

USA Volleyball Presents

2016-2017

Season

I**NCREASED**
M**ASTERY** and
P**ROFESSIONAL**
A**PPPLICATION** of
C**OACHING**
T**HEORY**

COURSE PARTICIPANT MANUAL ®



USAVolleyball.
Coaching Education

IMPACT 2016

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USAV/RVA IMPACT Preface

The 2015 edition (for 2016 season) of the IMPACT Manual is in two sections – this printed section and additional IMPACT Student Resources, which may be accessed online on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website. Click on the “Education” heading, then on the “Coaching Education Programs” tab, then on “Resources/IMPACT Student Resources.” Thanks for coaching this great sport - USA Volleyball Coaching Education looks forward to supporting your successes on and off the court!

Because you have purchased this manual and attended a USAV IMPACT course, it is evident that you are a coach who is committed to improving your skills to the same degree that your players are. As the saying goes, if coaches fail to prepare, they have prepared to fail. Coaching is a profession, whether it's a paid position or not, and every time coaches step into the gym to teach, they must be prepared and proficient, because the players are only this young once.

USA Volleyball currently has a minimum level coaching education requirement in order to coach a USAV Junior Volleyball program. Completion of a USAV IMPACT course or IMPACT clinic webinar meets this prerequisite. **Please note that Regional Volleyball Associations may have more stringent requirements to coach at this or any level.** A current certification in the USA Coaching Accreditation Program (CAP) Levels I-III will also satisfy this coaching certification requirement. With proper documentation submitted to the National Office, the following training programs, **plus purchase of the most recent IMPACT Manual from the National Office with online test completion**, will also meet the USAV IMPACT requirement to coach Junior Club teams: USVBA Levels I & II, FIVB Levels I-III, Canadian Volleyball Association Levels I-IV, NFHS “Coaching Volleyball” online course, American Sport Effectiveness Program (ASEP) “Principles of Coaching” online course, National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA), and PACE, as well as a teaching degree in Sport or Physical Education. Contact the USAV Coaching Education office in Colorado Springs for more information on this requirement.

USA Volleyball Coaching Education would like to thank the following volleyball leaders and organizations who have contributed to making this IMPACT Manual and certification course possible:

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This book is published annually in-house, and so represents the most recent information available. Any suggestions, additions, and comments should be sent to (Editor) Diana Cole, USA Volleyball Director of Coaching Education, 4065 Sinton Rd, Ste. 200, Colorado Springs, CO 80907, diana.cole@usav.org.

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THE IMPACT OF USAV IMPACT CLINICS

ON-SITE IMPACT CLINICS

Years ago I attended the IMPACT certification clinic and you were the instructor. It was very entertaining and I took a lot away from that experience. After I had been coaching club volleyball for around five years, my daughter decided to play (it was always her decision, although yes, it made Dad happy). I coached her team the first year she played 12s. That was a very trying time for me, and her. I found myself becoming "that" coach, the one I told myself I would never be. Criticizing without complimenting/encouraging, too hard on the girls for simple mistakes; in other words, not making the experience fun for them like it should be while teaching the game. That was my last year coaching club volleyball, until this year.

I was concerned with becoming that coach again: never satisfied with effort the players put forth, not encouraging or teaching and this concerned me, especially since this was my daughter's first year to coach. She was my assistant.

I looked over the Impact booklet from all those years ago and recalled your class and how fun you made it. No question out of bounds, guiding people to find the right answers in themselves and always encouraging discussion.

Our club offers a "prep" program which is 15 practices and two tournaments and we were to coach the U-16 team. This was the most rewarding coaching experience I've ever had. Not just because my daughter was with me, but because of the kids. I forgot somewhere along the way that it's about the kids and not their parents and certainly not me. The young ladies we had were fairly green, not a ton of experience. I came prepared for every practice and kept my energy high, asked them questions when they made mistakes, even encouraged them to make mistakes. "That" coach never came out. I was teaching them and it felt great. I was encouraging during both tournaments, never raising my voice when they made a mistake, just asking what they could do better next time and celebrating their successes on every point, whether it was ours or our opponent's.

At our last tournament, I had a parent from another club ask when our team was playing. She wanted to watch our match because of how much fun our young ladies had on the court – they were fun to watch. On four separate occasions, I had parents from other volleyball clubs tell me the same thing. They also enjoyed the way I coached, interacted, and always encouraged the young ladies on the court. "You don't see that every day" is what a couple of them said, which I think is unfortunate. I was extremely flattered and started thinking why I was that way for this season, and what happened the last season when I was "that" coach? I changed because I remembered the IMPACT clinic and the many articles of yours I had read in the interim. Those compliments were yours and I sincerely thank you for your articles and helping me find my love for coaching again.

Chris Thomas—IMPACT Certified Junior Club Coach – 2004

My husband and I were first-year club coaches coaching an 18s team in 2007. We were required to attend the IMPACT Clinic in 2006, which involved a four-hour round trip to get to the site, plus the four-hour clinic. Both of us thought that the IMPACT Clinic conducted by the Region staff was an extremely worthwhile use of our time and a real eye-opener.

We have always coached with the best interest of our players at heart, but before attending IMPACT we were selling them short by not knowing everything we could possibly know about relating to them as female athletes, and how they think, feel and learn. Thanks to the IMPACT Clinic we now know how to deal with situations to improve our players' learning and work with relational issues.

Reading the manual alone would not have given one the same benefit as attending the clinic. The instructor used many stories, examples and word pictures that related the material in the manual to real life. We find this very useful as we come up against similar situations quite often when we work with our team. We took a lot of notes as we went through the IMPACT Manual, and wished there had been even more hours in the clinic so we could have finished addressing even more topics that were in the later parts of the manual.

I believe that you have to go into everything with an open mind, or you won't learn anything. If you care about the people that you are serving by your coaching then attend the IMPACT Clinic – it can help you affect lives in a positive way as well as improve your team in the sport of volleyball.

Michelle Fox – IMPACT Certified Junior Club Coach – 2006

ONLINE IMPACT CLINIC WEBINARS

I wanted to say that I'm very happy that certification is required by USAV. Although I am a volunteer coach and don't have a lot of time for taking classes and tests, I can now say that it was definitely worth it. I have been a little league coach for 15 years (basketball, baseball and softball), but I really learned a lot through the IMPACT process and from the NFHS Fundamentals of Coaching Volleyball online course. I know many coaches at the high school level that could benefit greatly from certification of this type, if only they would take the time. I am a firm believer in life-long learning, and you folks who have been responsible for putting together IMPACT should be commended for your insight in continuing improvement and your caretaking of the sport of volleyball.

Rick Blum – IMPACT Certified Junior Club Coach – 2010

Excellent job by you and your group. I am relatively new to the sport - this is my first year coaching volleyball - and I learned a great deal. It was organized, extremely informative, and entertaining (especially the music!!!).

Dan Fitzsimmons – IMPACT Certified Junior Coach – 2008

I was blown away by the webinar. The video timing with audio was excellent ... I have been on a few conference calls and none of them compared to the webinar. The conference calls that I have been on did not have the guidance and direction that the webinar provided. The past conference calls were more for an audio learner. I was not only able to listen to good teaching, but I was also able to follow along with a slide show presentation. I appreciated the video clips that were used as tools to confirm what was being taught. In college we had classes that were combined through video conferencing and this would have been a great tool to use.

Any information that is given to a middle or high school coach would be beneficial...the drills and experiences shared in the webinar would definitely help the development of any coach. Obtainable resources, such as literature and video, can be used to gain a better understanding of the game and how it can be played at the highest level. I know there are several resources out there, but many people don't know where to find them or their program does not have the funds to purchase them. The basics and links that you will provide can give a head start to those coaching. Thank you for the IMPACT course.

Eric Wooldridge – IMPACT Certified Junior Coach – 2008

CAP Level I Course Comments

The previous year the original coach for the 13s fell through, so two players from the local college stepped in. While they were excellent players, they weren't yet equipped to communicate well with children. The girls won five sets (not games, sets) all year, and we were at the bottom of the bottom.

That is when I made a decision that I wanted to get involved. I loved volleyball all through school and college, even though I only played recreationally, and I felt I could make a difference because I had the heart of a teacher. With the support of my club director we decided that I would coach the 14s in the next season. Once I had completed my IMPACT training I became very aware that I needed to be teaching things correctly or this coaching journey wasn't going to last very long, so I signed up for USAV-CAP I in the closest location I could find to Chillicothe, Ohio, which was Henrico, Va.

When I arrived at USAV-CAP I, I was pretty nervous because it wasn't too hard to imagine that I was walking into a room where I knew less about volleyball than anyone else...and walking into a room without any answers was not a comfortable feeling. After hearing you speak for the first few minutes it dawned on me, "Wait a minute, this is the guy that writes those 'Stop Doing Things' articles that I had started reading and liked so much – that's pretty cool." Long story short about USAV-CAP I – I loved it – I bought in completely. I think more coaches should do it early on in their coaching so they don't waste two or three seasons just doing it the way they were coached.

Fast forward to our 14s season...we picked up a few new faces, but the general mix was roughly the same: good kids, decent players, but not super-stars. Half of our practices were at a church gym away from the rest of the club and the other half was on half a court with the 13's team. I put the blinders on and said to myself, "I know what I'm supposed to do. I'm not going to deviate even though I don't have much experience and we'll see what happens." We didn't run laps... didn't spend 15 minutes stretching... didn't do "punishments" like sprints, sit-ups, pushups or crunches. We played volleyball! There was not a single "practice serve" that didn't have someone trying to receive it on the other end. We used the ribbon a lot, plus 2v0, 1v1, 1v1+1, triple pepper weave, etc. I started to get to the point where if there weren't at least two balls in the air during gym time I would get nervous. We did eight-ball serving (which we re-named serving triplets because we were using six balls) at least three times from 1:30-2:30 per kid every practice. We didn't have really slick drills, but my girls knew how to play volleyball.

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Finally the tournaments start rolling around. I could fill pages and pages of all the awesome things that happened to us this year but I'll try to summarize. Even with getting off to a slow start, we won more in our first tournament than we did the entire previous year. Over the course of the season we won two silver brackets, made the gold bracket three times and went to two gold finals. We were close to winning a gold bracket two weekends before but lost it in the third. We talked this weekend about finding those 1% and 2% improvements. Last season we were able to do that 15-20 times. Six players have already early signed for next year and are excited to get back on the court together.

Thank you for all that you do for the sport of volleyball, but more importantly for the coaches and the people that play it. I hope to run into you again sometime. ~ Andrew Vitatoe – USAV-CAP I – 2015, Roundtown Volleyball – OV Region

Four years ago I went through USAV-CAP I with you and began to transform the way I thought as a coach. This school season marks the beginning of our third season as a homeschool volleyball program. This year I have eight girls – five of which have little or no experience. We started out doing 2 vs 0, then doubles, threes, fours and then a 5-1 system with my daughter playing setter, just because she has the most knowledge of the game.

Two days before our season started I was trying to encourage/recruit a homeschooler to come try out volleyball. While she wasn't interested she introduced me to a girl standing next to her that had just moved to town. She had never played before three weeks ago. Today I moved her to setter in the 5-1 system and she was amazing. Yes, she had a few doubles but was phenomenal.

Here is why all that matters. On day one of practice with about 15 minutes left she asked me, "How do you set?" The normal barrage of garbage started to come out and I stopped myself and thought, "You're not allowed to use more than five words," and so I said very little and sent her back to play. Her last 10 sets were absolutely spectacular.

Thanks so much for challenging us to think better and coach better.

Update: four or five weeks have passed since my initial communication and at our last game that same young lady put up a perfect antenna-high one-handed set in a game. She had neither seen it done nor been told you could do that.

"As I grow as a coach I find that many of my words actually put handcuffs on our kids' ability to be creative."

~ Douglas Boring – USAV-CAP Level I – 2011

I just wanted to send you a quick note to thank you and USA Volleyball for putting on this weekend. As I'm driving back to Southern California, I'm reflecting on the USAV-CAP Level I training at Ft. Lewis College this weekend. As a typical know-it-all teenager, I started off thinking on Saturday that there wouldn't be a lot for me to learn. Boy, how wrong I was! By the time we finished on Sunday afternoon, I felt like my head was going to explode with all the information I was trying to absorb.

I especially appreciated the technical and evidence-based foundation of everything you were teaching instead of falling back on beliefs and myths about volleyball coaching. All in all, it was a fantastic weekend. I learned so much (and have so much more to learn from all the notes I took). I look forward to incorporating what we did into my own coaching and playing and am already planning to do USAV-CAP II next year. Thanks for everything.

~ Galen Dodd – USAV-CAP Level I – 2013

First of all I would like to thank you again for instructing at the USAV-CAP clinic in Kansas City that I attended last fall. You confirmed many of the coaching principles I believe in, as well as providing several new insights to begin including in my coaching. I went "all-in" with these ideas for the Junior Olympic team I coached this winter (15-year-olds) and believe it was the most successful coaching job I have ever done. The girls really bought in to everything we introduced to them and at the end of the season their comments included how much they appreciated the focus on game-like drills, maximum contacts during practice, running the drills themselves, positive feedback, and teaching them what they should be doing rather than "hitting balls at us and then getting mad when we don't do it right." Even some of the ideas they at first thought were a little weird (practicing using their off hand, warming up doing volleyball activities, no partner passing/pepper or hitting against the wall) they quickly came to accept and understand the reason behind them. So please keep up the good work you and the rest of the staff at USA Volleyball are doing to improve and I look forward to any additional educational opportunities I can receive in the future.

~ Kevin Craig – USAV-CAP Level I – 2012

I want to take a quick moment to thank you all for the outstanding work you have done in such a short time to ensure that this course could run. The overwhelming response from the participants is that of sheer astonishment. Not one coach thought they could get so much out of a single clinic, myself included. We were challenged to rethink our techniques and processes, encouraged to ask "Why?" and given the confidence and opportunity to challenge the experts. Being able to walk away from this clinic with the experience of learning the techniques of an Olympic gold medal coach such as Hugh McCutcheon in itself is beyond amazing; but to be encouraged to question why someone as successful as he is does things a certain way, and to recognize that it is not always the right approach, was nothing short of outstanding. The Cadre were masters of their craft. Never for a second did I doubt their abilities or knowledge in the sport. Each new technique, topic, or approach was presented with poise and clarity. Nothing was left unclear. My only complaint with the course is the length. It was too short! I wanted more! I cannot wait to take my USAV-CAP II and subsequently my USAV-CAP III courses. Thank you again for everything you did to make this happen, it was well beyond expectation. I hope you continue to help facilitate growth and education for coaches in our sport.

~ Matthew Cribbin, Sarah Lawrence College – Sports Info. Dir. & Volleyball Head Coach, USAV-CAP Level I – 2010

I feel a little late with this note but just wanted to thank you both again for a great job in New Orleans at the USAV-CAP clinic. I learn more and more from the clinic as the days pass, processing deeper what was taught or shared, as well as getting immediate feedback on these elements as I use them in the gym with my athletes. Back to work with my HS team as I know you are both in the gym with your teams. So here's to a healthy and productive season to you both!

~ Andrew Beyer – New Orleans, LA Bayou Region USAV-CAP Level I course – 2009

I wanted to share with you some of the changes that I've made this year to my high school practice plans. This is my first pre-season since attending the USAV-CAP I course you ran in Colorado Springs.

We have a 24-minute warm-up routine that starts with play and it ends with play. After the first time we did the warm-up I asked one of my team captains if she liked the new changes and she smiled as she was wiping sweat off her face. First a little background on what we use to do: I'm an overzealous coach when it comes to movement and posture training. Needless to say we spent a lot of time shuffling and running through balls. That part has not changed! Actually it has gotten better and I mean much better because we are doing those things while competing for points and playing volleyball!

We put an antenna in the middle of the net to create two half-courts. The girls play "Queen Court Beach Bump" for the first four minutes... They are improving their passing skills because they are working on getting around the ball and looking at the other court before contact which is a huge benefit for any volleyball player.

Then 4 minutes of regular 2 vs. 2 queen court; the next 4 minutes they play 3 on 3, the next 4 minutes they play 4 on 4 with permanent setters ...and ...the last 8 minutes we do our Player Initiated Tiger Pass to Attack Drill.

All I can say is wow! We have gotten more out of our players so far in these practices than I have ever been able to get out of past teams. The great thing is that after the warm-up and water break the team is ready for practice and we have been able to fine-tune our playing system a lot quicker than in the past. We have a lot more time to prepare for the season.

~ John Rodriguez, Dripping Springs High School Volleyball – Colorado Springs, CO USAV-CAP Level I course – 2009

I just wanted to thank you again for what was one of the best weekends I've ever spent. I arrived enjoying the game of volleyball and left Colorado absolutely loving the game... Penny and Joan were unbelievably brilliant with their knowledge and the skill with which they put their points across. My only regret was that the experience came to an end. I honestly am looking forward to taking the USAV-CAP II soon, and short of that I may even take the USAV-CAP I again if we end up hosting a course in the near future, because my experience was so tremendously positive. Thanks again!

~ Jon Stocking – Assistant Coach, Southern Oregon University Women's Volleyball and Director, Southern Oregon Volleyball Club, USAV-CAP Level I – 2007

I want you to know that for my two-hour drive home from Bethlehem to Philadelphia this past Sunday following our USAV-CAP I course, I drove without the radio on because I was mentally reviewing everything that we covered this weekend. GREAT STUFF... What USAV-CAP taught me was how much there is to learn and how my coaching experiences are similar to what others have experienced. Your wealth of knowledge, presentation of material, and commentary, not to mention your preparation, is the gold standard for me. You made the course interesting, informative and fun... Again, well done and thank you.

~ Joe McCloskey – Fox Chase, PA USAV-CAP Level I course – 2007

INCREASED MASTERY AND PROFESSIONAL APPLICATION OF COACHING THEORY (IMPACT)

WELCOME TO THE PROFESSION OF COACHING!

Second only to soccer, volleyball is the world's most popular sport. Some reading this manual may have started as players, since most have probably played volleyball at some point in their lifetimes, whether in school, at park and recreation facilities or at family picnics. Some may have gotten involved in volleyball because of a family member playing, officiating or coaching the game. USA Volleyball is excited that you have decided to become involved in coaching and in giving back to the sport. Some reading this today may have already been involved in coaching for many years...as the title of this course and manual express, we invite you to increase your mastery of the art and science of coaching. Thanks to all of you, on behalf of all athletes, for being a part of the coaching profession.

USA Volleyball (USAV) is the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport in the United States. The USAV headquarters is based in Colorado Springs, Colo. In the USAV Articles of Incorporation (see below), the first and second primary purposes for formation specifically address the need for education.

USAV ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

According to the Articles of Incorporation of USA Volleyball, the specific and primary purposes for which this non-profit corporation is formed are to:

- Teach the sport of volleyball to children and adults by holding clinics conducted by qualified instructors in schools, playgrounds and parks
- Provide volleyball practice sessions, classroom lectures, seminars and panel discussions through which selected trainees may be schooled in competitive coaching, playing, officiating and scouting techniques
- Foster and conduct area, regional, state and national amateur volleyball competitions
- Unite those organizations in the United States that are supportive of this corporation and to aid those organizations in developing volleyball programs
- Select and train suitable candidates in the techniques of volleyball for national and international competition and thereby improve the caliber of candidates representing the United States in Olympic, Pan American and World Games competitions
- Foster and conduct amateur volleyball programs between the United States and foreign nations for the exchange and training of suitable candidates in the techniques and practices of volleyball in countries other than their own
- Represent the volleyball interest of the United States in national and international amateur sports organizations
- Collect, compile and maintain a complete and continuous record and history of volleyball and in cooperation with educational and related institutions throughout the United States, and make said records available for research, study and interpretive use

USA VOLLEYBALL (USAV)

Since its inception, and especially over the past few decades, the evolution of USAV has been great. Just 36 years ago USA Volleyball was an all-volunteer group. 2015 was the 36th anniversary of the Junior Volleyball National Championships. As of Aug. 25, 2015, USAV had 254,276 girls and 16,153 boys registered as Junior USAV members.

The Cub Scouts have recognized more than 63,000 athletes through its volleyball programs and other member organizations have greatly increased volleyball figures over the past decade, as well. More than 486,500 boys and girls compete in sanctioned high school volleyball programs nationwide, and in 2014 the state of Vermont became the last of the 51 states (including District of Columbia) to offer HS girls' competition (and is one of 22 states offering boys'). There are dozens of national and regional support staffs who put full-time effort and more into the development of the sport. This organization, and the sport itself, continue to change rapidly. Following the tremendous success of all of our USA Volleyball teams in 2008 – gold and silver in Beijing for our men's and women's Indoor National teams, along with two gold medals for our Beach teams, and a silver for our women's Sitting Paralympic team – as well as continued success in London in 2012 (gold and silver in women's Beach, silver in women's Indoor, and another silver medal for the women's Sitting team), the goal is to continue to work together with all members, all organizations and all disciplines to make the Quads following the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympic Games - where USA men's and women's Indoor teams and the women's Beach team earned bronze medals, and the Women's Sitting team earned their first Paralympic Gold Medal – an even greater success!

USA Volleyball firmly believes that every volleyball athlete in this country deserves to have access to a trained volleyball coach. However, even some “untrained” coaches who might teach players techniques that may not be considered the best – or even the most recent – may still be considered good coaches if they are giving the players a good experience as they learn. As a result, players will enjoy the game and stick with it. The converse, however – great techniques, but a poor learning experience – means they will not enjoy playing and may not stick with the sport. So, utilize both - learn the best techniques and systems to teach players AND give them a great experience in learning the game – and you will have hooked them for life!

The goal of this IMPACT Clinic, and all levels of the Coaching Accreditation Program (CAP) courses, is to give coaches a great start by presenting the correct information and techniques to accomplish both of these goals for their given situations. Remember, there are as many different ways to play the game as there are champions!

THE GAME CONTINUES TO GROW

In 2014, SFIA (Sports & Fitness Industry Association, formerly SGMA) reported that 6,304,000 Americans played court volleyball, 60 percent of whom are female, with 3,545,000 core participants (66 percent female). Volleyball is the second most highly sponsored women's collegiate team sport, and is now the second most popular high school girls' sport (surpassing basketball and behind track & field) with 436,309 players (according to the 2015-'16 NFHS Athletics Participation Survey), and ranks third in school sponsorship with 15,755 schools. Volleyball gained 4,133 female high school participants from the previous year. Boys' programs have begun in hundreds of high schools in the past quadrennial. In 2015-'16, 55,417 boys participated in high school volleyball at 2,333 schools in 22 states, an increase of almost 1000 participants. Worldwide it is estimated that more than 800 million play in the FIVB's 221 member Federations.

The Beach game has had success worldwide for men and women, making its Olympic debut in Atlanta in 1996. American Beach Volleyball gained huge exposure in each of the past three Olympic Games due to gold medals for the men in 1996, 2000 and '08, as well as gold and bronze medals for the women in 2004, gold for both again in 2008, and gold and silver for the women in 2012, and bronze for the women in 2016. In 2015, the SFIA estimated that there were 4,651,000 Beach/Sand Volleyball participants in the United States, and there were 3,911,000 who played on grass, while 30 percent of beach players also play court volleyball.

Crowds of thousands watch the beach and indoor national teams play on U.S. tours. Women's collegiate indoor matches set new attendance records each year. With collegiate sand scholarships now a reality, 2012 saw the first-ever AVCA Women's Collegiate Sand Championships played before large crowds in Gulf Shores, Ala. ... an event that was repeated in 2013, '14, and again in '15 to even greater exposure and success. The first NCAA Collegiate Beach Volleyball Championship was held at this same location May, 2016. Many of the world's top pro players make more than \$100,000 a year playing the game. USAV Junior Volleyball numbers have consistently grown as well – from 2,000 in 1977 to 4,800 in 1982; from 110,000 in 2003 to more than 154,400 in 2006; from 166,800 in '07 to 190,600 in '09; from more than 193,000 in '10 to more than 226,000 in '12; from more than 227,300 in '13 to more than 262,149 in 2015. For the 2015-16 season, this number is 270,140, representing growth of 5.9 percent for junior males and 2.96 percent for junior females. Both adult male and female membership also grew .5 and 2.1 percent, respectively, in 2016.

IMPACT 2016

USA COACHING ACCREDITATION PROGRAM (CAP) OVERVIEW

The USA Coaching Accreditation Program (CAP) is a comprehensive, five-level coaching certification program that thoroughly covers all aspects of teaching and coaching volleyball. USAV-CAP Level I certification requires a prior “Foundations of Coaching” class. These classes focus on the critical elements of the profession of coaching and are acceptable as the “Foundations” requirement: USAV IMPACT Clinics, National Webinars and the On-Demand IMPACT Course; or with purchase of a current *IMPACT Manual* and completion of the test, the NFHS’s Fundamentals of Coaching Volleyball online course, ASEP’s Principles of Coaching online class, or other identified classes will usually be accepted. The *IMPACT Manual* and clinic, whether delivered by local USAV Regions or by USAV’s National Coaching Education Department, serves as a pre-requisite to USAV-CAP Level I. Both IMPACT and USAV-CAP programs exist to assist both beginning and experienced coaches in teaching volleyball athletes from youth to collegiate and elite levels.

USAV-CAP is a centralized, comprehensive and sequential national program. Each course, organized by the office of Coaching Education at USA Volleyball in Colorado Springs, is presented at key sites throughout the U.S., typically 15-20 times per year. Course formats and topics are standardized to ensure consistent information and activity presentations at each site. Prerequisites for course attendance and certification beyond IMPACT may include: achieving the prior level of certification, maintaining a current certification status, coaching at least one season under the current certification, as well as a current USAV background screen for each new level of certification or any recertification.

The curriculum at each level of USAV-CAP was determined based on the intended audiences, as explained on the following pages. This overview is meant as a general guide only. Details may vary according to course site and host. Check with the USAV-CAP office for the most current information on coaching certification processes. A current year schedule of USAV-CAP courses, along with registration information for each, may be viewed at www.usavolleyball.org under the “Education/Coaching Clinics” link.

IMPACT and IMPACT PLUS CLINICS

- **Target Audience:** Beginning coaches or those with little prior coaching education foundation course work. Also required to be able to coach a USAV Junior Club team. Also meets the “Foundations of Coaching” class pre-requisite for USAV-CAP Level I.
- **Content Presented:** *IMPACT Manual*; includes Coaching Principles; Motor Skill Learning Theory; Communication and Feedback; Ethical and Legal Duties; Athlete Safeguards and SafeSport; Basic Games/Drills; overviews of Fundamental Skills/Offensive/Defensive System Organization and Practice and Drill Design.
- **Length:** Required length for full on-site Clinics is 4.5 hours (half-day) On-site clinics are scheduled and taught by local USA Regional Volleyball Associations (RVAs) or may be offered at select USAV National Events and USAV-CAP course sites. *IMPACT Plus* Clinics add a minimum of 1-2 hours of on-court training time. The webinar version of IMPACT is taught over two evenings (total of 5.5 hours) and includes an online exam. *IMPACT OnDemand* is about 6.5 hours plus a certification exam.
- **Requirements:** Pre-requisite for USAV-CAP Level I certification. The USAV National Office does not require recertification; however, the coach’s home Region may decide to do so. Check with your RVA.
- **Cost:** Varies by membership status, course site, course delivery format

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and length. Generally, cost may vary from approximately \$25 to \$80 or more. Late fees may apply. Some Regions provide **IMPACT** free to members.

- **Resources:** Current year **IMPACT Manual**. This manual is designed to introduce coaches to the key elements of being an active USAV Junior Volleyball coach. **IMPACT Plus** includes hands-on court time in addition to the standard in-class room clinic. Either format (or the online webinar and on-demand versions) will meet the USAV Junior Volleyball requirements for participating coaches and the “Foundations Course” pre-requisite for USAV-CAP Level I.
- **Benefits:** Following **IMPACT** Certification, coaches will receive documentation from the course instructor to take back to their clubs. Coaches have the opportunity to be added to the USAV Education email lists to receive the *Sidelines* e-newsletter and periodic information. Certified coaches are eligible to coach USAV Junior teams and the certification date will be entered into the National Database for the USAV-CAP Level I “Foundations” requirement. A full IMPACT Clinic certification is required to coach in National Qualifiers or Junior Championships.

USAV-CAP Level I HOME EQUIVALENCY (HE) [Available only until launch of on-line USAV-CAP Level I Course]

- **Target Audience:** ONLY for well-experienced coaches with prior coaching education course work; must possess established competencies in facilitating athlete development.
- **Content provided via:** Home study of materials.
- **Length:** Varies per individual.
- **Requirements:** Written test, signed USAV Code of Ethics form, proof of "Foundations of Coaching" course, submission of Favorite Drill and Coaching Philosophy Forms, successful USAV Background Screen; attending a Level II course within 12 months is required for Level I HE accreditation to be granted and activated.
- **Cost:** Approximately \$285 to \$350 (dependent on member status).
- **Resources:** *Coaching Volleyball: Building a Winning Team*, Supplemental Handouts and USAV Coaches COE and Conduct.
- **Benefits:** Coaches have the opportunity to be added to the USAV Education email lists to receive the *Sidelines* e-newsletter and other periodic information. Once all above requirements have been met, the HE USAV-CAP Level I coach is eligible to coach USAV Junior teams.

USAV-CAP Level I

- **Target Audience:** All coaching and teaching levels, especially coaches who have had limited formal coaching education courses. All coaches must start with Level I to progress through the USAV-CAP Accreditation System.
- **Content Presented:** Typically a mix of on-court and in-classroom hands-on learning. The new “Hybrid” format includes a mix of on-court and online training sessions. The emphasis of Level I is on Teaching the Game. Sessions include practicum in Teaching the Fundamental Skills; Application of Motor Skill Learning Theory; Coaching Principles/Foundations; Developing a Coaching Philosophy; the USAV Code of Ethics and Athlete Safeguards; Drill Design and Implementation; Practice Preparation and Execution; Basic Offensive/Defensive/Serve Receive Organization Systems, etc. Additional Module topics allow more study of specific topics and may vary at each course site
- **Length:** 13 to 16 hours, typically in a two-day on-site format, plus follow-up online exam at home; Day 1 is 10 hours of Core course instruction; Day 2 is four Elective Module topics in 1-1.5 hour long sessions.
- **Requirements:** USAV-CAP Level I written test; signed USAV Code of Ethics form; a successful USAV Background Screen; proof of a “Foundations of Coaching” course; electronic submission of Coaching Philosophy Worksheet and Favorite Drill Form (with on-site copies for course Cadre). With submission of proper documentation, FIVB and Canadian certifications may be acceptable (with a successful USAV Background Screen, submission of Coaching Philosophy Worksheet and Favorite Drill Form, and attendance at one Additional Elective Module) in order to grant USAV-CAP Level I status and allow certified coaches to attend a USAV-CAP Level II course. ***There is also a one-season coaching experience requirement prior to attending the next level course.***
- **Renewal Requirement:** Coaching certification is good for a **four-year period** and if status is “current,” may be renewed by either:
 - Attending another USAV-CAP Level I course (no other requirements except for a current successful background screen on file); or
 - Submitting proof of attending a total of four approved USAV-CAP Modules within four years of last certification date to stay current (requires a successful Background Screen as well). See website for more details about Approved Modules, where to attend them, and how to submit for recertification.
- **Cost:** Early Bird deadline – approximately \$275 (for members of USAV who are also AVCA members); \$290 (for USAV members); \$315 for AVCA members; up to \$340 (Non-Members); actual fees may be dependent on site/host. Late fees may be applicable after the early registration deadline.
- **Resources:** *Coaching Volleyball: Building a Winning Team*; Level I Supplemental Handouts; in-class video, DVD/PPT presentations; USAV Coaches Code of Ethics and Conduct; and other materials.
- **Benefits:** Coaches have the opportunity to be added to the USAV Education email lists to receive the *Sidelines* e-newsletter and other periodic information; will receive access to the USOC’s *Olympic Coach* e-magazine, receive a letter/email of congratulations, and Certificate of Accreditation.

4-OVERVIEW

IMPACT 2016

USAV-CAP Level II

- **Target Audience:** Open to all USAV-CAP Level I Accredited Coaches of all levels and experience, including those who have taken and passed the Level I Home Equivalency Test and met all other USAV-CAP Level I requirements, and to those granted USAV-CAP Level I status via FIVB or Canadian equivalent certifications. Check with USAV-CAP National office for updates.
- **Content Presented:** On-court/in-classroom with hands-on learning. The emphasis of USAV-CAP Level II is on *Organizing and Developing* Team Play. Topics may include: Developing Guiding Principles; Developing Team Systems of Play; Building the Serve Receive Offense; Team Building: Effective Communication and Trust; Building Team Defense: Blocking and Floor Defense; Developing Out-of-System Systems; and Team Drills: Teaching the Systems. Module topics may vary.
- **Length:** 15-18 hours in a two-day format, plus follow-up work at home; Day 1 is 10 hours of Core course instruction plus Module #1; Day 2 is five Elective Module topics in 1-1.5 hour-long sessions.
- **Requirements:** USAV-CAP Level II online exam, a USAV Background Screen, electronic submission of a Favorite Drill (plus 3-5 hard copies), signed COE on file and submission of original 2-3 page article are required for Level II accreditation. ***There is a one-season coaching experience requirement prior to attending USAV-CAP Level III.***
- **Renewal Requirement:** Coaching certification is good for a four-year period. If “current,” may be renewed by:
 - Attending another USAV-CAP II course (no other requirements except for a current successful Background Screen on file), or
 - Attending and submitting proof of attending a total of five Approved USAV-CAP Modules within four years of last certification date (requires a successful Background Screen in the system; see website for more details on Approved Modules), or
 - Applying for a recommendation to attend a training session to become an IMPACT Instructor for your Region. Attending this IMPACT Instructor Training session, plus teaching one required IMPACT Clinic (taught and documented to the National Office standards) within the initial four-year period following your last accreditation date, will provide four of the five necessary Modules Credits for re-accreditation; teach one additional IMPACT Clinic or attend one other approved Module and the renewal requirements for Level II will have been met. In subsequent four-year periods, trained IMPACT Instructors may use up to three IMPACT Clinics (taught and documented to the National Office standards) as Level II re-accreditation Module credits; and may attend one current instructor webinar each fall to collect one free module per season. Contact CAP@usav.org for more information.
- **Cost:** Early Bird deadline – approximately \$335 (USAV and AVCA); \$350 (USAV members); \$375 (AVCA Members); up to \$400 (Non-Members); dependent on site/host. Late fees may apply.
- **Resources:** *Volleyball Coaches’ Survival Guide*; Supplemental Handouts; in-class video, DVD and PowerPoint presentations; USAV Coaches COE and Conduct Codes; materials for modules may vary.
- **Benefits:** Coaches have the opportunity to receive the Sidelines e-newsletter and other periodic information; will receive access to USOC’s *Olympic Coach* e-magazine, a congratulatory letter/email and Accreditation Certificate. Coaches may have their article or drill selected for publication and may be eligible, with their Region Office’s approval, to become an IMPACT Instructor Candidate.

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USAV-CAP Level III

- **Target audience:** Open to all USAV-CAP Level II Accredited Coaches of all levels and experience. Check with USAV-CAP National Office for updates. Offered 1-2 dates/sites per year.
- **Content Presented:** On-court and in-classroom with hands-on learning. The emphasis in USAV-CAP Level III curriculum is on Moving Teams/Athletes to Elite Levels of Play.
- Module topics may vary; sessions may include but are not limited to: Sport Psychology; Gender, Communication and Competition; Fueling for Volleyball Athletes; Weight Training and Conditioning; Program Periodization Planning; Communicating with Today's Athlete; National Team Observation or interaction. Peer Presentations and Outreach Project development time is included.
- **Length:** 18-22 hours in a three- to five-day format, plus follow-up work at home; 10 hours of Core instruction; plus Modules and Outreach Project Planning sessions.
- **Requirements:** Design, implementation and evaluation of a follow-up ***Outreach Project designed to "grow the game" is required***; submission of written/electronic drill(s) w/video clips; online USAV-CAP III exam covering material and text books. ***One season coaching experience requirement prior to attending USAV-CAP IV.***
- **Renewal Requirement:** Coaching license is good for a four-year period. If "current" may be renewed by one of three methods (see website for methods of renewal if "lapsed"):
 - Attending a USAV-CAP III course (no other requirements except for a successful BGS on file); or volunteer with USAV-CAP for an educational event/experience within four years of accreditation date (call the National Office for more information); or
 - Attend and submit proof of attending a total of six approved USAV-CAP Modules within four years of last certification date (requires a successful background screen as well; see website for details on Approved Modules); or
 - Apply for a recommendation to attend a training session to become an IMPACT Instructor for your Region. Attending this IMPACT Instructor Training session, plus teaching one required IMPACT Clinic (taught and documented to National Office standards) within the four-year period following your last accreditation date, will give you four of the six required Approved Modules Credits for Level III re-accreditation – teach one more IMPACT Clinic and attend one more Module and the renewal requirements for Level III will have been met (requires a successful background screen as well). In subsequent four-year periods, trained IMPACT Instructors may use up to three IMPACT Clinics (taught and documented to the National Office standards) as Level III re-accreditation Module credits, and may attend one current instructor webinar each fall to collect one free module per season. Contact CAP@usav.org for more information.
- **Cost:** Varies according to USAV Membership status, course site and registration deadlines, but generally in the \$400 to \$450 range, with discounts for USAV and AVCA members; late fees may apply; also dependent upon the site and coordinating events.
- **Resources:** Level III Course Manual individually developed per course topics; textbooks are *Periodization Training for Sport*; *How Men and Women Approach Work and Play Differently*, and the *USOC Sport Psychology for Coaches* texts may also be available for purchase.
- **Benefits:** Coaches have the opportunity to be added to USAV Education email lists to receive the *Sidelines* e-newsletter and other periodic information; coaches will receive access to the USOC's *Olympic Coach* e-magazine, receive an email of congratulations, and a Certificate of Accreditation. With National Office approval, Level III accredited coaches may be selected for USAV-CAP Cadre Apprentice training; additional criteria apply.

USAV-CAP Level IV

- **Target audience:** Currently, this level may be reached by appointment only...for National and Olympic Pipeline Coaches with international coaching experience.
- **Future content/format:** In the future, USAV-CAP Level IV will become a three- to seven-day course, plus practicum and mentoring experiences, utilizing a Critical Thinking Seminar format for an in-depth learning experience with a single topic per course/seminar; emphasis is on specific aspects of the Profession of Coaching through specialized, expert, individualized training. Stay tuned for more information on the development of this course.
- **Status currently granted to:**
 - Those individuals who have been head coaches of an official USA National Volleyball Team competing internationally (no re-certification necessary), or those who have assisted with a USA National/Olympic Team (Disabled Teams, World University Games, National Team Apprentice program, Junior or Youth National teams, etc.), for a period of four years following completion of National coaching staff duties. *Thereafter, continuing education units will be necessary to maintain USAV-CAP IV status.*
 - Coaches who have received Cadre training **and** assisted national teams, or head coached an official USA Volleyball team internationally, are also granted Level IV status, for up to four years following retirement from USAV-CAP Cadre duties. *Thereafter, continuing education units will be necessary to maintain USAV-CAP IV status.*
- **Length:** Proposed 24-50 hours in a once-per-year, intensive, single-topic, four-day National Seminar format plus a practicum and mentoring experience, and home study assignments.

IMPACT 2016

- **Cost:** Varies according to USAV Membership status, course site and registration deadlines, and generally in the \$400 to \$850 range depending on length and associated events; late fees may apply.

USAV-CAP LEVEL V

- Level V status is granted to all current and previous USA Volleyball Olympic Team Head Coaches.
- Those coaches who have participated in the creation of the USAV-CAP program are also granted Level V.
- USAV-CAP Level V is granted for lifetime status.

Volleyball Conditioning Accreditation Program (VCAP) Clinics

- **Length:** 3-4 hours; six-week pre-season and 12-week off-season versions. VCAP Clinics are sponsored by USA Volleyball, USA Volleyball's Sports Medicine & Performance Commission (SMPC) and *Performance Conditioning for Volleyball*.
- **Target audience:** VCAP clinics are designed for coaches with responsibilities for conditioning their volleyball teams, emphasizing the use of non-weight room exercises, equipment and programs.
- **Content presented/approach:** Emphasis is on specific conditioning for volleyball athletes and teams without relying on use of a weight room. Hands-on topics covered in the course include both on- and off-court conditioning, movement, administering testing and evaluation, individualization, jump training, over-training and injury prevention.
- **Cost:** by Early Bird deadline (per individual clinic) from approximately \$75 to \$100. Late deadlines and fees may apply.
- **Instructors:** The "Accreditation" portion of the VCAP acronym refers to the certification of VCAP Instructors. Both the strength and conditioning professional with a high interest in conditioning volleyball players and the volleyball coach with a high interest in the field of strength and conditioning are eligible to apply to train and serve as the instructors for these clinics. VCAP Instructor Training sessions are conducted a few times per year. If interested, contact the USAV Education National Office for more information on becoming a Volleyball Conditioning Program Instructor (VCI).
- **For more details,** also visit the *Performance Conditioning for Volleyball* website at (<http://www.performancecondition.com/volleyball>).

For more information on the Coaching Accreditation Program, including where the closest USAV-CAP courses will be in your area this year, visit the Education pages at www.usavolleyball.org, or contact USAV Coaching Education, 4065 Sinton Rd, Ste 200, Colorado Springs, CO 80907 at (719) 228-6800 or CAP@usav.org.

USA IMPACT OVERVIEW

The main goal of this *IMPACT Manual*, in conjunction with IMPACT Clinics, is to give new and relatively inexperienced coaches a good start on the road toward becoming a "qualified coach" as they join the profession of coaching. USA Volleyball's aim is to motivate and help ALL participants to become responsible coaches and to develop a clearer understanding of the accompanying responsibilities and opportunities. For experienced coaches, in addition to fulfilling the minimum requirement to coach a USAV Junior club team, this Manual and Clinic seek to reacquaint them with and reemphasize the essential information necessary to be the most effective coach one can be, thus the title acronym for IMPROVED MASTERY and *Professional Application of Coaching Theory*.

This course is considered to be the introductory course to the Coaching Accreditation Program (CAP), which is also under the auspices of the USA Volleyball Coaching Education department. IMPACT and IMPACT Plus courses are the lead-ins to attending and becoming certified at USAV-CAP Level I. Either version will serve as the pre-requisite to attending a USAV-CAP Level I course, satisfying the "Foundations of Coaching" requirement toward USAV-CAP I accreditation.

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This Manual and clinic curriculum was originally developed in the late 1980s by John Kessel, USA Volleyball's current Director of Sport Development. In addition, the USAV Regional Volleyball Associations (RVAs) and other volleyball leaders assisted in creating this important resource for all coaches, both new to or experienced in volleyball.

After undergoing several revisions over the past years the Manual material now includes the Core Coaching section, used in this Clinic, and a list of Resources at the end of each chapter, portions of which are available to download from the [IMPACT Resources page](http://www.usavolleyball.org) of the USA Volleyball website (www.usavolleyball.org) – click on the Education header, then on Coaching-Education-Programs, then Resources, then on IMPACT-Student-Resources.

While some of the resource material may be referred to during a course, the main discussion will be in the Core Coaching areas. This course is not so much about the “X’s and O’s” as much as it is about the ways to understand and properly teach the “X’s and O’s”.

THE IMPACT of COACHES

The primary goal of the IMPACT program is to help coaches understand and become well-skilled in handling the awesome responsibility and incredible opportunity they have to influence young people positively through the sport of volleyball. Studies have shown there are about 3 million coaches in sport and about 2.5 million of them are untrained. Estimates of the attrition rate at the community or youth level are near 40 percent. For most, coaching is entered into more as an accidental occupation, not as the “profession” that it should be considered by all to be, whether or not one is paid to coach.

Broadly speaking, American coaches are probably the least formally trained coaches in the world, balking at spending time and money on coaching education and training. However, entering the profession of coaching, even if only for a season, paid or volunteer, requires that:

- **Coaches have a specialized body of knowledge**
- **This knowledge is taught under a system**
- **There is an evaluation of what has been learned**

Despite this lack of required formal training, high school and some Junior Club Volleyball program coaches are with their players two to three hours a day, up to five or six days a week, for several months of the year including tournaments. This adds up to more hours than some parents are able to spend with their children outside of work and school days. Yet, it is sometimes forgotten that young athletes are not merely smaller versions of adults, but are children, and coaches must work to understand and empathize with them at their level.

A quick look at the current average number of hours of training before being permitted to work in selected professions gives us an idea of the under-training that exists in coaching:

Bus Driver	...120 hours of training required
Beautician	...1,000 hours of training required
Plumber	...2,000 hours of training required
Dentist	...4,000 hours of training required
Physician	...12,000 hours of training required
High school coach	...0 to 3,000 hours of training required
Youth volleyball coach	...0 to 4 hours of training required

While striving to win is an objective of any volleyball match, it is not the main goal of the sport of volleyball at the beginning level. Coaches are charged with the duty to help each and every player become a responsible and autonomous individual.

This IMPACT Manual and class will focus on the following four main areas:

1. Helping participants create what they need to coach volleyball efficiently and effectively in a much more active and improved way, and to begin or enhance your development of a functional coaching philosophy.
2. Making participants aware of the great opportunities and responsibilities involved in the coaching profession, especially with young athletes. Risk management, legal duty and insurance information are also included.
3. Developing an understanding and appreciation of the National Governing Body of volleyball (USAV) and its role in international, national and regional leadership.
4. Identifying the latest resources available to help coaches create or improve any program.

IMPACT 2016

The USAV Regional Volleyball Association (RVAs) certify and rate both adult and youth volleyball officials on an annual basis. A similar commitment is now being made to increase levels of coach competency, through both this required *IMPACT Manual*/Class and the Coaching Accreditation Program (CAP).

This is not an easy game to master at any level. The varied skills and the challenges of continually having to rebound the ball, coupled with the maximum of three team contacts, can make the game look more like “chaos ball.” Coaches of this unique game must have patience and become “students of the game,” working to stay up on changes and advancements in the game.

The Goals of USAV Junior and Youth Volleyball

- **Teach young people the skills of volleyball.** Any player who enters a volleyball program has the right to expect quality coaching and instruction. Volleyball can be a vehicle to a better quality of life.
- **Help kids to have fun and enjoy volleyball.** Cooperation and having a good time are important to kids.
- **Help players build confidence and self-control.** Emphasize individual development, regardless of the score. Opportunities and responsibilities in play, travel and practice are teachable moments.
- **Help participants understand “winning.”** This ultimate team sport requires a focus on playing one’s best, because winning is out of one player’s control. Winning is the by-product of a superbly organized program. And remember... in all the matches played on any given day, 50 percent of all teams will lose!
- **Teach teamwork.** Teach players to cooperate with teammates to help them play as well as they can. With an emphasis on three contacts before returning the ball, volleyball teaches cooperation in a unique way. Support the goal of reaching a common objective, where individual intent is to improve results in group success. Teach players to respect teammates, opponents, officials, fans and themselves. In volleyball, judgment is made on every contact – by someone else – and players must adapt, abiding by the referee’s rule judgments. The rules, while not identical to those of international and Olympic volleyball, are similar to those by which the entire world plays.
- **Improve players’ imagination and anticipation skills.** The rebound aspect of volleyball means that the preparation for contact is more important than actual contact. Players must process information from clues, cues, perceptions and demands, and all before the ball is ever contacted.
- **Improve communication skills.** Volleyball is a game of constant chatter to help one another, once the kids know what to talk about. Players must learn correct responses in practice, as well as know how to make corrections, both individually and among the team.
- **Develop players emotionally.** The nature of the game requires players to be both self-reliant, with little coaching help from the sidelines, and united with the other teammates on the court. Players learn to take personal responsibility for their actions, with help from both teammates and the coach in establishing personal confidence through success on the court.
- **Nurture, never destroy.** There is a big difference between mental toughness and psychological abuse. Build a frame of realism, but never damage an athlete’s self-worth or confidence. Coaches must not be selfish in dealing with a player’s sense of self-confidence.
- **Develop friendships.** This includes friendship among parents and the players, as well as among teammates. It also includes friendships that can grow between opponents. The value of friendships across the nation and internationally is significant. The Chinese put it this way: *“Winning and losing are temporary, but friendships last forever.”*

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- **Cultivate parent participation.** Their true support and involvement with Junior Volleyball activities must be established.
- **Learn a sport for a lifetime.** There are national age group competitions for boys and girls from 12-and-under to players 75 years old and over.

VOLLEYBALL IS A LIFETIME SPORT

For coaches who have played this game in one form or another, even if it was just in physical education class long ago, all must be open to almost constant evolution and change in the game.

Volleyball is not played the same way today as it was played even just last year. Volleyball has evolved more in the past decade than any other sport. Coaches need to make every effort to regularly attend good clinics. They owe it to themselves and their players to keep updated on the latest techniques and advancements in the game. By attending this clinic, participants also have set a higher standard for their volleyball programs and for better leadership. Coaches must never compromise the self-esteem of players or fellow coaches as they seek to improve them all. Keep an open mind and create what your program and players need.

VOLLEYBALL IS A DIFFICULT SPORT TO LEARN

Most of the American sports that youngsters have tried will allow the players to hold the ball or at least to pause with it in their possession, with no penalty. However, the rebound aspect of volleyball creates unique challenges for all players. Volleyball makes broad motor skill demands on a player that include spatial orientation, balance, rhythm, power, speed and other coordinative abilities. Many uniquely different skills (and a myriad of variations of each) are needed just to play the basic game. Patience is paramount, both for those teaching and those learning the sport.

Volleyball does not copy the experiences of any other team sport. Young athletes, and even most adults, have a limited understanding of how the game should be played and what sort of conduct is proper. Volleyball is the truest team sport, since no one player or skill can dominate the outcome in and of themselves, but players may bring in actions from other sports that hinder the type of teamwork necessary to play this game. If athletes played volleyball like many professional sports are demonstrated on television, they would never become good volleyball players. Coaches should guide and support players in learning the kind of cooperation that volleyball requires. Read more about the unique aspects of this sport in the Resources Section article, "Unique Game Characteristics."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the IMPACT Resources page of the USA Volleyball website – click on the Education header, then on Coaching-Education-Programs, then Resources, then on IMPACT-Student-Resources.

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 – Teaching and Communication](#)
- [Overview of Coaching Accreditation Program Requirements](#)
- [History of Volleyball](#)
- [The World of Volleyball Chart](#), by Diana Cole
- [The Uniqueness of Volleyball](#), by John Kessel
- [Why USAV?](#)
- [About USAV-Facts List](#)
- [National Office Staff](#) – Colorado Springs, CO (www.usavolleyball.org)
- [Contact USAV](#) - If interested in growing Boys' Volleyball email mvp@usav.org
- [Beach Programs](#)
- [Men's Indoor National Team](#)
- [Women's Indoor National Team](#)

CHAPTER 2: COACHING RESPONSIBILITIES & RISK MANAGEMENT

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Mandatory background checks for adults associated with USAV Junior programs were first instituted in 2005. Now, when ANY adults affiliated with a junior program register for USAV membership with their Region Offices, many include the background screen as a membership benefit and a part of insurance and risk management compliance. Background screens are required of all adults affiliated with a junior program every two seasons, prior to first contact with junior athletes, to remain eligible to participate within a USAV junior program.

In 2005, the USAV Coaching Accreditation Program (CAP) also began requiring that candidates for initial certification or re-accreditation at any level pass the same background screen prior to becoming accredited as a USAV-CAP coach. This check must be repeated prior to re-accreditation at the same level (every four years) or for anyone newly accredited at any level.

If a coach who is a USAV-CAP candidate for certification is already a current-year USAV member, then the background screen may have already been completed in accordance with USAV junior coach policy. In this case, no further screening is necessary.

For coaches who are not current members of their USAV Region or who do not have a current background screening on record, a screen must be purchased from USA Volleyball in order to complete the USAV-CAP accreditation process. In this case, background screens for these USAV-CAP candidates will cost the coach a \$25 processing fee, collected at the time of course registration. International coaches wishing to undergo an accepted USAV Background Screen will pay additional fees.

BACKGROUND SCREENING POLICY OF USAV AND ITS REGIONAL VOLLEYBALL ASSOCIATIONS (6/21/13)

It is the policy of the Regional Volleyball Associations (RVAs) that **any club/entity intending to hire or use registered individuals in any sanctioned junior volleyball events and/or activities** (examples of events or activities that can be sanctioned with regional approval are: tournaments, practices, clinics, tryouts, and fundraisers) **will accept and abide by this background screening policy.** The following individuals, 18 years of age or older, will be screened: club directors, club administrators, team reps, coaches, chaperones, and trainers who intend to register, affiliate and/or participate with a junior volleyball club or team in a USAV RVA. Any Junior Tournament Director/Site Director/On-site Tournament Administrator/Manager or official 18 or older will also be screened with the exception of a junior player. Each RVA may also choose to require other members of their organization to submit to and pass background screens in order to affiliate with their organization.

Additionally, the club/entity will enforce the penalties resulting from a negative background screening report. Failure to do so is grounds for automatic suspension of membership privileges to participate in USAV/RVA sanctioned junior events and/or activities. All disqualified individuals have the right to dispute the findings of the background screening directly with the RVA's approved Background Screen Vendor.

The RVAs and/or USAV will not register, or allow to be registered, any individual who refuses to consent to a background screen if he/she intends to affiliate and/or participate with a junior club/team in the RVA or any other regional or national junior level programming.

NOTES:

Junior members are any members under the age of 18. A background screen will not be required for those individuals who will be classified only as junior players or those individuals not registered, affiliated and/or participating with a junior volleyball club or team in an RVA (other than those categories listed above).

For those regions that allow individuals under 18 to be an assistant coach, any individual who is not yet 18 years old and who is in a non-player role affiliated with a junior club must be background screened immediately upon reaching 18 years of age. A 30-day grace period shall apply from the date of the 18th birthday in order to allow time for the background screening to be processed. During the 30-day grace period, the same restrictions apply to the individual as are in place for junior coaches regarding supervision by a qualified adult. It is the responsibility of the individual, club and region to identify the individuals in this situation and to meet the BGS requirement. Upon the conclusion of the 30-day grace period, the individual may not participate in a non-player role affiliated with a junior club unless the background screening requirement is met.

All screens will be good for two membership seasons (maximum of 26 months). **Anyone that fails a background screen cannot reapply for another screen until the following season.** USAV and the RVAs retain the right to require additional background screens at any time, with the exception of reissuing an application that was previously disqualified due to falsification.

THE BACKGROUND SCREEN PROCESS

Every individual required to submit a background screening must complete, sign and date the Consent and Waiver Release Form. Electronic signatures are only accepted on the USAV Online Registration System. The Background Screen Consent and Waiver Release form will be submitted and the applicant cleared before the applicant may participate in RVA/USAV sanctioned junior events and/or activities.

Upon receipt of the above described documents, the USAV/RVA will request that the USAV/RVA's approved vendor perform the background screen.

All information received as a result of a background check will be strictly confidential. Notice of clearance or disqualification for all applicants will be provided to:

1. The designated contact of the RVA that submitted the application
2. USA Volleyball National Office

A notice of automatic disqualification will be sent by email by the USAV/RVA approved Background Screen Vendor to the RVA office. The RVA will provide the approved Background Screen Vendor a contact e-mail for the club director or highest staff member for the hiring entity. The approved Background Screen Vendor will then contact the club/entity to provide notice of the automatic disqualification and request additional contact information for the disqualified individual. The complete profile will be sent by the USAV/RVA approved Background Screen Vendor directly to an automatically disqualified individual using the agreed upon method of delivery.

Along with the profile, the individual will receive a copy of the "Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act" (FCRA) and a notification that the individual is prohibited from participating in USAV/RVA sanctioned junior events and/or activities.

All disqualified individuals have the right to review and dispute the accuracy of the background screening findings directly with the USAV/RVA approved Background Screen Vendor. A disqualified individual **MAY NOT** appeal an automatic disqualification or the results of the findings of the background screen vendor to the RVA and/or USAV. USAV and each RVA is required by the policy to accept the findings of the approved background screen vendor. Individuals automatically disqualified are excluded from participation in any USAV/RVA sanctioned junior events and/or activities.

EFFECTIVE SEPT. 1, 2013, AUTOMATIC DISQUALIFICATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SANCTIONED JUNIOR EVENTS AND/OR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

Anyone found guilty, entering a plea of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere (no contest) regardless of adjudication, or who has received court-directed programs and/or other sentencing directives in lieu of a finding of guilt, for any of the following criminal offenses:

- All sex offenses (regardless of time limit)
- Murder/and homicide (regardless of time limit)
- Felony violence (within the last 10 years)
- Felony drug offenses (within the last 10 years)
- Any misdemeanor violence offenses (within last seven years)
- Any other crimes (not listed) against children (within last seven years)
- Any multiple misdemeanor drug and alcohol offenses, to include, but not limited to, driving while intoxicated (DWI), operating while intoxicated (OWI), operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated (OMVI), driving under the influence [alcohol or other drugs] (DUI), driving under the combined influence of alcohol and/or other drugs, driving under the influence per se or drunk in charge [of a vehicle] (within the last seven years)

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The time frames associated with the categories of crime listed above are calculated based on the date of the offense. **Individuals found to have pending court cases for any of the disqualifying offenses will be disqualified.** If the disposition of the pending case does not meet the criteria for disqualification as listed above, the individual would then be cleared and reinstated. **Falsification of information on any membership application or the consent/release form is grounds for membership revocation or restriction of membership.** Individuals that are automatically disqualified must wait one season before reapplying for affiliation and/or participation with a junior club or team (or to receive a USAV-CAP accreditation).

ENFORCEMENT:

The hiring entity is responsible for ensuring adherence to this policy, and ensuring that those individuals who are disqualified do not participate in USAV/RVA sanctioned junior events and/or activities.

PENALTY:

Failure of a club or entity to request background screens (BGS) or enforce disqualification is cause for the RVA or USAV to impose penalties. The minimum penalty shall be suspension **of all members of the offending club/entity** until the BGS and enforcement requirements are met. Additional measures may include financial penalties and/or extended suspensions against disqualified individuals and/or the club/entity. Information on how to obtain the following necessary background screening forms is included in the "Resources" section at the end of this chapter:

- RVA Background Screening Consent Waiver and Release Form
- USAV-CAP Accreditation Candidate Background Screening Consent Waiver and Release Form

THE LAW AND ATHLETICS

Over the past several years the interest in sport activities as a means to keep one's body in peak performance has greatly increased. The desire to keep one's body in top physical condition has taken many people from the occasional morning jog, to the three-day-a-week aerobics and, for the very serious minded, to long daily workouts.

Being a part of a competitive society, Americans have always had the urge to test their stamina and physical prowess against others to see who is the best. No longer self-satisfied by just working out and seeing the physical results of training, competing against others has become the gauge for determining the effectiveness of training programs and the method for achieving satisfaction for the pain and strain we put ourselves through to be No. 1. All of this leads to a tremendous rise in the number of part-time and professional athletes participating in various individual endurance events and team sports.

The rise in interest in participating in athletics has required that more and more events be sponsored to satisfy the needs of the athletes. As a result, one could probably find some sort of endurance event or competition in any given city or town across the United States on each and every weekend. All of this competition, although healthy for mind and body, is not without detriments. With the increase in participation and events has come an increase in the number of participant and spectator injuries. Many of these injuries have arisen out of the negligence of others resulting in the rapid escalation of lawsuits filed and large monetary awards given.

In the past, athletic participation was virtually immune from civil liability. If one participated in or was a spectator of an athletic event, one assumed the risk involved and thus was barred from any financial recovery. That thinking and immunity has been eroded in today's judicial process.

NOTES:

The primary defenses of assumption of a risk, contributory negligence, and consent have become porous as a result of the high standards that are placed upon the athletic sponsors, promoters, coordinators, coaches, and participants. Current court cases have demonstrated that coaches, trainers, and National Governing Bodies can and will be held responsible for failing to warn athletes or spectators of the inherent risks, dangers, and potential injuries or death that may result from participating in athletic events.

With the erosion of common law defenses and the increase in standards to which people involved in athletics are held, it has become paramount that strategies be implemented to counterattack these trends and improve the overall quality of sporting activities. The key ingredient to minimize potential injuries and resulting litigation effectively is the implementation of specifically designed safety guidelines. It cannot be stressed enough that failure to conduct athletic events with the utmost care will increase the vulnerability of event promoters, directors, coaches, and governing bodies to litigation.

LEGAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL COACHES: *The following represents just some examples of how to meet a coach's duties and responsibilities. In any sport, coaches have both a general and specific legal duty to:*

1. Warn of the inherent risks in volleyball

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Warn athletes of inherent risks
 - Use written notices, releases, videos to warn of risks
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Post signs describing risks
 - Meet with the team and parents to discuss risks
 - Use participation agreements signed by parents and athletes
 - Use films or videotapes to show inherent risks

2. Provide a safe environment

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Greater the risk, the more regular the inspections
 - Develop a facility inspection list for your sport
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - In writing, note hazards of entire facility
 - Develop a written checklist for facilities and equipment
 - Change dangerous conditions and document
 - Give rules for using the facility
 - Consistently monitor environment conditions

3. Properly plan the activity

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Teach skills in correct progression
 - Consider each athlete's developmental level
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Develop a written season plan
 - Test athletes' physical capacity and skill level
 - Adapt plans to individual needs of athletes
 - Keep all records of planning and testing

4. Provide proper instruction

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Teach in accordance with accepted practices
 - Instructional duty cannot be delegated
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Keep current on instructional standards
 - Use customary teaching methods
 - Make instructions clear, complete, consistent
 - Head coach is always responsible for athletes

5. Evaluate students for injury or incapacity

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Ensure the athlete is healthy before the season
 - Determine if injury or illness should stop participation
 - Ensure an injured athlete is ready to return
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Require proof of physical exam

- Follow AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) guidelines for serious conditions
- Keep a written medical history of each athlete
- Use good judgment in deciding if an athlete stays involved
- Get parental and physician's written permission for participation

6. Match and equate players

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Match by size, experience and conditioning
 - Put them in safe situations
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Match by size, maturity, skill and experience
 - Enforce eligibility rules
 - Modify drills if mismatched for some reason
 - Be alert to mismatches by gender

7. Provide adequate and proper equipment

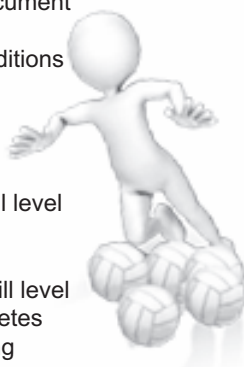
- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Inspect equipment regularly (posts, stand, pads, wires, ropes, etc.)
 - Buy the best and make sure it meets standards set
 - Keep equipment properly and safely stored
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Buy the best you can afford considering age and skill
 - Teach athletes how to fit, use, and inspect properly
 - Inspect equipment regularly
 - Only qualified staff to install, fit, and repair equipment
 - Warn of hazardous equipment (verbal and written)
 - Watch for changes in equipment and document

8. Supervise the activity closely

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Provide general supervision at all times
 - Be immediately accessible, alert to dangerous situations and able to react to emergencies
- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Provide general and specific supervision
 - Know your sport to anticipate danger
 - Use signs and posters supporting supervision
 - Watch for aggressive or reckless behavior

9. Know/provide emergency procedures and first aid

- ✓ Understand your duty
 - Provide or secure appropriate medical assistance
 - Have a written emergency plan
 - Transfer risk to qualified medical personnel or drivers
 - Only use first aid you are qualified to provide (no more, no less)



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- ✓ How to fulfill your duty
 - Protect injured athlete from further harm
 - Provide appropriate First Aid/CPR
 - Attempt to maintain/restore life with CPR when necessary
 - Comfort and reassure the athlete
 - Activate your emergency medical plan and use medical personnel



NOTES:

SOME ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- ✓ Keep adequate written records - **if it's not in writing, then it does not exist!**
 - Pre-season and regular player evaluations
 - Practice and season plans
- ✓ Provide safe transportation – use public carriers if possible
- ✓ Follow due process – protect their constitutional rights
 - Right to fair treatment, freedom of expression, not to be discriminated against, right to confidentiality of medical information
- ✓ Procedures – inform the athletes of violations and penalties, and allow athletes to present their sides; keep written record of findings
- ✓ Proper training of coaches
 - An untrained coach increases the risk of injury and lawsuits
 - Make sure all assistants are qualified and certified to coach
 - Certification doesn't guarantee safety
 - Stay current – get/provide continuing education
- ✓ General notes on Waiver and Participation Agreements
 - Waivers may have limited legal value, since:
 - o Minors cannot enter into contracts and parents/guardians cannot waive the minor's right to sue
 - o Courts reject contracts to waive negligence
 - o Frequently considered a violation of public policy to require a release prior to participation in sport
 - However, valid Participation Agreements require a written and signed acknowledgement that parents and kids **do**:
 - o Understand the inherent risks or dangers
 - o Appreciate the consequence of participation
 - o Know the rules and procedures of the sport **and that...**
 - o Knowing all this, they still request to participate in the sport

THE ELEMENTS OF NEGLIGENCE

The single factor that probably leads to more litigation resulting from participant or spectator injury is the limited knowledge coaches, trainers, administrators and directors have concerning the elements constituting negligence. A better understanding of how civil law works will better prepare coaches to foresee potential negligence and thus take steps to minimize the loss that may result.

Four key elements must be present to bring a cause of action for negligence:

1. A duty or obligation must be owed to another, which requires one party to conform to a certain standard or conduct for the protection of the other party from unreasonable harm
2. A breach of that duty to conform to the standards must be observed
3. An injury must arise from the breach of duty
4. It must be shown that the breach of duty was the proximate cause of the injury

In addition, monetary damages are usually warranted as compensation for the injury.

A commonly accepted "rule" in respect to negligence is the "*Reasonable and Prudent Person*" doctrine. This means that if an individual acted in a manner that was consistent with how a reasonable and prudent person would act in the same or similar situation, then a cause of action for negligence would be unfounded.

With the increase in sports technology, medicine, and equipment, the foreseeability of injury or loss has been increased. Thus, individuals involved in sporting activities have been held to a higher level of supervision and accountability.

There are no specific criteria for determining negligence. Every cause of action must stand on its own merits. Accidents do occur, and in every instance, someone could be held negligent for that accident. It has always been incumbent upon the plaintiff to prove the elements of negligence. There must be sufficient evidence that the alleged negligence was the proximate cause of the loss and that no other intervening factors contributed to the loss. Courts have not been holding defendants liable where substantial evidence proves that the defendant acted with prudence and caution in performing his/her duties.

THE DEFENSES AGAINST NEGLIGENCE

Although declining in effectiveness, there are generally accepted defenses against a cause of negligence. The following are the most widely used defenses (check to see which your own state accepts):

1. **Failure to prove one or more of the elements** of negligence necessary to recover damages.
2. **Assumption of Risk** is one of the oldest defenses against a cause of action for negligence and is one that has probably deteriorated the most over the years. When one voluntarily assumes the risk of injury or harm arising from the conduct of others, he or she cannot recover if the harm or injury actually occurs. Erosion of the Assumption of Risk defense has occurred as a result of the higher standard of care required of a defendant in advising the plaintiff, prior to injury or harm, of the potential risks involved in participating in the event.
3. **Last Clear Chance.** This defense puts the burden of responsibility on the plaintiff as the plaintiff had the "last clear chance" to avoid the injury or harm. This defense was only held to be valid if the harm or injury was foreseeable by the plaintiff and the plaintiff could have taken action to avoid the harm or injury.
4. **Contributory Negligence.** This defense varies by state and prevents a cause of action in negligence if the plaintiff, even in the slightest degree, contributed to his or her own harm or injury. With this defense, courts will evaluate the standard of conduct required of the defendant based upon the age, physical capacity, sex and training of the plaintiff before making a decision as to fault.
5. **Comparative Negligence.** This is a relatively new defense and one that was established by state statute to offset the unfairness associated with the contributory negligence defense, which barred a plaintiff from recovery even though he/she may have been only 1% at fault. Under the comparative negligence doctrine, recovery for damages is pro-rated based upon the percentage of fault associated with the plaintiff. Unlike contributory negligence, a plaintiff may be 1-49% negligent and still recover damages from the defendant. The plaintiff's percentage of fault to recover under comparative negligence varies by state and 40 states have enacted some form of comparative negligence statute. Typically, a plaintiff with 50 percent or more of the fault will be barred from recovery.

FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO NEGLIGENCE

There are five fundamental factors that contribute to a cause of action of negligence. It is important that coaches be very aware of these factors and take steps to minimize or eliminate these factors whenever possible.

1. **Failure to Warn** – A great deal of responsibility to warn participants of any potential hazards associated with the event is being placed on the event director or official by the courts. Knowing conditions of the facility and making these conditions known to the participants prior to the event are essential. Failure to warn of hazardous or potentially hazardous conditions, especially when known, is the No. 1 factor leading to large monetary damages being awarded to injured athletes. This includes coaches warning their athletes of potential risks associated with participation in the sport as well.

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2. **Ignorance of the Rules** – Someone once said "Ignorance is bliss," meaning that if one was not aware of the rules then how could one be held accountable? In today's litigious society, ignorance of rules is not an acceptable basis on which decisions are made. It is vitally important to the success of any sporting event that all parties involved know the rules.
3. **Knowingly Ignoring the Rules** – To ignore the rules under which a sporting event is to be conducted is to ignore safety. USA Volleyball has a specific set of rules designed to ensure the safety of participants and spectators of the sport. USA Volleyball's No. 1 priority is to ensure the safety of all those involved in the sport of volleyball. To ignore these rules not only subjects the participants to potential harm, but exposes USA Volleyball to a great deal of liability.
4. **Failure to Act** – Success of any sporting event is dependent upon the people directing the event to respond quickly to problems and act in a "proactive" manner instead of a "reactive" manner. Unfortunately, too many event directors or officials tend to react only after a tragedy or serious injury occurs. They react to crisis when prevention is the key. They fail to:
 - a. Assign competent personnel to supervise, maintain, inspect and repair the court or equipment
 - b. Review all aspects of the event prior to tournament, with supervising personnel to ensure a coordinated effort
 - c. Conduct clinics for officials, safety teams and medical teams.
5. **Money** – Insufficient funds to conduct a safe sporting event properly often prevents action. The lack of funds or unwillingness to spend money leads to:
 - a. Reduction in safety and services
 - b. Not training or hiring competent personnel
 - c. Not securing safe equipment
 - d. Not inspecting and maintaining equipment and facilities

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USAV INSURANCE HANDBOOK

The *USAV INSURANCE HANDBOOK*, produced by Entertainment and Sports Insurance Experts, Inc. (ESIX), is a valuable reference and organizational tool for USA Volleyball Regional Commissioners. The handbook provides an insurance phone directory, a recap of the current USA Volleyball insurance program, claims procedures, risk management information, and information on directors' and officers' insurance. Information from this handbook on the law and athletics appears on the following pages of this *IMPACT Manual*. The majority of the handbook is online under the "Membership" heading, then on the "Forms & Information" page at www.usavolleyball.org.

From time to time, additional information will be supplied and posted on the website for coaches to download and insert into their *INSURANCE HANDBOOK*. Hopefully, this information will be of help to all in managing the insurance program within each Region.

It's recommended that you keep this *INSURANCE HANDBOOK* with you when attending any USA Volleyball approved or sanctioned events, as it provides "Incident Reports" as well as "Medical Claims Reports" to be used in the event of an injury or liability/loss.

Other key documents for coaches are the Summary of Insurance and the Summary of Sports Accident Insurance. Be sure you fully understand the Claims Reporting Procedures in the handbook. An Incident Form must be sent first to the RVA; the Medical Claims Form goes directly to the insurance company.

INSURANCE COVERAGE:

No coach should coach without Insurance. USAV Members do have Liability and Sport Accident coverage for sanctioned events. If an incident occurs, contact your Region office for the current year's forms (Medical Claim Form and/or Incident Reports) since the contact information for submission may change from year to year. Incident Reports must be filed with the Region office to initiate an insurance claim so that the Region office is aware of any incident occurring at their sanctioned events/activities. Usually a tournament director would complete and submit it; however, if the injury happened at a practice, the club or coach might need to submit it. Both forms may be found on the USAV website at www.usavolleyball.org; click on the "Membership" heading, then on "Forms & Information" links, though contacting the Region is the best first step, as no claim may be processed without an incident report on file. The Medical Claim Form must be sent directly to the USAV insurance company. **Remember that one of the most frequent claims against the USAV insurance policy is for floor damage caused by using improper types of floor tape!** A handout on proper types of floor tape is posted on the USAV website ([IMPACT Student Resources page](#)) and can also be obtained from your RVA Office.

Insurance certificate requests (if required by a facility) are handled through the Region. Additional insured status or other requests should also be communicated to the Region administrator. USAV Liability Insurance is **per occurrence**, unlike other organizations which, even if they have coverage, is a single aggregate policy – meaning once the limit of the policy is used up, there is no insurance available for others who may need the coverage. In some cases these policies may even be covering other sports organizations, clubs, sponsors and others under the same pool of "aggregate" insurance money!

USAV provides Sport Accident medical insurance to USAV members if injured during participation in any sanctioned USAV event (such as practices or tournaments). For USAV insurance purposes, a sanctioned event includes direct team travel to/from sanctioned practices and competitions. One caution here – coaches should not just assume that their practices or other team activities are sanctioned! Coaches can inquire with the Region about what needs to be done to apply for sanction. This coverage is secondary for those with insurance (with \$250 deductible) and primary with a \$1,000 deductible for those without. While the coverage may not apply in the case of an average sprained ankle, it becomes more important, for example, in a more serious knee injury situation.

USAV Sport Accident Insurance will **NOT** cover an illness or sickness (such as appendicitis), nor will it cover re-injury and/or pre-existing conditions, overuse ("wear and tear") injuries, or any injuries occurring other than on designated competition premises during a sanctioned event.

It also does not cover suicide or attempted suicide, fighting (unless an innocent victim), hernias, non-prescription drugs, or expenses incurred outside the United States. Whatever additional insurance coverage you possess, make sure you have an understanding of what is and is not covered.

WAIVERS

USA Volleyball has developed a "Waiver, Release of Liability and Indemnity Agreement," which must be signed by each participating coach and athlete, or if the athlete is a minor then also by the athlete's parent or guardian. A note to club directors here – **you cannot sign a coach's or athlete's waiver for them**. This could constitute fraud and invalidate the waiver if you do! EACH member must sign his/her own waiver forms.

The waiver includes:

- An acknowledgment of the risk involved in playing a sport
- Agreement by participant to follow the rules and regulations of the sport of volleyball
- A statement of the USA Volleyball Participant Code of Conduct essential to participating in the sport
- Waiver of liability provision
- Indemnification and Hold Harmless provision

This agreement is invaluable in assigning responsibility to the athlete or parent/guardian and for providing good public relations by advising the athlete and/or parent/ guardian of the risks of injury. It is important to remember that there is no foolproof way for USA Volleyball, program directors or others to transfer responsibility for conducting a reasonably safe event. Reliance on a waiver or "hold harmless" agreement without utilizing good common safety practices in conducting an event is the equivalent of putting a fire out with gasoline. It just will not work and will no doubt make matters worse than they would have been.

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THE WAIVER AND RELEASE – JUST HOW IMPORTANT IS IT?

A major concern with many, if not all, sporting event directors or promoters is how to conduct an event so that it is both profitable and, more importantly, enjoyable for the participants as well as the spectators. The various demands placed on the event directors and promoters from sponsors, participants, governmental agencies, insurance companies, etc., has taken most of the enjoyment out of conducting the event and turned the activity into a business. The days of getting a group of people together with similar sporting interests for some good old competition and fun has been replaced with the business need to advertise and promote the event, raise sponsorship money for prizes, fight with municipalities over securing a permit, find and train volunteers to help conduct the event, and the constant need to continue looking over one's shoulder to see what attorney is following to serve legal papers over some frivolous claim.

Since it has now become a business and no longer just a game, how can event directors or promoters shelter themselves from the ravages of litigation or claims for damages that can or will arise out of the business of conducting a sporting event? Most people respond by saying they will buy insurance and look at no other alternatives. If you are one of those people, keep looking over your shoulder because the "big one" is about to bite and it's going to hurt. Insurance is just one aspect of an overall process called Risk Management that each and every event director and promoter should be practicing on a daily basis.

The process of Risk Management is to evaluate the potential areas of the event that could cause a financial loss and develop action plans to help minimize or eliminate the potential for loss. Risk Management is a dynamic process requiring continuing observation and review. The purpose of this article is on one element of the process called Loss Control – that element is the proper use of Waivers and Releases.

Probably the one single-most important risk management action that an event director or promoter can take to shelter themselves from litigation by participants is the use of a Waiver and Release. By using a valid waiver and release form, event directors are advising the participant of the hazards of the sport and are placing more of the burden of responsibility squarely on their shoulders. USA Volleyball has developed a valid waiver and release that is believed to be upheld in most, if not all, jurisdictions. Using a waiver and release that is valid and enforceable provides one with a greater degree of security than one that is not. It is for this reason that event directors and promoters should be using the USA Volleyball Waiver and Release in each and every event.

Using the USA Volleyball Waiver and Release is one of many risk management techniques that can be used. It is not the total answer to solving litigation problems but its use, coupled with a comprehensive insurance program, doing what a "reasonable and prudent" person would do, and abiding by the rules of the sport, will go a long way in minimizing litigation and claims problems.

USAV encourages all tournament directors to use the USA Volleyball Waiver and Release as the standard. By complying with a set of standards, as evidenced by the event sanctioning process, USAV is able to work with all parties in establishing safe and enjoyable events.

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SUMMARY OF EFFECTIVE RISK MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Although not all-inclusive, the following list of risk management recommendations, if implemented, will help to prevent situations that may lead to injuries and subsequent litigation.

1. Warn, in specific terms, the athlete and parent/guardian of all the possible risks inherent in the sport activity in which they are participating.
2. Consistently use a waiver and release of liability that has been prepared by a competent attorney, knowledgeable of sports law; never allow participants to participate without reading and signing a waiver.
3. Establish an effective medical plan for accident emergencies.
4. Establish a plan for the proper supervision of the athletes while participating in the sporting event.
5. Follow all the USAV sanctioning guidelines for the proper set up and conduct of an event.
6. Affect a public relations program with all parties involved in the event, especially with parents and athletes.
7. Conduct ongoing clinics to keep officials and volunteers apprised of changes in rules and new techniques.
8. Conduct periodic safety audits; inspect equipment and facilities for any possible hazards; keep records.
9. Implement an Approach to Remedy a Risk
 - ✓ Eliminate risk by removing hazard or dropping the activity
 - ✓ Avoid risk by taking steps to protect athletes
 - ✓ Accept the risk (benefits outweigh risks)
 - ✓ Transfer the risk:
 - Hire a professional driver
 - Have legal liability insurance
 - Have a participant agreement
 - Can't transfer legal duties, but **CAN transfer some risk**

INJURY PREVENTION AND FIRST AID

Every coach owes the duty to their athletes to both do what they can to prevent injuries from occurring and to apply the proper first aid measures should an injury occur in a practice or competition. However, the USA Volleyball/RVA *IMPACT Manual* is not designed to certify coaches in any way in the areas of athletic training or sports medicine, other than to inform them of the need for training in this area.

A July 9, 2010, *USA Today* article titled, "In School Sports, Make Safety Part of the Game," by Kim Painter, reported that girls' volleyball was the safest in comparison with the female sports listed – highest was soccer, then basketball and third was softball. The National Federation of High Schools study of girls' high school (team) sports injury reported that for the school year 2015-2016 volleyball was first in safety (1.19 overall incidences per 1,000 exposures), with softball 2nd (1.30), followed by basketball (2.14) and soccer (2.59).

Most injuries in volleyball occurred 1-2 hours into practice sessions (56.5%) with most associated with blocking skills performance (27 percent). During competition, most injuries occurred during the 2nd (35.3 percent) and 3rd (27.8 percent) sets (followed by 17 percent during warm up), and were more prevalent in middle front players (30.7 percent).

FIRST AID

Studies have shown that the highest incidence of injuries in volleyball are of the strains and sprains type. To make sure coaches are prepared to handle any injury situation, coaches and club directors can contact their local Red Cross agency to set up standard First Aid, CPR and AED courses for their volleyball programs. Sport First Aid courses may also be taken on-line from **ASEP**, the **NFHS**, or directly from the American Red Cross. The NFHS and ASEP courses are accessible from the links under the **Education/Coaching Education Programs/Indoor Courses/CAP Recertification/Online Modules** links on the www.usavolleyball.org website.

CONCUSSIONS IN VOLLEYBALL

Although concussions in our sport are fairly rare, USAV has been proactive in addressing the topic of concussion injuries in our sport. They do happen...a player dives for a ball and her head makes contact with the floor, the standards or another player. Or a player gets hit in the head with a serve or attack. One 2015 Canadian study estimated that 80 percent of head hits/concussions happen during warm up. *The NFHS 2015-16 School Year Report* indicated concussion/head injuries represented 23-26% of all reported injuries, and occurred most often in relation to digging skill performance (24%) and more so in competition than in practices.

INJURIES BY THE NUMBERS*

Injury rates in high school sports
(Per 1,000 practice/competition exposures):

GIRLS TEAM SPORTS

•Soccer	2.59
•Basketball	2.14
•Softball	1.30
• Volleyball	1.19

NFHS 2015-2016 School Year Report

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The Zackery Lystedt Law, passed in 2009, was the first “warn, recognize and return to play” legislation implemented in the country. Since then, 49 of 50 states (and the District of Columbia) have passed laws making it mandatory for youth and high school athletes to obtain a written release from their doctor before being allowed to return to activity. The Centers for Disease Control and USA Volleyball have made available a set of materials for distribution to athletes, parents and coaches detailing signs and symptoms of concussion head injuries, along with a set of guidelines for the athlete’s return to practice and competition.

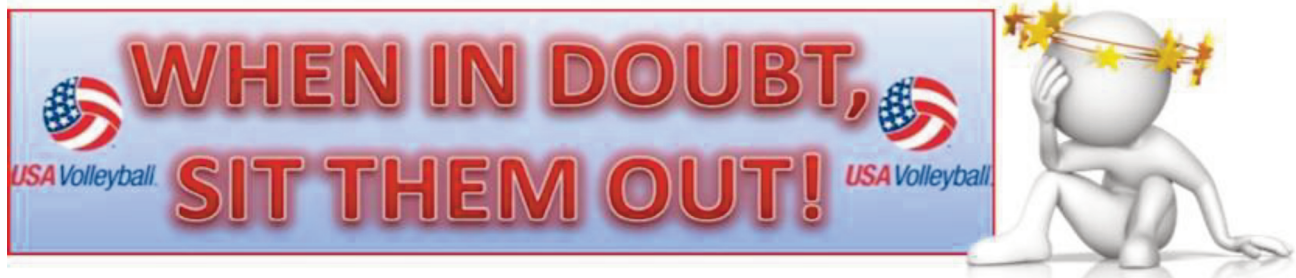
In addition, the CDC has created a free app designed to educate coaches, parents, and players about concussion safety. Designed for parents and coaches, the new HEADS UP Concussion app provides instant access to information to help spot a possible concussion, respond and help athletes return to play safely. Download the free HEADS UP Concussion and Helmet Safety app here: <http://go.usa.gov/3wedR>.

Concussions Incidence in High School Sports Injury rate per 100,000 athletic exposures in high school athletics:

Football	87
Boys’ Ice Hockey	68
Girls’ Soccer	58
Boys’ Lacrosse	48
Girls’ Lacrosse	37
Boys’ Wrestling	40
Girls’ Basketball	37
Boys’ Soccer	29
Girls’ Field Hockey	27
Girls’ Softball	20
Boys’ Basketball	20
NFHS/High School RIOTM 2008-14	

A concussion can be defined as a mild traumatic brain injury. Neurosurgeon and concussion expert Robert Cantu has stated that even if an athlete suffers a mild or first-time concussion, the athlete needs to be free of all symptoms (such as dizziness, nausea, vision issues or headaches) for at least a week while at rest and during physical exertion, before returning to practices or games. Cantu’s (and USA Volleyball’s) mantra is, “*When in doubt, sit them out.*”

Concussion safety materials (and links to those on the CDC website) can be found on the USA Volleyball website under



the [Education Heading and then the Health and Safety tab](#). Club directors and coaches are highly encouraged to download and print out these valuable materials and distribute to their athletes and parents. Coaches are also encouraged to keep a list of the signs and symptoms on their clipboards at practices and games. It is also suggested that clubs/coaches address this topic in annual parent/player meetings. NFHSLearn.com also has free online courses on athlete health and safety.

SPORTS MEDICINE RESOURCES

For additional information, contact the following organizations:

- **American College of Sports Medicine**
Indianapolis, IN
(317) 637-9200 www.acsm.org
- **American Medical Association**
Chicago, IL (800) 621-8335 www.ama-assn.org
- **American Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine**
Rosemont, IL (847) 292-4900 www.sportsmed.org
- **National Center for Disease Control (CDC)**
Atlanta, GA (800) 232-4636
www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports
[HEADS UP Concussion App](#)
[HEADS UP Concussion Online Course](#)
- **NFHSLearn Free** online courses on Concussion, Heat Illness, Creating Safe and Respectful Environments www.nfhslearn.com
- **National Athletic Trainers Association**
Dallas, TX (214) 637-6282 www.nata.org
- **The President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition**
Rockville, MD (240) 276-9567
www.fitness.gov or
www.presidentschallenge.org
- **American Medical Society for Sports Medicine**
Overland Park, KS
(913) 327-1415 www.amssm.org
- **United States Anti-Doping Agency**
Colorado Springs, CO www.usada.org/ or
www.truesport.org/resources
- **USOC SafeSport Program** SafeSport toolkits for use by clubs, coaches, parents and athletes, plus additional valuable resources
www.safesport.org or www.teamusa.org/stopabuse

NUTRITION AND DISORDERED EATING

Athletes who try to meet their own expectations of body image, as well as the perceived expectations of coaches, parents, peers and society, may create unhealthy or disordered eating habits, which the athlete thinks he/she is in control of, but is not. Those athletes who get caught in this dangerous web of unhealthy dieting can quickly find themselves in cycles of disordered eating from which they can't escape. If this cycle is allowed to continue, disordered eating may become an eating disorder. The coach may or may not be first to realize the situation, and once a problem is identified, also may not be the primary professional needed to help the athlete deal with it. Many times the coach is actually part of the problem, especially if "making weight" is emphasized, or if seemingly "innocent" or "joking" comments are made about a player's weight or appearance.

If we look at it as a continuum of behaviors then disordered eating habits represent the far left of the line, and eating disorders appear on the far right. While the presence of one or two signs or symptoms does not necessarily indicate an eating disorder, they may be early clues to the creation of disordered eating habits.

Coaches should inform parents if they feel unhealthy eating or lack of eating nutritiously is an issue with the athlete, and consult with a health care professional versed in the field of nutrition and addictions for advice on how to intervene. Denial and depression are stages that typically occur before recovery can take place. Coaches can have an effect on disordered eating habits by educating their athletes on fueling properly for effective volleyball performance, but once these behaviors move further to the right on the continuum, coaches will have less effect on **eating disorders**.



⇒ General Symptoms and Signs of Eating Disorders

- Being secretive about eating habits and/or unwilling to discuss eating habits
- A substantial increase in exercise levels
- Intense fear of becoming obese
- Feeling or perception of being fat even when emaciated
- Weight loss greater than 15 percent of appropriate weight in a relatively short period of time (months)
- Refusal to maintain appropriate weight
- Loss of menstrual period (due to insufficient body fat) for more than three months

⇒ Eating Disorder Dangers

- Loss of menstrual period = decrease in bone density
- Higher risk of stress fractures and other injuries
- Dehydration, cramps, fainting, convulsions
- Muscle wasting, reduced strength and stamina

⇒ Signs and Symptoms of Anorexia

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant weight loss • Distorted body image • Intense fear of becoming fat • Preoccupation with food, calories and weight • Wearing baggy or layered clothing • Hyperactivity • Relentless, excessive exercise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social withdrawal; avoiding food-related activities • Mood swings • Growth of fine body hair • Hair loss, brittle nails • Water retention • Food rituals • Anxiety at meals • Sensitivity to cold |
|---|--|

⇒ Signs and Symptoms of Bulimia

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disappearance after meals and secretive behavior • Swollen glands, puffy face, eroded tooth enamel • Noticeable weight loss or gain • Excessive concern about weight • Strict dieting followed by eating binges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sores, calluses, bloodshot eyes • Weakness, dizziness • Depressive moods • Increasing criticism of own body |
|---|---|

For more information regarding eating disorders, visit this website: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org.

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FUELING FOR VOLLEYBALL ATHLETES

It is part of a coach's responsibility to expose his/her athletes to what good eating habits are all about and hopefully help them avoid a disordered eating situation. USA Volleyball has a number of resources to help coaches do this. USAV's Sports Medicine and Performance Commission (SMPC) created a one-page guide to good volleyball nutrition, which is available on the USAV website and may be downloaded, printed and distributed to your athletes and their parents.

Coaches who want to learn more about proper nutrition for volleyball athletes may want to seek out a local nutritionist to come in and address this topic with their athletes and their parents. There are also several additional resources listed at the end of this chapter and posted online on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print out the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website – click on the [Education/Coaching-Education-Programs/Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources](#).

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #2- Safety and Injury Prevention](#)
- [2015-2016 USAV INSURANCE HANDBOOK and FORMS](#)
- [2015-2016 USAV RVA and CAP – Background Screening Consent Waiver and Release Form](#)
- [What To Do After An Ankle Sprain](#), by William W. Briner, Jr., MD, FACSM, USAV SMPC
- [Zachery Lystedt Law – Concussion Compliance Handout](#)
- [NFHS Free Online A Guide to Sports Nutrition Course](#) (www.nfhslearn.com)
- [NFHS Free Online Concussion in Sports Course](#) (www.nfhslearn.com)
- [NFHS Free Online Heat Illness in Sports Course](#)
- Trainers take giant leap in establishing head trauma protocol, By Marty Maciaszek, *Chicago Daily Herald* columnist
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Concussion Handouts](#) (www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports)
- [United States Anti Doping Agency](#) (request *Printed Athlete Handbook* from the Outreach tab)
- [Injury Prevention through Proper Reaction, Reading and Anticipation](#), by John Kessel
- [Offside Hitting](#), by John Kessel
- [Your Health: In school sports, make safety part of the game](#), By Kim Painter, *USA TODAY*, 7/9/2010
- Sports Safety Video from National Center for Sports Safety: Topics Covered – Heat Illness, Concussions, Heart and Genetic Disorders, Pre-participation Physical Exams, Staph Infections/MRSA (www.sportssafety.org)
- Nutrition for Volleyball Athletes - Poster, USAV-SMPC, 2006.
- Athletes and Eating Disorders (from www.edreferral.com)
- F – as in Fat (view full report) (www.healthymamericans.org/reports/obesity2010/)
- Eating Disorders websites: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org or www.edreferral.com
- USAV Floor Tape Handout
- [Concussions and Female Athletes Documentary](#)
- [Volleyball and Concussions – Neurocognitive Testing](#) By Online Volleyball Blog Jan. 26, 2009

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CHAPTER 3: SAFESPORT

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 specifically adds content approved and required by the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) and USA Volleyball's risk management organization, ESIX (Entertainment & Sports Insurance Experts), in order for USAV to grant the additional SafeSport course certification following completion of USAV IMPACT.

WHAT IS SAFESPORT?

We know that athletes will perform better, reach higher, and get more out of their sport if they feel safe participating. SafeSport seeks to create healthy and supportive sport environments for all participants. Through education, resources, and training, SafeSport helps members of the sport community recognize, reduce, and respond to misconduct in sport. SafeSport:

- ⇒ Is a comprehensive nationwide program initiated and created by the USOC SafeSport Initiative, focusing on:
 - Prevention of abuse in sport
 - Creating safe and fun environments for participants
- ⇒ Provides strategies to help recognize, reduce and respond to child abuse in sport:
 - Screening of adults affiliated with youth sport programs
 - Education and training about child abuse prevention
 - Clear procedures for reporting child abuse
 - Information on when, how and where to report suspected child abuse
- ⇒ Requires participation of all National Governing Bodies (NGBs for U.S. Olympic Sports):
 - Collaboration with local clubs and grassroots organizations for developing safety plans
 - With this USOC template, USA Volleyball has developed a SafeSport program for our members

WHY IS SAFESPORT IMPORTANT?

We all have a role to play in creating a healthy setting for sport. SafeSport helps raise awareness about misconduct in sport, promote open dialogue, and provide training and resources. When we work as a team, we can build a game plan to make sport safe—for everyone.

The SafeSport materials and resources will help your organization create a culture that encourages safety, openness and disclosure. By implementing the appropriate policies and procedures, Regions, clubs and teams can fulfill their obligations to coaches, athletes and parents.

From our youngest participants to our most elite performers, mistreatment of an athlete serves no productive purpose in sport. Even elite athletes are not immune to mistreatment. In fact, they are actually at a higher risk for nearly every type of misconduct. Research shows that athletes skilled enough to play college sports are two times more likely than high school athletes to have witnessed or experienced hazing by teammates and coaches. A large majority of advanced competitive athletes also report enduring some form of emotional abuse during their careers. Studies also suggest there are higher rates of sexual abuse among Olympic athletes than among other groups. We all strive to reduce any kind of misconduct in sport; however, it is just as important to respond appropriately when a policy violation, misconduct or child sexual abuse is disclosed.



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USA VOLLEYBALL'S SAFESPORT PROGRAM

USAV was one of the first NGBs to embrace the USOC SafeSport program and goals proactively. Just because we haven't had major problems in the past, we must not make the mistake of thinking misconduct doesn't now or won't happen in volleyball in the future.

We know that before the age of 18, between six and 13 percent of competitive athletes experience some form of sexual abuse or assault within their sport. That's as many as one out of every eight athletes and, as mentioned above, the numbers may be even greater for elite athletes. If we think about this in terms of our average junior volleyball club teams, that means that probably one to two of those athletes on each team falls into this statistic.

USA Volleyball strives to create a community of true professionals and exceptional role models, and it's precisely that professionalism we're counting on to keep our athletes safe and competition in our sport healthy. What can we do as volleyball professionals to reduce misconduct from happening? First and foremost, we must educate ourselves so that we can take action to reduce the chances of any misconduct happening, and if it does occur we will know how to respond appropriately. That is why the IMPACT curriculum has stressed professional standards of behavior (Codes of Conduct/Ethics) since the program was created. That is also where the SafeSport Program comes in.

USAV has long had policies defining and prohibiting misconduct by adults affiliated with junior club programs...and has taught this information in IMPACT and CAP/Beach CAP curriculums. USAV has also been the frontrunner among youth sport organizations when it comes to Codes of Conduct/Ethics and Background Screening requirements.

With SafeSport, we now have a new focus on:

- Awareness, education and training
 - Indoor and Beach IMPACT and CAP courses
 - USOC's SafeSport online course (at no cost to USAV members)
 - Age-specific materials for athletes
 - USAV SafeSport educational and training materials for clubs and parents
 - Policies on travel, social media, mobile and electronic communications
- Screening of staff and volunteers
- Reporting concerns of abuse
- Monitoring and supervision
- Enforcement of policies and penalties

USAV'S STANCE ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, HARASSMENT AND ABUSE

USA Volleyball continues to be a leader among youth sport organizations in protecting its young athletes from harassment and abuse of all types. In the summer of 2010, USA Volleyball created a special Commission on Athlete Safety to study the ways USAV could improve upon the already extensive safeguards in place for all aspects of athlete safety. The result was the adoption of the *USOC SafeSport Manual*, website and online SafeSport certification course for educating coaches, administrators, athletes and parents. USAV has also launched its own SafeSport Resources section (under the Education header tab) at www.usavolleyball.org.

The inclusion of this SafeSport material means coaches are able to receive both an IMPACT certification and a USAV/USOC SafeSport certification with completion of this single clinic. Of course, coaches may still take the 90-minute free online SafeSport Course if they wish (<http://safesport.org/take-the-training/>).

A COACH'S NIGHTMARE – AN ACCUSATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR MOLESTATION

One of the single most devastating accusations that can be leveled against a coach or any adult working in youth sport is that of sexual abuse or molestation of team members. Whether one is guilty of the charge or not, the mere accusation of child abuse can severely ruin an individual's reputation. These types of claims make great "press" in the newspaper and are often the talk of the town once made public.

Once accused of being a "child molester" or "pedophile," it is very difficult to overcome the stigma, even if totally exonerated of all charges. It is for this reason that a great deal of personal care and protection should be taken to minimize placing yourself, your club, the RVA, or USA Volleyball in a position of having to defend against a devastating claim.

Child abuse can happen in any number of ways and is not limited to the physical touching of a child. Claims can arise out of a verbal utterance of sexual content, by over-disciplining a player in practice, from the improper use of an auto, from negligent supervision, improper coaching or instruction, or supplying minors with alcohol. It is not uncommon for

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coaches or managers to be guilty of one or more of these activities unknowingly.

So, how can USA Volleyball or its coaches/managers/volunteers protect against such accusations? How can the Association, its Regions, or clubs guard against allowing known pedophiles, “closet” pedophiles, or others with serious criminal histories from associating with junior players and exposing the players to undo harm?

These are difficult questions to answer due to the various legal issues, rights of privacy issues, and organizational issues that come into play regarding this subject. Some common sense approaches to this problem can be addressed that would go a long way in minimizing this problem.

A CAUTIONARY TALE FOR YOUNG COACHES COACHING YOUTH TEAMS

This is a real situation that developed a few years ago and was contributed by a USAV IMPACT Instructor:

A young male coach of rather impressive visual appeal had several players on his young female junior club team that were completely infatuated with him. Things got to the point where the coach felt that this very much NOT mutual attraction was preventing these particular players from being able to concentrate and improve as individual athletes. Since he could not remove himself from the team, he discussed it with his club director and they decided to move the players in question to another team where there was no such distraction. At first they were angry and resented him for it, but as the season went on, he felt they began to grow as players.

The young male coach in the above tale found himself in a situation that is all too common ... his young players had developed a crush on him. He recognized it as such and handled it in a very mature way.

Such situations may be flattering to a coach, especially to one so close in age to his athletes. However, if this young man had allowed things to continue and perhaps escalate, he could have put himself in a very uncomfortable, and perhaps unethical and illegal, situation. This may have affected the lives of the coach, the players in question, as well as the rest of the athletes on that team. Instead, he and his club director “nipped it in the bud” and avoided a potentially serious scenario from developing.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

The *Volunteers for Children Act*, signed into law in 1998, captures the importance of preventative measures that must be taken by sports organizations with regard to abuse. Under this law, if a volunteer or employee of the organization sexually molests a child in his or her care – and it can be shown that the molester had been previously convicted of a relevant crime elsewhere in the U.S. – then the organization may be held liable for negligent hiring practices.

HOW TO PROTECT THE USAV, THE REGION, OR THE CLUB

Create and adopt a sexual abuse and molestation policy statement that is universal within the organization that includes the following provisions:

- A. Any adult with a legally documented history of child molestation, physical abuse, or other criminal activity that would pose harm to members of the organization will be excluded from membership participation.
- B. Establish a policy of screening potential coaches, managers, or volunteers by conducting comprehensive criminal background checks prior to their involvement in the program. The background check should include: social security verification, address history, and a local and national search of criminal records and sex offender registries. It is

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important that all misdemeanors and felonies be included in this search as often serious crimes or felonies are pled down to lesser crimes or misdemeanors. Knowledge that such a background check is required is often helpful in keeping pedophiles and other predators from infiltrating the organization. This activity would require the permission of the individual before conducting a background check.

- C. Establish a policy or procedure that limits who and what information is made available as a result of the background check. Confidentiality is extremely important and any discussions relating to this information should be limited to those individuals who have “a need to know.” It is recommended that this responsibility rest with a board member of the organization to ensure discretion and confidentiality.
- D. Establish a training or awareness program for current and new coaches, managers or volunteers regarding abuse and molestation issues. To develop procedures or rules is only half the battle. The organization needs to inform, remind, and train its members continually in order for the procedures or rules to be truly effective.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

As a coach, manager, or volunteer, you can minimize your risk by not putting yourself in a position that could lead to a claim of abuse or molestation. This is often times easier said than done. Some rules to live by would include:

- A. **Never coach alone.** Always coach with at least one other adult present. If you do not have an assistant coach, encourage a player's parent to assist in or monitor the practice.
- B. **Never encourage or allow players to share a room with a coach** without another adult present.
- C. Avoid **physical touching** in demonstrating a technique, concept or drill. Use another coach or parent as the model.
- D. **Avoid transporting players in your vehicle** by yourself. When transporting players, obey all traffic laws and require the use of seat belts.
- E. **Refrain from giving one-to-one coaching or counseling** without another adult present.
- F. **Routinely communicate with parents** concerning their sons or daughters. Address discipline or coaching problems promptly with the parents and the player. Let the parents know what the outcomes will be if change is not fostered.
- G. **Be observant and provide proper supervision** of the practice or game. Do not depend on players to be responsible for their activities in your absence.
- H. If your club director allows it, and if you use social media outlets to communicate with your team members, **your page and communications should be open to all.** Encourage and accept your club's coaches, directors and parents to be “friended” so they can check-in at any time, post communications concerning only club info (not personal), do not post photos without club/director/parent/athlete permission, if you have a personal page, do not co-mingle the two, and follow established club/RVA guidelines.

Following these types of rules will keep you from having to defend yourself against an unwarranted claim of abuse or molestation. Whether it is feasible to implement these personal rules or policies for the USAV is solely dependent upon the effort and concern placed by the USAV, RVA, club or its members in minimizing this exposure. For an organization or its members to ignore or downplay the potential risks of abuse or molestation accusations poses a tremendous threat to the overall organization. “Sticking our heads in the sand” and only dealing with this potential problem when it occurs is not the solution. We do not want to find ourselves in “damage control” after the fact, but rather want to be in control and prevent the damage from ever happening. Ultimately, we want to protect our athletes and coaches.

POLICIES ON MISCONDUCT

In this section, we will discuss the six various types of misconduct we may need to deal with on our teams and in our club programs:

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| •Bullying | •Physical misconduct |
| •Harassment | •Emotional misconduct |
| •Hazing | •Sexual misconduct |

Bullying

“Bullying” is defined as a **repeated pattern** of committing or willfully tolerating **physical and non-physical behaviors** that are intended to cause **fear, humiliation or physical harm** in an attempt to socially **exclude, diminish or isolate** the targeted athletes.

Practicing, traveling to competition, competing with each other, working as a team – in all these situations volleyball teammates usually spend a lot of time together getting to know one another and developing great relationships. However, one of the most harmful effects on any team is when athletes mistreat their own teammates by bullying or harassing them. Such behavior is destructive not only to the individual targeted athlete, but also to the morale and performance of the team as a whole.

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Bullying and harassment can be carried out verbally, socially, physically, and in cyberspace, which is one of the most recent disturbing trends. Social media and mobile communication means potentially 24/7 access to athletes by coaches, and other athletes, which may be more difficult to directly observe.

Bullying IS:

- An intent to harm
- An imbalance of power
- Repeated threats or acts of aggressive behavior

Bullying IS NOT:

- Isolated incident of rudeness or meanness
- Spontaneous teasing
- Criticism which unintentionally hurts someone's feelings
- A disagreement between teammates

Bullies target every kind of athlete...those that may:

- Be overweight
- Be small for their age (or even big for their age)
- Lacking in confidence
- A gifted athlete
- Perceived as "different" for any reason (including ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, etc.)

Harassment

Harassment is defined as **unwanted, offensive and intrusive behaviors** that are linked to **discrimination** – such as bias against a particular group based on **gender, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation**.

Bullying and harassment have adverse effects on an athlete's performance resulting in a loss of focus as well as tentative play and performance.

Bullied or harassed athletes rarely report what they are experiencing because of fear of retaliation, fear of being viewed as a tattletale, fear of being ostracized, or fear of further/escalating harassment.

Coaches set the stage for how their athletes will treat one another. Preventing bullying and harassment requires that coaches create an environment that is conducive to team building. An adult is considered to be "willfully tolerating" actions of bullying and harassment if he or she doesn't act to stop them. Adults who knowingly tolerate bullying and harassment of children/athletes might be at risk for criminal or civil actions, depending on the laws of their particular state.

Coaches need to take immediate action when a situation of bullying or harassment on the team occurs. Talk with the athletes involved in suspected patterns of bullying and harassment and put a stop to the behavior immediately. It is good practice to talk to each involved athlete separately to address the situation. By paying attention to how team members treat and talk to each other, and by talking with your athletes, you might learn about misconduct that's occurring in areas that you can't observe – places like the locker room or on the Internet. It is also good practice to encourage athletes' peers to step in. Research shows that when peers step in, especially if seen as leaders on the team (captains, etc.), they're often successful in getting the bully to stop his/her actions.

NOTES:

As previously discussed, bullying and harassment amongst athletes can be detrimental to the success of the entire team, so from the beginning, set the expectations for your team that bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.

Take the time early in your season, with reminders throughout the season, to educate your athletes on the various forms of bullying and harassment, and provide them with examples of its effects on individual athletes and on the team.

During training times, regularly communicate with your athletes by asking questions to gauge if there's any evidence of misconduct. Creating a culture of disclosure and safe reporting at the athlete's level will encourage them to come forward should there be any kind of misconduct or abuse.

Employers, too, must provide a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment, whether intentional or unintentional. Employees must work in an environment which is free from harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, medical condition, marital status, sex or age, and at the federal/national level this may also include sexual orientation. Harassment in the workplace is illegal no matter what form it might take. Even innocently intended remarks or uninvited touching may be seen as harassment by the person on the receiving end. Employers may become liable if they know or should have known about workplace harassment and failed to take immediate appropriate corrective action.

This applies not only to employers, but also to labor organizations, employment agencies, apprenticeship programs or any of their agents or supervisors. Religious organizations or corporations not organized for private profit are exempt.

Employers are required to have a program in place to prevent discrimination and harassment in the workplace and must take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment and discrimination from occurring. Harassment includes, among other things, verbal, physical or visual harassment. Sexual harassment includes conditioning a promotion or benefits on sexual favors.

Although other provisions of the Fair Employment and Housing Act apply only to employers with five or more employees, the harassment provisions apply to all employers who regularly employ one or more persons. If the employee establishes that a violation is willful, the employer becomes liable for damages and compensatory and punitive damages. Regardless of whether the employee proves intent, the employer will be liable for court costs and reasonable attorney's fees if a violation is proved. If an individual supervisor failed to take action to warn the harassing party and failed to report the incident, the supervisor may be individually liable.

The Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has issued some guidelines that declare sexual harassment to be a form of sex discrimination in violation of Title VII:

1. **Unwelcome conduct:** The EEOC considers "unwelcome" conduct as undesirable or offensive behavior, which the victim did not solicit or incite. The commission will look at whether the victim's conduct was consistent with the assertion that the sexual conduct was unwelcome.
2. **Evaluating evidence of harassment:** While not a necessary element of a claim, whether the charging party made a contemporaneous complaint may be something the commission will look at when evaluating evidence of sexual harassment.
3. **Hostile environment:** A "reasonable person" standard will be used in determining whether a hostile environment existed. No violation is likely to be found "if the challenged conduct would not substantially affect the work environment of a reasonable person."
4. **Employer liability:** The employer will always be held responsible for acts of "quid pro quo" sexual harassment. In hostile environment cases, the commission will examine carefully whether the employer has in place an appropriate and effective complaint procedure designed to encourage victims to come forward, and if so, whether the victim used it.
5. **Remedies:** If "harassment has been eliminated, all victims made whole, and preventive measure instituted," the commission will typically close the charge on the basis the employer took prompt remedial action. Harassment because of sex, race, color, religion or national origin is a violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The EEOC has published guidelines on harassment because of sex, which can be summarized in the following statements: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:
 - Submission to such conduct is made a condition of employment
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions
 - Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment

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In addition to the publication of a policy outlining corporate non-discrimination policy, employers need to specify the executive to whom complaints of harassment or any other form of discrimination may be directed if, in effect, an employer needs a policy and a mechanism to enforce the policy equitably.

Because the threshold of offense varies between and among individuals, and because avoidance of harassment is so important in the workplace, the following do's and don'ts are offered for consideration:

- **Do** write and distribute a clear statement of the company's position on harassment of employees and visitors to the workplace
- **Do** set a good example as a member of management
- **Do** take any complaints seriously, even if your initial judgment is that the complaint is trivial or unwarranted
- **Do** investigate complaints and take corrective action
- **Don't** use your management position to request personal favors of any kind
- **Don't** wait for a complaint if you personally observe something that is likely to be offensive

The employer is held strictly liable for harassment of an applicant or employee through the employee's supervisors or agents. The employer also can be held liable for harassment if one employee harasses another employee and if the employer fails to have a policy about the harassment and fails to take corrective action. If the employer, supervisor or agent turns his or her back on the situation, it does not relieve the employer of responsibility or liability. Therefore, the employer, supervisor or agent should take immediate corrective action at the highest level. This could include speaking to the involved employees, (complainant, accused and witnesses), and/or taking immediate disciplinary action. It would be wise to establish an ongoing program to eliminate harassment in the workplace.

If an incident occurs that involves harassment – sexual, racial or otherwise – the employer should:

1. Document the event
2. Treat it confidentially
3. Treat it seriously
4. Have management treat the situation as far up the chain of command as possible

Incidents involving serious violations that appear to be deliberate or inexcusable may be subject to punitive damages. Although the federal statutes pertaining to harassment are specifically targeted at "for profit" business organizations, there may be a significant impact on "non-profit" organizations as well. USA Volleyball, its Regional Associations and clubs should take all reasonable and necessary steps to minimize the threat of harassment within the overall association.

Hazing

Hazing is defined as **coercing, requiring or willfully tolerating any humiliating, unwelcome or dangerous activity as a condition for an athlete to join a team.**

This widespread problem is easy to dismiss as a harmless and traditional way of building team cohesion. Eighty percent of college athletes have reported that they've witnessed or experienced some form of hazing.

NOTES:

Unlike bullying/harassment, which attempt to exclude or isolate athletes, hazing attempts to welcome, include, or initiate athletes on a team/in a program. Often tolerated as a team tradition or “rite of passage,” these types of activities can be damaging to an entire team.

As volleyball coaches we have the wonderful opportunity to help individual athletes bond into a cohesive team. However, when hazing is used to form that bond, instead of treating teammates with respect and dignity, a truly cohesive team cannot exist.

Hazing can include any combination of physical, social or sexual abuse, and unlike bullying and harassment, hazing is an attempt to include an athlete on a team. However, hazing does not include group activities, such as seniority rights or privileges, which are meant to establish normal team behaviors that promote team cohesion.

Once again, it is the coaches who will set the example for how athletes treat each other... *So, what can a coach do?!* How can we respond to hazing and reduce its effects?

- Educate our coaching staff, our athletes, and their parents about the dangers of hazing
- Provide examples of the consequences of hazing
- As a club/team, implement a strong anti-hazing policy, communicate it clearly and often, in writing and verbally
- Enforce consequences 100 percent of the time if those policies aren't followed (such as individual athlete, coach or team suspension)

Physical Misconduct

Physical misconduct is defined as **contact or non-contact behaviors** that result in, have the potential to, or threaten to **cause physical harm** to an athlete. They may be a result of a misuse of power, an out-of-control coach's temper or ego, or the misplaced notion of motivational methods.

Physical misconduct may involve contact and/or non-contact behaviors. Examples of physical misconduct include:

- Contact – includes behaviors such as:
 - Hitting
 - Choking
 - Slapping
 - Shoving or pushing
 - Throwing things at an athlete
 - Trying to cause any intentional harm to an athlete
- Non-contact – these situations may be more difficult to recognize...but still may cause athletes' safety to be in question:
 - Denying adequate hydration, nutrition, or sleep
 - Overtraining an athlete
 - Encouraging or permitting an athlete to return to play too soon after a concussion or other medical injury
 - Because athletes love their sport, they often want to get back into the game even if they're hurt
 - Monitor athletes closely to ensure they're not pushed beyond their physical abilities
 - Defer to athletic training staff, team or athlete physician for return to play timetable/parameters

Athlete safety should always be in the forefront of all coaches' minds. Always consider:

- The environment that you work out in...the temperatures, safe surroundings, etc.
- The environment where people are positioned during certain times of the workout
- The environment of the implements/equipment used
- Providing or withholding appropriate medical services upon injury occurring or following an injury and prior to return that are necessary for athletes to have proper rehabilitation and healthcare

There is a fine line between pushing and motivating athletes to achieve more than they thought they could and over-training those athletes or causing them physical harm. Communication, knowing your athlete and reading him/her, are critical to preventing non-contact physical misconduct.

Emotional Misconduct

Emotional misconduct is defined as any **intentional conduct** that **harms an individual's spirit and/or self-worth** through **rejection, threats, harassment, terrorizing, isolating, or belittling**. Emotional misconduct exists when there is a **sustained and repeated pattern of deliberate, non-contact behavior** that has the **potential to cause emotional or psychological harm** to an individual. This definition is not intended as a substitute for the legal definition of emotional abuse. This may vary across state lines, so check your state's definition of emotional abuse.

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These acts must be part of a sustained and repeated pattern – not an isolated outburst that may occur in the heat of the moment. Emotional misconduct may also be described as a misguided attempt to motivate or manipulate athletes, to punish them for a poor performance, or simply because of an inability on the coach's part to control his/her own emotions, frustration or anger.

Emotional misconduct is the most reported form of misconduct. It tends to increase as athletes progress up the competitive ladder. As many as 75 percent of elite athletes report that their coaches emotionally abused them during their athletic career.

We need to remember that a supportive coach-athlete relationship has a tremendous effect on athletes and their competitive success. Coaches support players by motivating them to accomplish more than they thought possible in a positive manner.

A win-at-all-costs coaching approach can lead to emotional misconduct when coaches fail to understand how to teach, motivate, or discipline athletes properly.

- Athletes are more likely to drop out of sports if they are berated, degraded, or humiliated
- Coaches misuse their authority when they tear their athletes down by berating, degrading, or manipulating them
- Denying an athlete attention or support by ignoring them or arbitrarily excluding them from practice or competition is the most threatening form of emotional misconduct

In order to help an athlete strive to achieve the next level, build them up, don't tear them down.

- Focus on positive coaching techniques
- Keep your ego in check – tearing down an athlete for the sake of your ego is detrimental to the athlete
- To help prevent emotional abuse from happening, start with the coaching staff and then athlete-coach discussions on appropriate standards of behavior, athlete protection policies, and positive coaching techniques
- If you do accidentally cross the line, apologize

Understand that emotional misconduct is also often connected to both physical and sexual abuse.

- Offenders often break down an athlete's resistance to abuse through emotional means – manipulating them with unrealistic promises, praising them one day and degrading them the next, and isolating them from their peers
- Emotional abuse then makes it easier for offenders to move on to physically or sexually abusing the athlete (or both)

Sexual Misconduct and Abuse

Child sexual abuse is defined as **any sexual activity with a child where consent is not or cannot be given**. This includes all sexual contact between an adult and child, as well as contact that occurs through force or threat of force. A "child" is considered to be under age 18. Sexual contact between an older child and younger child can also be abusive when there is a disparity in age, development or size that makes the younger child incapable of offering consent.

NOTES:

Each club organization needs a plan for dealing with incidents and accusation of child sexual abuse. Some suggestions for reviewing each organization's child abuse policies and procedures include:

- ⇒ Develop a job description for each staff member and volunteer with a written policy detailing appropriate and inappropriate behavior and go over it with applicants.
- ⇒ Find out whether any staff or volunteer members of each program are “mandatory reporters” – those who are required by law to report any suspected child abuse cases (such as teachers). Laws vary from state to state, so check with someone who knows.
- ⇒ Involve the Board of Directors. In some cases, board members, as well as the organization, can be held legally liable in child abuse cases. Have the board members made aware of and approve any policy or procedure changes.
- ⇒ Screen potential staff members and volunteers. Make record checks on criminal backgrounds through your local police department. USAV also background screens all adult members associated with Junior programs.
- ⇒ Make sure parents have access to their children at all times. Telling parents they are not allowed to watch a practice may not be wise.
- ⇒ Provide training regarding appropriate and inappropriate contact for all staff and volunteers. Be careful to advise that all sexual behavior is inappropriate.
- ⇒ As volunteers generally have the same legal responsibility as staff members, make sure all staff, new or old, receive education in this area. With staff, some questions for group discussion as part of orientation would include:
 - What activities or situations with our program are potentially the most dangerous in terms of child abuse incidents occurring or accusations being made?
 - Who are the people in the most vulnerable positions and why?
 - What would you do if you suspected a staff member or volunteer of inappropriate behavior toward an athlete or staff member?
 - What would you do if an athlete came to you accusing a staff member or volunteer of sexual abuse?

It has been proven over and over that education and training is the best protection that children have against abuse. Programs exist that teach children the differences between “good” touches and “bad” touches and how to say “no” to an adult who confronts them. Training directed at children should be handled by a qualified adult. Many local social service agencies may offer this type of training for your youth. Child abuse is a cycle that can only be broken when somebody tells. The USAV SafeSport webpages (and USOC SafeSport.org) have many resources for players, parents, coaches and clubs as well.

Predator Grooming Behavior

It is important for coaches, parents and athletes to understand and be able to recognize the “grooming” behavior of predators in order to disrupt and stop these behaviors before abuse can occur. Predators use a combination of **attention, affection, and gifts** to establish and maintain control over their victims. Most offenders are very practiced and good at what they do – they are subtle and cunning in their approach to victims. The prolonged and purposeful tactics of an experienced predator allow him or her to avoid detection, and almost always guarantee compliance from the athlete, who is often incapable of understanding that what's going on is wrong, especially as the offender becomes bolder and may even abuse the victim in public. The grooming process usually presents in six distinct stages:

- Targeting a victim
- Gaining trust
- Recognizing and fulfilling needs
- Isolating a child
- Sexualizing the relationship
- Maintaining control

Targeting a Victim (Identifying/Selecting a Victim)

- A child's unstable home environment can lead to extreme vulnerability and become an easy target
- Certain children may be more vulnerable than others, but any athlete can be preyed upon by a kind and affectionate adult

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Gaining Victim's Trust

- One of the key things predators need in order to accomplish their crime is the trust of the victim
- In most cases trust comes automatically because a coach is perceived as a hero, mentor, or figure to be looked up to by children
- Usually this is the case with those around the victim as well – gaining trust of athletes' parents is key for a predator to gain access

Recognizing and Fulfilling Needs

- Giving athletes extra attention and time
- Use of overly positive reinforcement
- Promising/awarding starting position or increased playing time
- Scholarship or an introduction to recruiters
- Learning what the athlete values/is motivated by

Isolating the Victim

- Telling athlete they have a "special relationship"
- Sharing secrets – offender may tell a child that he/she is the only person that understands the child
- Creating situations where they are alone with child – additional tutoring/lessons, extra one-on-one coaching sessions, special sporting trips or overnight stays
- With sufficient emotional dependence and trust, the predator gradually confuses the child about the nature of the relationship through talking, texting, and pictures

Sexualizing the Relationship

- This phase is accomplished after the breaking down of psychological and physical barriers
- "Accidental" nudity situations are set up by the predator
- Involves use of pornography or touching the victim to get him/her desensitized to touch, which causes the victim to be confused about the nature of the touch
- The stage is now set for sexual assault on the victim
- The predator uses secrecy and blame to control the victim

Maintaining Control

- This is the "secrecy and concealment" phase
- The better an offender is at picking a victim and breaking down the psychological and physical barriers, the less overt the offender has to be in keeping the secret
- Secrecy is now inherent in the relationship and the victim will keep the secret
- The offender becomes bolder and may even abuse the victim in public, in presence of other athletes, their parents, etc. (not necessarily in full view of, but in presence of...on bus ride home, in back of parent's car on ride home, in office behind closed door, etc.) Many times offenders will actually become bold enough and secure enough in the fact that no one will "tell" that they progress to the point of sexually abusing victims or commit sexually inappropriate acts against victims in front of other witnesses.

This does two things:

- It creates a defense for the predator because the offender can then turn around and say, *"If that were wrong, I wouldn't have done it in front of other people,"* or *"If it was wrong, somebody would have stopped me."*
- It also sends a mixed message to the child/victim who then may become confused as to the "wrongness" of the act.

NOTES:

As coaches and sport professionals, we can learn to look for and identify any “red flags” and disrupt a predator at the beginning stages of their grooming process.

For example, we can ask:

- Does this person often buy expensive gifts for or give an athlete money for no reason?
- Does this person often try to separate the athlete from their teammates or parents?
- Does this person often try to find ways to be alone with the athlete?



RESPONDING AND REPORTING

There are four basic steps for responding to a situation of misconduct:

- Interrupt or disrupt the misconduct
- Share your concerns
- Report to your designated administrator
- If you suspect child abuse, report to the proper law enforcement authorities

When and How to Make a Report of Misconduct/Abuse

First of all, remember that there is absolutely no need for you to attempt to evaluate the credibility or validity of the allegation as a condition for reporting to the appropriate law enforcement authorities!

USA Volleyball requires the reporting of sexual misconduct/abuse by or of any member and strongly encourages reporting ANY concerns related to SafeSport.

- USA Volleyball appreciates your willingness to report inappropriate behavior
- Out of respect for the importance of this issue and to encourage honest and effective reporting, knowingly making a false or vindictive report will not be tolerated and may be a violation of USA Volleyball’s Code of Conduct

Though you may want to report first to your Club Administration or your Region Office, you can also report abuse to the National USAV Office by calling the hotline at 1-855-306-7775 or filling out the USA Volleyball SafeSport Abuse Reporting Form on the USA Volleyball SafeSport page (from the USAV Home page, hover over the Education header tab and scroll down to the bottom of the list and click on SafeSport), or which can be also be found here https://www.volleyballrefraining.com/SafeSport/safesport_report_abuse_form.html. Use of this phone number or of the online form will reach Quintiya Miller, USAV SafeSport Coordinator in the National Office.

The flow chart at the right will be helpful in determining the appropriate reporting procedures.

Mandatory Reporters

Mandatory reporters are individuals who usually have frequent contact with children. Those included in this category and the legal reporting responsibilities will vary by state.

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You can find the Guidelines on Mandatory Reporters from the Department of Health and Human Services Child Welfare Information Gateway (https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm). Several states do include coaches as mandatory reporters and in many states, any person who suspects child abuse must report (use the State Statutes Search https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/). It is important to understand that failure to report abuse may result in criminal charges.

It's not easy to be put in a situation where you have to call the authorities, but the bottom line is, **it's the right thing to do!** Again – it is not your job to evaluate the validity of the allegation – it **IS** your responsibility to report to the appropriate law enforcement authorities!

Whether or not you are a Mandatory Reporter, all coaches can voluntarily report suspected abuse to the proper law enforcement authorities. As coaches we all have an important role in our athletes' development, and USAV encourages everyone to report suspected abuse to the proper law enforcement authorities.

Remember, too, that regardless of your legal obligations, your club and/or Region office may require you to report suspicions or allegations of abuse or misconduct. Each of the 40 USA Volleyball Regions (RVAs) will have a Regional SafeSport Contact (RSC), who is in charge of distributing the educational and training materials. This RVA contact person will be the point of contact for the SafeSport program in that Region. You can Find your Region on the USA Volleyball website (<http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Volleyball/Membership/Regions>) and check with your Regional SafeSport Contact for any local questions regarding SafeSport. USAV also recommends that each Club identify a SafeSport "Ambassador" to help educate their parents, players, and coaches.

A reminder also that coaches/adults sign the **Junior Personnel Code of Conduct** (JPCOC) when becoming a USAV member and affiliating with a Junior Club – the JPCOC specifically requires you to report any unethical conduct or misconduct or you will be in violation of that code!

So remember:

- Any suspicions or allegations of child abuse should be reported to your Club/Region and the proper law enforcement authorities.
- It is not your responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse.
- Know your state's reporting laws and what constitutes abuse in your state.
- You may be subject to legal and/or civil liability if you don't report.
- Understanding how to recognize misconduct and properly report it is essential to maintaining the safe and fun environment that sport creates for athletes and coaches of all ages.
- You can also access information from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect. (https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/manda.cfm)
- To access the statutes for a specific State or territory, visit the State Statutes Search from that page (direct link is https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/)

NOTES:

SOCIAL MEDIA PROFESSIONALISM

All communications between coaches, adults and athletes must be professional in nature and for the sole purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Volleyball Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection. Coach or other adult electronic communication with athletes should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- Drugs or alcohol use
- Sexually-oriented conversation, sexually explicit language, sexual jokes or sexual activity (no sexting)
- The adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems
- Inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures, drawings or other images

The T.A.P. Test

With respect to electronic communications, coaches should use the "T.A.P. test." Ask yourself, "Is this communication..."

- **Transparent**
- **Accessible**
- **Professional**

Transparent means that the communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of any hidden meanings, innuendo, and expectations.

Accessible means that all electronic communication between coaches or other adults and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the club's records. Whenever possible, when sending electronic communications to athletes, include another coach or parent in the communication so there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional means the word choice, tone, grammar and subject matter model the standards and integrity of a professional coach-athlete relationship.

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Blogs and Similar Sites

Coaches may certainly have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the club join their personal pages as a "friend." Likewise, a coach should not accept a "friend" request from any athlete...nor should they request an athlete to friend them. In addition, the coach should remind the athletes that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "private message" or "instant message" (IM) each other through Facebook or other social media/instant message sites. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to "private" to prevent athletes from accessing the coach's personal information. Instead, the club should create an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can "like" or "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters.

Texting

Texting shall only be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

- Texting with athletes should be subject to the general guidelines mentioned above (T.A.P.)
- In general, texting between coaches and athletes **should be limited to the hours from 7a.m. until 10 p.m.** ...or specified alternate start and end times between these hours as set by club/RVA policy.

Email Communications

When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied for transparency. Parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches or other adult club staff through any form of electronic communications. When requested, there should be immediate compliance without any repercussion.

Coaches' Conduct on Social Media (general professionalism)

Coaches should maintain their professionalism while participating on social media sites. Coaches should:

- Refrain from discussing or making comments that may be interpreted as a slur or are demeaning toward another individual, especially other coaches, officials, parents or athletes
- Not use commentary that is deemed defamatory, obscene, proprietary, inflammatory, or libelous
- Exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterizations
- Exercise good judgment – this is paramount regardless of personal opinion
- Consider whether a particular posting puts their effectiveness as a teacher/mentor/coach at risk
- Coaches should refrain from publicly discussing/criticizing players, parents, officials, fellow coaches, clubs or USA Volleyball policies or personnel

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Coaches are expected to:

- Act responsibly and ethically
- Post meaningful and respectful comments
- Respect whomever they are addressing
- Honor differences
- Think before clicking that “post” or “send” button

Conclusion and Review

Education and training is the best protection athletes have against abuse.

- USAV has had a plan for rolling out the requirement for SafeSport training and certification for ALL adults affiliated with/working with junior athletes as well as our senior/elite athletes.
 - o Phase 1A ended at the conclusion of 2014 – all National Office Staff, National High Performance Coaches and Staff, National Event Arbitrators, National Team Coaching Staff/Personnel and Senior National Team Athletes took the online SafeSport course by Dec. 31, 2014.
 - o Phase 1B started Sept. 1, 2014, and ended Aug. 31, 2015 – this group includes RVA Commissioners and Executive Directors, Regional SafeSport Contacts persons, as well as encouragement to all adult members to get certified, including:
 - Regional Leadership
 - Club Leadership
 - Coaches of Juniors
 - Junior Event Staff and Officials (Adults)
 - USAV Board of Directors
 - o Phase 2 is from Sept. 1, 2015-Aug. 31, 2016, and includes having a trained SafeSport Contact in every USAV Junior Club. This person will direct the club members in the right direction for resources. This phase will also include SafeSport certification for every Club Director.

ANY and ALL adults associated with Junior teams are encouraged to take the online certification course at any time prior to/during any phase...it is 90 minutes long, does not need to be finished in one sitting, and it is free (SafeSport certification will be included with IMPACT certifications from September 2014 forward as well).

The USOC SafeSport.org website (and [USAV's SafeSport webpage](#)) has many resources for players, parents, coaches, and clubs.

The safety of all participants is of paramount importance to USA Volleyball, (on and off-court). As a National Governing Body and a Coaching Education Department we will:

- Remain committed to creating safe, fun environments for youth
- Provide training, educational materials and resources for USAV Regions, clubs, coaches, parents and all athletes
- Maintain a zero-tolerance policy for any abuse and misconduct

NOTES:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources](#) page of the USA Volleyball website – click on the ***Education/Coaching-Education-Programs/Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources***.

- [USAV SafeSport Program \(https://www.volleyballreftraining.com/SafeSport/safesport_home.html\)](https://www.volleyballreftraining.com/SafeSport/safesport_home.html)
- [USAV SS HANDBOOK](#) and [POLICY TEMPLATES](#)
- [How, When, and Where to Report - flowchart](#)
- [USOC SafeSport Program \(www.safesport.org\)](http://www.safesport.org) or www.teamusa.org/stopabuse
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #2 – Safety and Injury Prevention](#)
- [USA Volleyball Statement Regarding Youth Membership Protection Safeguards](#)
- [Why Bullying is the New Boy Who Cried Wolf...](#)
- [NFHS Free Online Creating Respectful Environment in Sports Course](#)

ALSO LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY OR ONLINE:

- ***Spoilsports: Understanding and Preventing Sexual Exploitation in Sport***, by Celia Brackenridge, Routledge Publishing (2004). Available at Amazon.com.

NOTES:

The material in this chapter is intended to represent the history, evolution and discussion of Professional Conduct of coaches, beginning with the original USOC Coaching COE, through the newest USAV Regional Coaches' Code of Ethics.

USOC Coaching Code of Ethics (COE)

The following original document was first released in 1995 at the USOC Coaching Symposium. It was adopted by the USOC for all USOC directly supported functions (Olympics, World University Games, Pan American Games, etc.) and must be signed by all coaches participating in events or training on site at any of the U.S. Olympic Training Centers, including USAV events. This document, in effect, became the national coaching ethics standard and USOC officials urged adoption by each of their National Governing Bodies. USAV requires all USAV-CAP candidate coaches and High Performance, National Team coaches/staff to sign this full document. For more information on the USOC Coaching Code of Ethics, contact USOC Coaching Division, One Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, CO 80909.

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This USOC Coaching Code of Ethics was the result of the work of many people and committees. The approach, structure and contents of this code were inspired by the ***Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct***, December 1992 (American Psychological Association, Vol. 47, No. 12, 1597-1611). Many of the ideas for these ethical standards were drawn from numerous other codes. The most significant of these were developed by the Coaching Association of Canada, The British Institute of Sport Coaches and the NCAA. In particular, the USOC would like to thank:

- USOC Coaching Committee, Ray Essick, chair
- USOC Ethics Oversight Committee, Harry Groves, chair
- USOC Games Preparation and Services Committee, Joe Kearney, chair
- USOC Training Centers Committee, Mike Jacki, chair
- USOC Vice President Michael B. Lenard
- USOC General Counsel Ronald T. Rowan

COACHES' ETHICS CODE

This Ethics Code is intended to provide standards of professional conduct that can be applied by the USOC and its member organizations that choose to adopt them. Whether or not a coach has violated the Ethics Code does not by itself determine whether he or she is legally liable in a court action, whether a contract is enforceable or whether other legal consequences occur. These results are based on legal rather than ethical rules. However, compliance with or violation of the Ethics Code may be admissible as evidence in some legal proceedings, depending on the circumstances.

This Code is intended to provide both the general principles and the decision rules to cover most situations encountered by coaches. It has, as its primary goal, the welfare and protection of the individuals and groups with whom coaches work. This Code also provides a common set of values upon which coaches build their professional work. It is the individual responsibility of each coach to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct. Coaches respect and protect human and civil rights and do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES
Principle A: Competence

Coaches strive to maintain high standards of excellence in their work. They recognize the boundaries of their particular competencies and the limitations of their expertise. They provide only those services and use only those techniques for which they are qualified by education, training or experience. In those areas in which recognized professional standards do not yet exist, coaches exercise careful judgment and take appropriate precautions to protect the welfare of those with whom they work. They maintain knowledge of relevant scientific and professional information related to the services they render and they recognize the need for ongoing education. Coaches make appropriate use of scientific, professional, technical and administrative resources.

Principle B: Integrity

Coaches seek to promote integrity in the practice of coaching. Coaches are honest, fair, and respectful of others. In describing or reporting their qualifications, services, products, or fees, they do not make statements that are false, misleading or deceptive. Coaches strive to be aware of their own belief systems, values, needs and limitations and the effect of these on their work. To the extent feasible, they attempt to clarify for relevant parties the roles they are performing and to function appropriately in accordance with those roles. Coaches avoid improper and potentially harmful dual relationships.

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Principle C: Professional Responsibility

Coaches uphold professional standards of conduct, clarify their professional roles and obligations, accept appropriate responsibility for their behavior and adapt their methods to the needs of different athletes. Coaches consult with, refer to or cooperate with other professionals and institutions to the extent needed to serve the best interest of their athletes or other recipients of their services. Coaches' moral standards and conduct are personal matters to the same degree as is true for any other person, except when coaches' conduct may compromise their professional responsibilities or reduce the public's trust in the coaching profession and coaches. Coaches are concerned about the ethical compliance of their colleagues' professional conduct. When appropriate, they consult with colleagues in order to prevent or avoid unethical conduct.

Principle D: Respect for Participants* and Dignity

Coaches respect the fundamental rights, dignity and worth of all participants. Coaches are aware of cultural, individual and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language and socioeconomic status. Coaches try to eliminate the effect on their work of biases based on those factors and they do not knowingly participate in or condone unfair discriminatory practices. ***Participants: Those taking part in sport (athletes and their family members, coaches, officials, volunteers, administrators and spectators).**

Principle E: Concern for Others' Welfare

Coaches seek to contribute to the welfare of those with whom they interact professionally. In their professional actions, coaches consider the welfare and rights of their athletes and other participants. When conflicts occur among coaches' obligations or concerns, they attempt to resolve these conflicts and perform their roles in a responsible fashion that avoids or minimizes harm. Coaches are sensitive to differences in power between themselves and others and they do not exploit or mislead other people during or after professional relationships.

Principle F: Responsible Coaching

Coaches are aware of their professional responsibilities to the community and the society in which they work and live. They apply and make public their knowledge of sport in order to contribute to human welfare. Coaches try to avoid misuse of their work.

Coaches comply with the law and encourage the development of laws and policies that serve the interest of sport. They are encouraged to contribute a portion of their professional time for little or no personal advantage.

1.0 GENERAL STANDARDS

These General Standards are applicable to the professional activities of all coaches.

1.01 Applicability of the Ethics Code

While many aspects of personal behavior and private activities seem far removed from official duties of coaching, all coaches should be sensitive to their position as role models for their athletes. Private activities perceived as immoral or illegal can influence the coaching environment and coaches are encouraged to observe the standards of this Ethics Code consistently.

NOTES:

1.02 Boundaries of Competence

- (a) Coaches provide services only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience or appropriate professional experience.
- (b) Coaches provide services involving new techniques only after first undertaking appropriate study, training, supervision and/or consultation from persons who are competent in those areas or techniques.
- (c) In those emerging areas in which generally recognized standards for preparatory training do not yet exist, coaches nevertheless take reasonable steps to ensure the competence of their work and to protect athletes and other participants from harm.

1.03 Maintaining Expertise

Coaches maintain a reasonable level of awareness of current scientific and professional information in their fields of activity and undertake ongoing efforts to maintain competence in the skills they use.

1.04 Basis for Professional Judgments

Coaches rely on scientifically and professionally derived knowledge when making professional judgments or when engaging in professional endeavors.

1.05 Describing the Nature and Results of Coaching Services

When coaches provide services to an individual, a group or an organization, they provide, using language that is reasonably understandable to the recipient of those services, appropriate information beforehand about the nature of such services and appropriate information later about results and conclusions.

1.06 Respecting Others

Coaches respect the rights of others to hold values, attitudes and opinions that differ from their own.

1.07 Nondiscrimination

Coaches do not engage in discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socioeconomic status or any basis proscribed by law.

1.08 Sexual Harassment

- (a) Coaches do not engage in sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is sexual solicitation, physical advances or verbal or nonverbal conduct that is sexual in nature and that either:
 - (1) Is unwelcome, is offensive or creates a hostile environment, and the coach knows or is told this;
 - (2) Is sufficiently severe or intense to be abusive to a reasonable person in the context. Sexual harassment can consist of a single intense/severe act or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts;
- (b) Coaches will treat sexual harassment complainants and respondents with dignity and respect. Coaches do not participate in denying an athlete the right to participate based upon their having made, or their being the subject of, sexual harassment charges.

1.09 Other Harassment

Coaches do not engage in behavior that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their work based on factors such as those persons' age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language or socioeconomic status.

1.10 Personal Problems and Conflicts

- (a) Coaches recognize that their personal problems and conflicts may interfere with their effectiveness. Accordingly, they refrain from undertaking an activity when they know or should know that their personal problems are likely to lead to harm to athletes or other participants to whom they may owe a professional obligation.
- (b) In addition, coaches have an obligation to be alert to signs of, and to obtain assistance for, their personal problems at an early stage, in order to prevent significantly impaired performance.
- (c) When coaches become aware of personal problems that may interfere with their performing work related duties adequately, they take appropriate measures, such as obtaining professional consultation or assistance, and determine whether they should limit, suspend or terminate their work-related duties.

1.11 Avoiding Harm

Coaches take reasonable steps to avoid harming their athletes or other participants and to minimize harm where it is foreseeable and unavoidable.

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1.12 Misuse of Coaches' Influence

Because coaches' professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to guard against personal, financial, social, organizational or political factors that might lead to mis-use of their influence.

1.13 Multiple Relationships

- (a) In many communities and situations, it may not be feasible or reasonable for coaches to avoid social or other nonprofessional contacts with athletes and other participants. Coaches must always be sensitive to the potential harmful effects of other contacts on their work and on those persons with whom they deal. A coach refrains from entering into or promising another personal, professional, financial or other relationship with such persons if it appears likely that such a relationship reasonably might impair the coach's objectivity or otherwise interfere with the coach effectively performing his or her functions as a coach, or might harm or exploit the other party.
- (b) Likewise, whenever feasible, a coach refrains from taking on professional obligations when preexisting relationships would create a risk of such harm.
- (c) If a coach finds that, due to unforeseen factors, a potentially harmful multiple relationship has arisen, the coach attempts to resolve it with due regard for the best interests of the affected person and maximal compliance with the Ethics Code.

1.14 Exploitative Relationships

- (a) Coaches do not exploit athletes or other participants over whom they have supervisory, evaluative or other authority.
- (b) Coaches do not engage in sexual/romantic relationships with athletes or other participants over whom the coach has evaluative, direct or indirect authority, because such relationships are likely to impair judgment or be exploitative.

1.15 Consultations and Referrals

When indicated and professionally appropriate, coaches cooperate with other professionals in order to serve their athletes or other participants effectively and appropriately.

1.16 Delegation to and Supervision of Subordinates

- (a) Coaches delegate to their employees, supervisors and assistants only those responsibilities that such persons can reasonably be expected to perform competently, on the basis of their education, training or experience, either independently or with the level of supervision being provided.
- (b) Coaches provide proper training and supervision to their employees or supervisors and take reasonable steps to see that such persons perform services responsibly, competently and ethically.

1.17 Fees and Financial Arrangements

- (a) As early as is feasible in a professional relationship, the coach and the athlete or other participants reach an agreement specifying the compensation and the billing arrangements.
- (b) Coaches do not exploit recipients of services or players with respect to fees.
- (c) Coaches' fee practices are consistent with law.
- (d) Coaches do not misrepresent their fees.
- (e) If limitations to services can be anticipated because of limitations in financing, this is discussed with the athlete or other participant as appropriate.

NOTES:

2.0 ADVERTISING AND OTHER PUBLIC STATEMENTS

2.01 Definition of Public Statements

Coaches comply with the Ethics Code in public statements relating to their professional services, products or publications.

2.02 Statements by Others

- (a) Coaches who engage others to create or place public statements that promote their professional practice, products or activities retain professional responsibility for such statements.
- (b) In addition, coaches make reasonable efforts to prevent others whom they do not control (such as employers, publishers, sponsors, organizational clients and representatives of the print or broadcast media) from making deceptive statements concerning the coach or his professional activities.
- (c) If coaches learn of deceptive statements about their work made by others, coaches make reasonable efforts to correct such statements.
- (d) Coaches do not compensate members of press, radio, television or other communication media in return for publicity in a news item.
- (e) A paid advertisement relating to the coach's activities must be identified as such, unless it is already apparent from the context.

2.03 Avoidance of False or Deceptive Statements

Coaches do not make public statements that are false, deceptive, misleading, or fraudulent, either because of what they state, convey or suggest or because of what they omit, concerning their work activities or those of persons or organizations with which they are affiliated. As examples (and not in limitation) of this standard, coaches do not make false or deceptive statements concerning:

- a) Their training, experience, or competence;
- b) Their academic degrees;
- c) Their credentials;
- d) Their institutional or association affiliations;
- e) Their services;
- f) The basis for, or results or degree of success of their services; or
- g) Their fees.

2.04 Media Presentations

When coaches provide advice or comment by means of public lectures, demonstrations, radio or television programs, prerecorded tapes, printed articles, mailed material or other media, they take reasonable precautions to ensure that the statements are consistent with this Ethics Code.

2.05 Testimonials

Coaches do not solicit testimonials from current athletes or other participants who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence.

2.06 Recruiting

Coaches do not engage, directly or through agents, in uninvited in-person solicitation of business from actual or potential athletes or other participants who, because of their particular circumstances, are vulnerable to undue influence. However, this does not preclude recruiting athletes deemed eligible by appropriate governing bodies.

3.0 TRAINING ATHLETES

3.01 Structuring the Relationship

- (a) Coaches discuss with athletes as early as is feasible appropriate issues, such as the nature and anticipated course of training, fees and confidentiality.
- (b) When the coach's work with athletes will be supervised, the above discussion includes that fact and the name of the supervisor.
- (c) When the coach is uncertified the athlete is informed of that fact.
- (d) Coaches make reasonable efforts to answer athletes' questions and to avoid apparent misunderstandings about training. Whenever possible, coaches provide oral and/or written information, using language that is reasonably understandable to the athlete.

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3.02 Family Relationships

- (a) When a coach agrees to provide services to several persons who have a relationship (such as parents and children), the coach attempts to clarify at the outset which of the individuals are athletes; and the relationship the coach will have with each person. This clarification includes the role of the coach and the probable uses of the services provided.

3.03 Providing Coaching Services to Those Served by Others

In deciding whether to offer or provide services to those already receiving coaching services elsewhere, coaches carefully consider the potential athlete's welfare. The coach discusses these issues with the athlete or another legally authorized person on behalf of the athlete, in order to minimize the risk of confusion and conflict.

3.04 Sexual Intimacies with Current Athletes

Coaches do not engage in sexual intimacies with current athletes.

3.05 Coaching Former Sexual Partners

Coaches do not coach athletes with whom they have engaged in sexual intimacies.

3.06 Sexual Intimacies with Former Athletes

- (a) Coaches should not engage in sexual intimacies with a former athlete for at least two years after cessation or termination of professional services.
- (b) Because sexual intimacies with a former athlete are so frequently harmful to the athlete, and because such intimacies undermine public confidence in the coaching profession and thereby deter the public's use of needed services, coaches do not engage in sexual intimacies with former athletes even after a two-year interval except in the most unusual circumstances. The coach who engages in such activity after the two years following cessation or termination of the coach athlete relationship bears the burden of demonstrating that there has been no exploitation, in light of all relevant factors, including:
 - (1) The amount of time that has passed since the coach-athlete relationship terminated;
 - (2) The circumstances of termination;
 - (3) The athlete's personal history;
 - (4) The athlete's current mental status;
 - (5) The likelihood of adverse impact on the athlete and others;
 - (6) Any statements or actions made by the coach during the course of the athlete-coach relationship suggesting or inviting the possibility of a post-termination sexual or romantic relationship with the athlete or coach.

3.07 Drug Free Sport

Coaches do not tolerate the use of performance-enhancing drugs and support athletes' efforts to be drug free.

3.08 Alcohol and Tobacco

- (a) Coaches discourage the use of alcohol and tobacco in conjunction with athletic events or victory celebrations at playing sites and forbid use of alcohol by minors.
- (b) Coaches refrain from tobacco and alcohol use while they are coaching and make every effort to avoid their use while in the presence of their athletes.

NOTES:

3.09 Interruption of Services

- (a) Coaches make reasonable efforts to plan for training in the event that coaching services are interrupted by factors such as the coach's illness, death, unavailability or relocation or by the client's relocation or financial limitations.
- (b) When entering into employment or contractual relationships, coaches provide for orderly and appropriate resolution of responsibility for athlete training in the event that the employment or contractual relationship ends, with paramount consideration given to the welfare of the athlete.

3.10 Terminating the Professional Relationship

- (a) Coaches terminate a professional relationship when it becomes reasonably clear that the athlete no longer needs the service, is not benefiting or is being harmed by continued service.
- (b) Prior to termination, for whatever reason, except where precluded by the athlete's conduct, the coach discusses the athlete's views and needs, provides appropriate pre termination counseling, suggests alternative service providers as appropriate and takes other reasonable steps to facilitate transfer of responsibility to another provider if the athlete needs one immediately.

4.0 TRAINING SUPERVISION**4.01 Design of Training Programs**

Coaches who are responsible for training programs for other coaches seek to ensure that the programs are competently designed, provide the proper experiences and meet the requirements for certification or other goals for which claims are made by the program.

4.02 Descriptions of Training Programs

- (a) Coaches responsible for training programs for other coaches seek to ensure that there is a current and accurate description of the program content, training goals and objectives, and requirements that must be met for satisfactory completion of the program. This information must be readily available to all interested parties.
- (b) Coaches seek to ensure that statements concerning their training programs are accurate and not misleading.

4.03 Accuracy and Objectivity in Coaching

- (a) When engaged in coaching, coaches present information accurately and with a reasonable degree of objectivity.
- (b) When engaged in coaching, coaches recognize the power they hold over athletes and therefore make reasonable efforts to avoid engaging in conduct that is personally demeaning to athletes and other participants.

4.04 Assessing Athlete Performance

- (a) In coach-athlete relationships, coaches establish an appropriate process for providing feedback to athletes.
- (b) Coaches evaluate athletes on the basis of their actual performance on relevant and established program requirements.

4.05 Honoring Commitments

Coaches take reasonable measures to honor all commitments they have made to athletes.

5.0 TEAM SELECTION

- (a) Coaches perform evaluations or team selection only within the context of a defined professional relationship.
- (b) Coaches' assessments, recommendations, reports, and evaluative statements used to select team members are based on information and techniques sufficient to provide appropriate substantiation for their findings.

6.0 RESOLVING ETHICAL ISSUES**6.01 Familiarity with Ethics Code**

Coaches have an obligation to be familiar with this Ethics Code, other applicable ethics codes, and their application to the coaches' work. Lack of awareness or misunderstanding of an ethical standard is not itself a defense to a charge of unethical conduct.

6.02 Confronting Ethical Issues

When a coach is uncertain whether a particular situation or course of action would violate the Ethics Code, the coach ordinarily consults with other coaches knowledgeable about ethical issues, with NGB or USOC ethics committees, or with other appropriate authorities in order to choose a proper response.

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6.03 Conflicts Between Ethics and Organizational Demands

If the demands of an organization with which coaches are affiliated conflict with this Ethics Code, coaches clarify the nature of the conflict, make known their commitment to the Ethics Code, and to the extent feasible, seek to resolve the conflict in a way that permits the fullest adherence to the Ethics Code.

6.04 Informal Resolution of Ethical Violations

When coaches believe that there may have been an ethical violation by another coach, they attempt to resolve the issue by bringing it to the attention of that individual if an informal resolution appears appropriate and when intervention does not violate any athlete rights that may be involved.

6.05 Reporting Ethical Violations

If an apparent ethical violation is not appropriate for informal resolution under Standard 6.04 or is not resolved properly in that fashion, coaches take further action appropriate to the situation, unless such action conflicts with athlete rights in ways that cannot be resolved. Such action might include referral to NGB or USOC committees on professional ethics.

6.06 Cooperating with Ethics Committees

Coaches cooperate in ethics investigations, proceedings and resulting requirements of the USOC and any NGB to which they belong. Failure to cooperate is itself an ethics violation.

6.07 Improper Complaints

Coaches do not file or encourage the filing of ethics complaints that are frivolous and are intended to harm the respondent rather than to protect the public.

7.0 PROCESS RELATING TO VIOLATION OF CODE

7.01 The coach acknowledges that this Ethics Code is administered under the authority of the NGB or other responsible organization and that a violation of this Code subjects the coach to the processes of the NGB or other such organization required to be provided in the event of disciplinary action. The NGB or other such organization acknowledges that all violations of the Ethics Code will be reviewed for possible disciplinary action and it will provide a written report to the USOC on all reviews and actions.

7.02 In the event that a violation of the Ethics Code occurs during an authorized U.S. Olympic Training Center activity, USOC may, as landlord of the facility, take action separate and independent from that of the NGB or member of the USOC in order to protect its interests and those of athletes, coaches and others at the location.

7.03 Any action taken by an NGB or member of the USOC which affects the opportunity of a coach to participate in "protected" competition as defined in the USOC Constitution shall be entitled to processes assured under the USOC Constitution and the Amateur Sports Act of 1978. This includes process within the NGB, the USOC and the American Arbitration Association.

7.04 If the violation of the Ethics Code occurs while a member of a USOC team or event, the coach and NGB acknowledge that the USOC may institute its own proceeding regarding the violation, which action shall not restrict the ability or obligation of the NGB to take its own separate and independent action.

NOTES:

7.05 In the event that a coach is found to have violated the Ethics Code, such action is separate and apart from any other legal consequences which may occur as a result of the act.

USAV/AVCA COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

Continuing the focus on further defining professional standards of behavior for volleyball coaches, and in addition to the USOC Coaches Ethics Code, USA Volleyball later adopted (February 1999), in conjunction with the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA), a volleyball-specific Code of Ethics that includes standards of behavior not just for coaches, but also for athletes, parents, support personnel, spectators, officials, administrators, as well as for dealing with the media and sponsors. Those guidelines are below.

Principle – Prologue/Creed

I, _____, as a coach in a USA Volleyball sponsored program, am committed to sound educational processes, establishing traditions and promoting values for my volleyball community. I am dedicated to advancing the welfare of those who seek my assistance and to the maintenance of high standards of professional conduct and competence. I am accountable for all of my actions and to this Code of Ethics and my acceptance of this fiduciary responsibility is expressed in all my personal and professional relationships. In that coaching may involve my direction of youth, adolescent or adult teams, I will follow these principles in all environments and abide by them completely when coaching.

USA Volleyball has adopted, in its entirety, the United States Olympic Committee's Coaching Ethics Code, and it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with that document and conduct myself according to its tenets. Failure to understand any of the principles of these documents does not constitute a defense for violation of its rules. The principles outlined in the document are intended to be clarifications or expansions on the USOC document, and are an emphasis on the values of USAV; this document should not be considered to be the full scope of regulations and Ethics Codes required of coaches. Further, where this document supersedes, contradicts or exceeds the scope of the USOC Coaching Ethics Code, I will adhere to the principles and intent of the USAV Code. I recognize that this Code of Ethics goes beyond the scope of the law, and should be treated with the same, or greater, respect and gravity with which I treat the laws and standards of my community.

Principle I – Professional Practices

I pledge to maintain practices that protect the public and advance my profession; I will

- A. Maintain responsible association with USA Volleyball, its national programs and member organizations.
- B. Continue personal and professional growth, remaining current on new developments in the field through continuing education.
- C. Use my knowledge and professional association(s) for the benefit of the people I serve.
- D. Always strive to be truthful and put colleagues or other professionals in a positive light.
- E. Avoid discrimination in all of its forms.

Principle II – Coach/Athlete Relationships

I pledge to maintain relationships with athletes on a professional basis. I will:

- A. Conduct all my relationships from a perspective of dignity and sound educational and scientific foundation to:
 1. Direct comments or criticism relative to the performance, not the athlete.
 2. Ensure that all activities are suitable for the age, experience and ability of the athletes.
 3. Educate athletes as to their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment, and to do my best to ensure that all facilities and equipment meet safety standards and that they are age/ability appropriate.
 4. Consider the athlete's future health and well-being as foremost when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue competing or training, and seek professional medical opinions to serve as a basis for my decisions.
 5. Be aware of academic responsibilities; conduct practices and match schedules in a manner so as not to interfere unduly with academic success. Never encourage, condone, or require any behavior that threatens an athlete's high school, USA Volleyball, collegiate eligibility or amateur status.
 6. Comply with regulations and ethical guidelines for recruiting practices as defined by governing sport organizations.
 7. Strive to develop individual and team respect for the ability of opponents.
 8. Prioritize being present at all practices and competitions and, when unable to, assure knowledgeable and safe supervision.
 9. Work with and strive to develop every member of the team.
 10. Show sensitive regard for the moral, social, religious, and sexual orientations of others and communities. I will not impose my beliefs on others.
 11. Recognize the trust placed in, and the unique power of, the coach and athlete relationship. I will not exploit the dependency of athletes and will avoid dual relationships (e.g., business or close personal relationships) which could impair my professional judgment, compromise the integrity of the process and/or take advantage of the relationship for my own gain.
 12. While serving in a professional capacity or as a role model, avoid any drug, tobacco or alcohol use while in the presence of athletes. I will discourage by way of education any consumption of these substances by minors and will remain at all times within the limits of the law with regard to legal substances. I will avoid illegal ones entirely.
 13. Not engage in physical, verbal or emotional harassment, abusive words or actions, or exploitative coercion of current or former athletes. I will report any suspected cases of abuse to the appropriate authorities immediately.
 14. Recognize that all forms of sexual abuse, assault or harassment with athletes are illegal and unethical, even when an athlete invites or consents to such behavior or involvement. Sexual abuse and harassment is defined as, but not limited to, repeated comments, gestures, or physical contacts of a sexual nature. I will report all suspected cases of sexual assault or abuse to law enforcement as required by law.

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Principle III – Confidentiality

I will respect the integrity and protect the welfare of all persons with whom I am working and pledge to safeguard information about them that has been learned or obtained during the coaching relationship, including performance reviews, statistics and all personal confidence. Further, I will obtain permission from athletes before sharing videotape recordings or other data of them with anyone excepting the recognized coaching staff; when current or former athletes are referred to in a publication, while teaching or in a public presentation that is not laudatory, their identity will be thoroughly disguised. The only exception to this will be that I will not use these standards of confidentiality to avoid intervention when it is necessary (e.g., when there is evidence of physical or psychological abuse of minors, or legal issues).

Principle IV – Staff/Employee Relationships

All relationships with employees and staff will be maintained on a professional and confidential basis, and I will avoid exploiting their trust and dependency.

Principle V – Process Relating to Violation of Code

I acknowledge that this Ethics Code is administered under the authority of USA Volleyball or other responsible organization and that a violation of this code subjects me to the process of USA Volleyball or other such organization required to be provided in the event of disciplinary action (February 1999).

CODES OF BEHAVIOR FOR NON-COACHES

The quest for performance excellence in volleyball continues to increase as all those associated with the sport (including athletes, coaches, administrators, parents, spectators, sports medicine support teams, officials, media and sponsors) constantly search for strategies that will grow the game and increase levels of success.

As this search for excellence continues, so does the increasingly important need for a moral compass to continue to guide all from the direction originally established with the foundation of the sport by William G. Morgan at a YMCA in Massachusetts. Central to this discussion is the need for organized sport for youth (ages 5-18) to serve as one of the strategies to grow the game of volleyball worldwide.

USA Volleyball has been and continues to be committed to creating and upholding traditions of excellence through volleyball based upon the existence of supportive and nurturing environments in which individuals can become successful. Age-group volleyball programs (5 through 18 years of age) can provide such environments. All associated with these age-group programs must display and insist upon behaviors which foster beneficial growth and development of children and improvement of motor skills through volleyball. Some of these behaviors for specific groups are as follows. Coaches should share these codes with their athletes and all associated with the “team around the team.”

⇒ ATHLETE CODE OF BEHAVIOR

As an athlete, I will aspire to:

- Participate in volleyball alcohol and drug-free
- Play by the rules of volleyball
- Use positive verbal and physical behavior, controlling temper and aggression (intent to do harm)
- Tell the truth about another person's involvement in or knowledge of something that violates the rules
- Show fair play by treating all those involved in the match with dignity and respect
- Treat others as I would like to be treated
- Work hard and honestly to improve performance and participation
- Maintain a positive image of myself by playing volleyball for enjoyment

NOTES:



⇒ **PARENT CODE OF BEHAVIOR (see Chapter 9 for more on a Parent Code of Behavior)**

As a parent, I will aspire to:

- Be positive in attitude toward volleyball and emphasize the cooperative nature of the sport
- Encourage hard work and honest effort that will lead to improved performance and participation
- Encourage athletes to participate in volleyball alcohol- and drug-free
- Encourage and respect referees and officials and their integrity
- Encourage athletes to participate for their own enjoyment
- Applaud fair play and good play during games and/or matches
- Be supportive of all attempts to remove verbal and physical abuse from organized volleyball activities, including language
- Meet the required administrative and programmatic rules if in some cases the athletes are not able to do so
- Protect athletes from sanctions and/or suspension by producing accurate documentation
- Attend age-group (5-18) volleyball events alcohol- and drug-free
- Use only designated smoking areas that are clearly posted at age group (5-18) volleyball events



⇒ **SPORTS MEDICINE SUPPORT TEAM CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As a sports medicine support team member, I will aspire to:

- Represent professional qualifications and/or credentials
- Provide appropriate emergency services at practices and matches
- Work professionally to condition athletes to prevent injuries and rehabilitate athletes from injuries incurred
- Encourage athletes to participate in volleyball alcohol and drug-free
- Make true claims about efficacy of care
- Maintain knowledge and skills required for continuing professional competence
- Maintain a professional relationship with athletes
- Disclose to athletes any interest in commercial enterprises which the sport medicine support member or team promotes to athletes for the purpose of personal gain or profit
- Provide services without discrimination based on race, sex, creed, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, ability or age
- Provide confidentiality of records on athletes within federal and state status



⇒ **SPECTATOR CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As a spectator, I will aspire to:

- Respect the rights of others and treat the visiting team and their spectators courteously
- Attend age-group (5-18) volleyball events alcohol/drug-free
- Abide by federal, state and local laws while attending any match
- Cheer positively for my team, rather than against them or their opponents, using socially acceptable language
- Respect the integrity and judgment of the officials without taunting or approaching them between games or at the end of a match
- Applaud good performances by all teams
- Use items to cheer with that are of non-violent nature
- Discourage all forms of violent behavior
- Use only designated smoking areas that are clearly posted
- Use litter receptacles to dispose of trash properly



⇒ **OFFICIATING TEAM CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As a part of the officiating team (1st referee, 2nd referee, scorer, libero tracker, scoreboard operator, line judge), I will aspire to:

- Maintain a dignified and professional appearance at all times
- Devote time, thought and study to the rules and mechanics to carry out the rules effectively
- Maintain appropriate credentialing as part of the officiating team
- Display impartial, consistent and courteous officiating behavior
- Display quiet efficiency in the performance of officiating duties
- Enforce rule modifications for those present with special needs
- Work with other officiating personnel as an officiating team
- Accept officiating team feedback positively



⇒ **ADMINISTRATOR CODE OF BEHAVIOR**

As an administrator/director, I will aspire to:

- Provide quality supervision and instruction by coaches who demonstrate qualities of hiring positive role models for youth in volleyball
- Insist that coaches conduct themselves in a professional manner (according to USA Volleyball Coaches' Code of Behavior)
- Assist coaches in professional development to improve the standards of coaching
- Provide visible security (security should be equipped with radio equipment that permits communication at all times)

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- Provide appropriate emergency and medical services at practices and matches
- Provide equal opportunities and equal access for everyone to participate
- Insist that unruly spectators be removed from the premises
- Follow the rules and regulations of USA Volleyball to ensure that the association's philosophy and objectives are enhanced
- Adjust the equipment, practice sessions and match schedule based on the ability, maturity levels, ages and special needs of the athletes involved
- Develop programs that encompass fairness to the participants and promote fair play
- Positively promote and publicize volleyball

It is also the intent of USA Volleyball leadership to conduct business with media and sponsor partners in the following manner:

⇒ MEDIA RELATIONSHIPS

- Have respect for truth and for the right of the public to the truth
- Defend the principles of freedom in the honest collection and publication of news and the right of fair comment and criticism
- Use fair methods to obtain news, photographs and documentation as they relate to volleyball
- Be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media and avoid facilitating such discrimination based upon race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, religion and national or social origins
- Be aware of the differences in the rules of volleyball for all those who participate (e.g. Special Olympics (Unified), Sitting and Standing, Seniors, Juniors, Mixed Six)
- Report and help reduce incidents of inappropriate sporting behavior in volleyball



⇒ SPONSOR RELATIONSHIPS

- Use responsible advertising appropriate for age-group volleyball programs
- Advertise to promote healthy lifestyles
- Maintain reputable business practices involving labor laws, racial and gender advancement
- Treat other sponsors with respect by not degrading other competitive products
- Provide positive support for volleyball by watching even if it is not the sport of choice
- Fulfill the obligations to USA Volleyball as described in contractual agreements
- Encourage the responsible use of products



Coordinated by:

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Resources:

American Volleyball Coaches Association, Coaches Code of Ethics and Conduct (1996). Australian Sports Commission, Aussie Sport Codes of Behaviors. (1995). Martens, R, & Deefeldt, V. (Eds.), (1987). Guidelines for Children's Sports. Reston, VA: AAHPERD. NAGWS Volleyball Rules. (1997-1998). SEC. Sportsmanlike Conduct. (1996). Texas Department of Health. (1996). Athletic Trainers General Requirements and Guidelines. USAV Coaches Code of Ethics and Conduct. (1996). USA Volleyball Rules. (1997-1998). USOC, Coaching Ethics Code. (1995) YMCA of the USA, Officials' Code of Ethics. (1997)

In Discussion with:

Central Hockey League, Eureka Junior/Senior High School Athletics, Department, Eureka, KS; Moore High School Athletics Department, Moore, OK; Professional Golf Association; United States Golf Association; University of Oklahoma Office of Athletic Directors; USA Volleyball Executive Committee & Executive Council; USA Volleyball Member Organizations & Division Leadership; Group D through Vice President Bonbright; Juniors Division through Vice President Pingel.

NATIONAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR JUNIOR CLUB PERSONNEL

In addition to ensuring that every junior club staff member has a current USAV Background Screen on file, and each coach is IMPACT certified, it now becomes a requirement that all adult Junior Club personnel registering online via the National Membership Registration System each year also sign and submit the new nationwide standard Code of Conduct. Regions may still also require coaches to sign a Region-specific document in addition to this one. Please refer to specific requirements as published by your Region.

This document is intended to replace inconsistent Regional requirements and to provide a uniform nationwide Code of Ethics for all USAV members, regardless of membership Region. This document was approved in concept by the RVAs in May 2009. An ad-hoc committee was formed and charged to work with the USAV National Office Staff to write the document. In accordance with our risk managers, the approved Code of Ethics is for all individuals in a non-player role, that are actively participating in a junior club program. This includes but is not limited to the following roles: Club Director, Club Administrator, Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Trainer, Manager, Chaperone, Team Representative/Parent, etc., but excludes individuals who only participate in the capacity of a player.

USA VOLLEYBALL JUNIOR CLUB PERSONNEL CODE OF ETHICS (last updated on 7/23/2013)

It is the duty and obligation of USA Volleyball affiliated Junior Club Program administrators, directors, coaches and other club personnel to assure the following Code of Ethics is followed and adhered to by all individuals who have an active role in a USA Volleyball Junior Club Program in any Region of USA Volleyball.

In a continuing effort to promote safe, healthy and ethical communication, relationships and treatment of all USA Volleyball players and personnel, all adults associated with a junior club program now must read, accept and submit this USAV Junior Club Personnel Code of Ethics before they are eligible to participate actively in a junior club program associated, affiliated, or participating in USA Volleyball.

1. All adult club personnel affiliated with a junior program must be a registered member with a Region of USA Volleyball and USA Volleyball.
2. All adult club personnel including coaches, chaperones, assistant coaches, trainers, etc. affiliated with a junior program intending to participate in USA Volleyball must have an approved and current background screen on file as per USA Volleyball policy. It is intended that the term "all adult club personnel" be all inclusive and not limited to only those categories identified herein.
3. A head coach or assistant coach affiliated with a junior program must also: be an adult (see Region definition of an adult) and be IMPACT certified according to USA Volleyball and Region policies.
4. If allowed by Region rules, an assistant coach who has not yet met the age of majority in the state of residence must be supervised by a head coach recognized by the Region and must meet all applicable Region and USA Volleyball requirements. Individuals who are registered as junior players and also have an interest in coaching should contact their region regarding coaching eligibility.
5. **Responsibilities:**
 - A. A head coach or other equally qualified club personnel must be present at all practices and competitions. A head coach, adult club representative personnel or registered chaperone must be present during team-supervised travel. This individual shall be responsible for the moral, legal and ethical well-being for each participant during team/club activities.
 - B. Coaches shall understand the unique power of a coach-athlete relationship. Coaches and all other club personnel shall not exploit athletes and shall avoid any relationships which could compromise the integrity of the learning and participation process, impair their professional judgment and/or take advantage of a situation for their own personal gain or gratification.

All Club Personnel:

- C. Must understand that all forms of sexual abuse, assault or harassment of a current or former athlete are unethical and illegal even when an athlete invites or consents to such behavior or involvement. Club personnel shall not engage in sexual/romantic relationships with current athletes or other participants over whom there is/was authority. See B above.
- D. Shall ensure that all individuals have met all Regional Volleyball Association and USA Volleyball membership requirements prior to participation in any club, team and/or Region/National USA Volleyball activity.
- E. Must inform the players and their parent(s)/guardian(s) about any Region and/or USA Volleyball transfer policy. This policy may restrict or prohibit a participant from transferring to another club or team if specified criteria have been met. Likewise, all club personnel must inform the players and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of any rules or policies regarding coaching transfers during a particular season.

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- F. Shall abide by and inform the players and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of applicable regional recruiting policies.
- G. May not participate in, require another individual to participate in, or condone any act considered to be illegal under federal, state or local laws and/or ordinances.
- H. Shall strive to educate their athletes and personnel to respect, honor and adhere to the rules of the facility being used during practices, tournaments or events. In this regard, the rules of the facility shall have priority over the rules of the Regional Volleyball Association.
- I. Shall ensure that all activities are suitable for the age, experience and ability of their athletes.
- J. Shall seek professional medical advice when making decisions regarding an injured athlete's ability to continue training or playing.
- K. Shall, while serving in a professional capacity, avoid any drug, tobacco or alcohol use while in the presence of athletes.
- L. Shall not supply or condone the use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, fireworks, ammunition, firearms, knives or any item or material that can be used as a weapon, to any of the participants or athletes and shall report any athlete using or in the possession of the same.
- M. Shall not allow, encourage, condone or require any behavior that threatens an athlete's amateur status or Regional, USA Volleyball, school and/or collegiate eligibility.
- N. Shall maintain all relationships with other club personnel on a professional and confidential basis.
- O. Must be positive role models. This includes being courteous, respectful and polite to players, parents, other coaches, club directors, event personnel, and officials.
- P. Will not engage in any physical, verbal or emotional harassment, abusive words or actions, or coercion of current and/or former athletes.
- Q. All club personnel will immediately report any suspected case of illegal activity, abuse, assault, harassment, or ethical violations of this club personnel code of ethics to the appropriate authorities, including Regional Volleyball Administrators.

Any violation of this Code may result in sanction being issued against the club representative, the individual(s) and the club/team involved. These sanctions may extend to the loss of eligibility of the club representative, the individual(s), the entire club and the team involved.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, any coach wishing to become USAV-CAP certified will still need to accept, acknowledge and submit the existing full USOC/USAV Coaches Code of Conduct as part of their certification requirements.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website – click on the Education heading, then on the Coaching-Education-Programs tab, then on Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources.
 - [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #1- Philosophy and Ethics](#)
 - [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #2- Safety and Injury Prevention](#)
 - [2015-2016 USAV Junior Club Personnel Code of Ethics Form](#)
 - [Gold Medal Standards for Youth Sport](#), from Pursuing Victory With Honor Summit on Youth Sports, Feb. 10-11, 2002
 - [Fifteen Important Points About Volleyball Coaching Ethics](#), by John Kessel.

NOTES:

NOTES:

CHAPTER 5: COACHING PHILOSOPHY, PRINCIPLES, AND DEVELOPMENT

PHILOSOPHY

The game of volleyball is rapidly changing. Players are doing things at levels that would have been called impossible a decade ago. This is a sport that even young players can play at a very high level. Indeed, it is the years of volleyball experience, not age, which determine what a player can do on the court. The All Japan Elementary School Championships has more than 7,000 schools in the program and the players, all under the age of 11, could beat most American high school teams. As their programs gain experience, coaches will need to be creative to change the demands, the systems, game play and even the court sizes for the more experienced players. And remember, **everything changes**; what you knew as volleyball “back then” has changed, so live and learn.

Take a couple of minutes and write down a brief draft of a personal working coaching philosophy here (2 or 3 sentences). >>>>

USA Volleyball coaches support a philosophy that attempts to put winning in its proper perspective. Simply stated, it is “player development over winning.” Supporting this philosophy means that every decision a coach makes is based first on what the coach thinks is best for the athletes, and second on what may improve the team’s chance of winning. Do not misunderstand this philosophy – **IMPACT** and **USAV-CAP** are not saying that winning is unimportant. Striving to win is essential for enjoyable competition. As you begin to develop ways to put a coaching philosophy into practice, consider the ideas on the following pages.

NOTES:

Pat Head Summit’s Coaching Philosophy: “The Definite Dozen” (from her book *Reach for the Summit*)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Respect yourself and others | 7. Don't just work hard, work smart |
| 2. Take full responsibility | 8. Put the team before yourself |
| 3. Develop and demonstrate loyalty | 9. Make winning an attitude |
| 4. Learn to be a great communicator | 10. Be a competitor |
| 5. Discipline yourself so no one else has to | 11. Change is a must |
| 6. Make hard work your passion | 12. Handle success like you handle failure |

THE IMPORTANCE OF COACHES

Coaches may have more influence than anyone else in a number of players’ lives. A coach may be the only role model players can trust or may be the escape from a difficult situation. Young athletes are going through tough developmental stages in becoming adults. There are huge differences between the needs of the younger and older players in each program, even though all are junior players. If coaching the opposite sex, coaches must be especially cognizant of their position of power and the sexual/gender implications of such a position.

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents notes that young adolescents have much discretionary time and a lot of it is unstructured, unsupervised, and unproductive for the youngsters. Only about 60 percent of their waking hours are committed to school, homework, eating, chores or jobs, while about 40 percent are discretionary.

Quick –

What do you coach?!

If you just thought to yourself...

“Volleyball!”...

You just failed this IMPACT Clinic!

Just kidding ...but the important thing to realize is that we coach PEOPLE – little people or big people, they are all still people! Keep this important distinction in mind as you think about and create your Coaching Philosophy.

Carnegie's Task Force also found that 92 percent of 1987 high school graduates had begun drinking alcohol prior to graduation; 56 percent had begun drinking in the sixth to ninth grades. Again, in 1989, they found that by age 17, about 25 percent had engaged in behaviors harmful to themselves and others (sexual activity, using drugs/alcohol, antisocial activities, and failing in school).

The suicide rate among adolescents 10 to 14 years old more than doubled from 1980 to 1985. It emphasized that the period from 10 to 15 years of age is one of extreme vulnerability, in large part because of the great physical, social and emotional changes that occur in adolescence. More recently, in the 1990s, it was determined that suicide had become the second leading cause of death for teens aged 13-18 years old. Carnegie's report ("A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours," 1992) also states:

"Young adolescents do not want to be left to their own devices. In national surveys and focus groups, America's youth have given voice to a serious longing. They want more regular contact with adults who care about them and respect them, more opportunities to contribute to their communities, protection from the hazards of drugs, violence, and gangs, and greater access to constructive and attractive alternatives to the loneliness that so many now experience."

One study of role models done at the University of Oklahoma with the average high school student body (and as a specific subgroup, athletes) confirms the huge responsibility that coaches have:

Top 4 Role Models for **Students**

- 1) parents
- 2) teachers
- 3) siblings
- 4) classmates

Top 4 Role Models for **Athletes**

- 1) parents
- 2) **COACHES**
- 3) teachers
- 4) siblings

More importantly, 35 percent of the athletes in this study actually placed their coaches first on their lists, ahead of their parents!

Researchers from Michigan State University say 75 percent of today's teenagers quit organized athletics by the age of 15. Coaches must keep these studies in mind as they work with the junior players in their programs.

The main reasons given for this attrition?

"I was not having fun."

"The coach was a poor teacher."

"I lost interest."

Thanks to Tom Crawford, a former USOC Coaching Development director, for sharing this adaptation of a poem by Haim Ginott, originally describing the impact of teachers on students, at a U.S. Olympic Committee conference on youth sport. USA Volleyball's IMPACT program and many of the other United States Olympic National Governing Bodies use it in their coaching accreditation programs. USAV's Video interpretation of this quote can be viewed at www.usavolleyball.org.

The IMPACT of Coaches

I have come to the frightening conclusion

I am the decisive element on the court.

It is my personal approach that creates the climate.

It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a coach, I possess tremendous power

To make a child's life miserable or joyous.

I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.

In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis

will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.

---an adaptation from Haim Ginott

Another item to share originated with Gary Walton, formerly with the USOC Coaching Development Office:

Ten Characteristics of Highly Successful Coaches

1. **Committed to individual integrity, values and personal growth**
2. **Profound thinkers who see themselves as educators**
3. **Well educated (formally and informally) in a liberal arts tradition**
4. **Long-run commitment to their athletes and institution**
5. **Willing to experiment with new ideas**
6. **Value the coach-player relationship, winning aside**
7. **Understand and appreciate human nature**
8. **Love their sport and work**
9. **Honest and strong in character**
10. **Human and therefore imperfect**

A recent study found that kids find playing for coaches who stress personal improvement, having fun and giving maximum effort is much more important with a bigger impact on them (about 10 times more influential) than a team's win-loss record, illustrating again that winning is relatively unimportant for youth sport participants.

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Boys/girls perceiving that their coach created a **MASTERY CLIMATE**:

- Liked playing for their coach more
- Rated their coaches as more knowledgeable about the sport
- Thought their coach was better at teaching kids how to play
- Had a greater desire to play for the coach again the following year
- Enjoyed their team experience more
- Believed that their parents liked the coach more

COACHING POINTS OF EMPHASIS

Coaching Objectives – Many coaches do not ask themselves the key questions, “Why do I coach?” and “What is my coaching philosophy?” Too often coaches get into this profession and go about their business without thinking about the effect they are having on young athletes. Coaches speak eloquently about youth development and having a good time, but when the match starts they revert to yelling about any error and keep lesser-skilled players “riding the pine.” Their words are not reflected in their game conduct. Coaches need to state their personal mission in writing, so parents and players can read it; this reflects the coach’s core values in coaching.

As a new coach, it is easy to let one’s own self esteem be closely tied to the victories of the group. With young players and the many varied skills demanded by volleyball, errors are the rule rather than the exception. Remember that players are gaining invaluable experience now that will usually show up next season, so be patient.

Establishing Foundational Beliefs – Great religions, enduring philosophies, established systems of government or law are all characterized by a few key principles – short but powerful statements that embody the essential truths of that religious, philosophical, or governmental system. These are the foundational beliefs upon which everything else within the system is built. Without such foundational beliefs, a consistent, strong and enduring structure cannot be built.

If one desires to build a great volleyball program it is also necessary to have consistent, strong, enduring foundational beliefs. But these beliefs cannot be built on sand; they must be built on substance. So a very important question is, “On what foundation should the system be built?” This foundation is many times based on societal beliefs about the characteristics of a coach that may not necessarily be true.

Some prevalent myths about coaching, which **IMPACT** hopes to dispel by the end of this course, include:

- If one has played the game, this makes one a good coach
- If one has played the game, this makes one a better coach than those who have not played
- If one has coached for many years, s/he must be a good coach
- The best trained coaches are needed more on the elite levels, rather than on the beginning levels
- Volunteer coaches cannot be fired
- Volunteer coaches should not be held to the same standards or expectations as paid coaches

Along these same lines, in answer to an FAQ on their website, the West Virginia High School Activities Association states:

“There is no such thing as a “volunteer” coach. If an individual wants to coach, whether paid or unpaid, they must be a teacher, substitute teacher or authorized certified individual.”

HOW MANY GREAT TEACHERS HAVE YOU HAD?!

WHY were they GREAT?!

List some reasons WHY you include them on this list...

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Now...go out and DO each of these and YOU will likely be one that is remembered on someone else’s “Great Coaches” list!

NOTES:

John Wooden, the legendary UCLA basketball coach, said this in an interview (*American Coach*, 1988):

“When I was coaching I always considered myself a teacher. Teachers tend to follow the laws of learning better than coaches who don’t have any teaching background. A coach is nothing more than a teacher. I used to encourage anyone who wanted to coach to get a degree in teaching so they could apply those principles to athletics.”

Teaching is More Important than Training – The best volleyball teachers are like loving parents. Their care for children, combined with volleyball, produces the best result. Coaches must spend as much time teaching players with less ability as much as, or even more than, those with more ability because a team on the court is only as strong as its weakest player. Just like parents should not compare their children to each other – coaches must also treat each player fairly. More training time is more important for a young player than competition time – we’ll discuss this more when we get to Motor Learning in Chapter 6.

Legal Duties and Responsibilities – As covered in Chapter 2 under the Risk Management section, coaches must be knowledgeable in the areas of **Injury Prevention, First Aid and Rehabilitation of Volleyball Injuries**, and their **Legal Responsibilities and Liability for Negligence**. Coaches must take these into account as they develop their coaching philosophy. Remember that coaches have the legal duty to keep adequate records and:

- Provide a safe environment
- Properly plan the activity
- Provide proper instruction
- Evaluate students for injury or incapacity
- Match and equate players
- Provide adequate and proper equipment
- Warn of the inherent risks in volleyball
- Supervise the activity closely
- Know emergency procedures and first aid

FUNDAMENTAL COACHING PRINCIPLES

Have Patience – This is especially true at the youth volleyball level. There will be countless errors as these young athletes play under the same demands as an Olympic team competitor. With no time to hold the ball and figure things out, there will be many judgment and timing errors, so focus on good technique. Motor skill research (by Anders Ericsson) notes that it takes 10 years or 10,000 hours of “deliberate practice” to become a skilled player in a sport, but not all those hours may need to be IN that sport to count, so specializing early may not be the best decision.



Photo by Jay Metzger

Know Your Athletes – Part of this is knowing where your athletes are developmentally – not just chronologically. A basic knowledge of human growth and development (more SCIENCE) is essential to being able to take advantage of critical “windows of trainability” for both boys and girls. There are critical windows for developing mental, emotional, and physical skills in young players – don’t miss those windows. We’ll cover this in Chapter 6.

“We must have responsible coaches out there who, based on sound principles, will teach effectively and efficiently.”

~ Bill Neville, 1984 U.S. Men’s Olympic Team Assistant Coach ~

Process and Performance over Outcome – Volleyball coaches must focus on process over outcome. The development of the player as a whole person is most important. Off-the-court behavior is controllable, and by helping players learn to control their lifestyle, coaches help them control the flow of their game. Certainly, winning is fun and exciting. However, in the unique sport of volleyball, winning may be out of any one player’s control. The emphasis must be on the performance of the players over the outcome of the game. There can only be one winner at any level. It’s a fact that half of the volleyball teams playing on this very day throughout the world will lose!

Success is not just winning on the scoreboard, but in knowing the players did their best to play their best. Thus, a team can win on the scoreboard (but not succeed), or lose on the scoreboard (yet still triumph). Winning is also fun and exciting if it is kept in perspective. Adults who expect their players to perform like Olympians and who value winning above all other goals spoil the pleasure found in playing the game.

Winning at all costs leads to an acceptance of cheating and a view of the other team as the enemy. Remember, the kids come to have fun, to learn new skills and to play in a program that will enrich the quality of their lives. Share with them the concept, “We will be successful. We may lose some matches, we may win some matches, but we will be successful.”

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Help Every Player in the Program – Give every player equal attention, regardless of skill level. The more skillful players will receive more opportunities to play, so pay particular attention to the less skilled during practice. It is impossible to predict a young athlete's ability potential until given real encouragement and assistance.

Separate the Performance from the Performer – Young players too often tie their self image to their performance. Coaches must not make this same mistake. Make sure every criticism is constructive, using compliments and correction, clearly separated from the player's ego. One of the most important things coaches can do is to build every player's self esteem, no matter what his/her skill level.

Be Consistent – Coaches are very important role models for young players, inside the gym or out. Coaches must always demonstrate what they believe in, model it in practice and reinforce it when it is seen. Coaches need to let athletes know that coaches are human and will make mistakes, and so will athletes. Coaches should demonstrate to players how to believe in themselves and what they are doing. Coaches should also earn respect and accept respect. Help athletes develop in mind, body and spirit, not just in technique.

Be Demanding and Disciplined, Never Demeaning – Perhaps old coaching styles do live on though tradition, but a coach's style must be based on the laws of learning. If screaming, yelling at or putting down a player was the best way to teach, then English, science, and primary school teachers would all be using that method. Many coaches' actions, if brought into a classroom in front of a principal watching him/her teach, would get that coach sent quickly to counseling and psychiatric sessions, and possibly even fired. Coaches must make sure they are **teaching**, not taking out their frustrations as a former player or setting unrealistic expectations. Even the pros make errors after decades of learning and kids will too. Coaches should never be demeaning to their athletes.

Coach Smarter, Not Harder – Experience is a great teacher, but coaching clinics and other learning opportunities are essential. Sharing ideas with fellow coaches and not keeping secrets that work will reinforce and challenge everyone's ideas. The ideas here and in all levels of the USAV-CAP courses will provide coaches with much more efficient ways of coaching. Coaches need to be aware that at this level they generally won't have the same amount of time to train their athletes that the higher levels do.

Be Innovative, Not Imitative – This is hard to do, but it is suggested coaches do not just copy others. Do not ask for just one more drill. Do not demand the exact recipe for this year's program – including practice plans. This **IMPACT** Clinic will help coaches discover the ideal plan for this year, but also will enable them to create what their programs and players need to be successful. Players should also be involved in this process. Indeed, one key goal of all Junior and Youth volleyball programs should be to look for any and all ways to involve players in problem-solving. The program and players will benefit more from such a standard of coaching.

Quality Over Quantity – In practice, drills that are game-like are much more valuable than non game-like motor programs and habits. Players should spend time doing single-person, against-a-wall drills or most pair drills outside of the practice session. When coaches are with them, they must teach them the angles and tactics of the game relative to the net and game-like ball flights.

NOTES:

If there are too many players for one net, create nets by using court lines, walls and spaces between courts that are part of your gym space. Learning increases when the number of response opportunities increases. Coaches must blend game-like habits in high-repetition drills. Be aware of when the quality of the contact suffers from mindless quantity of contacts.

No Fear of Mistakes – Coaches need to develop the atmosphere in their gym where there is no fear of making a mistake. Sloppy performances are not to be tolerated; however, practice is a place to try new things continually, not just those already known. This means that as skills are learned, many mistakes will be made. There must be a blend of self discipline – to perform the fundamentals daily and perfectly and not fear the errors when attempting unperfected skills.

The renowned social psychologist H. Stephen Glenn has a wonderful motto about making mistakes, taking new risks, and doing new things, since they are part of the process of learning to be the best you can be:

“MISTEAKS R WUNDERFULL OPPERTUNITEEZ 2 LERN!”

Athletes Will Become Better Players if They Coach – If coaches want to see their athletes become better performers of a particular skill, have them teach that skill to someone else. Coaches, former players themselves, have been heard to say such things as, “I never learned to really see the block as a player, until I had to coach my players to do so – now I consciously see the block each time I hit.” Coaches should give their players the opportunity to coach other, usually younger, players in the game of volleyball.

Regression to the Mean – Volleyball, like anything else, is governed by the mathematical principle of “regression to the mean.” This simply means that a skill done either above or below a player’s average action will more than likely return toward the average action in the next performance. The coach’s job is to help players steadily raise that “average” performance by striving for perfection in every drill, a consistency that can only come through repetitive practice.

People unaware of this fact find themselves using punishment and negative reinforcement. This is caused by the fact that an above-average performance – those actions we find easy to praise and positively reinforce – will probably regress to the mean. It seems that the attention directed at the improvement serves to inhibit the next action. This regression makes one underestimate the effectiveness of reward. One might even think the attention caused a lack of concentration on the subsequent – and likely less perfect – attempt.

At the same time, when a player performs below average, many people discipline or exhibit negative kinds of attention, after which they see improvement in the next action. Even though this is also because of regression to the mean, people tend to overestimate the effectiveness of punishment. Their experiences mistakenly seem to prove that punishment works and praise does not.

Those interested in learning more about this topic should go to the library and get a copy of *Discover Magazine’s* July 1985 issue, where this was first covered in an article called “Decisions, Decisions.” Coaches would also gain a lot of insight into coaching errors from the book by Tom Gilovich, *How We Know What Isn’t So: The Fallibility of Human Reasoning in Everyday Life*.

Positive vs. Negative Errors – Given the number of errors the players will make, it is important to help them find good things in the many mistakes. Each skill has an ideal ball placement and many inaccurate placements. Look for the good and help your player make good mistakes. For example, it is better to set a ball too far off the net or too high rather than too close to the net or too low? Toshi Yoshida, head coach of the 2004 USA Women’s Olympic Volleyball Team, stresses this daily calling them “Good Misses” (too far off) and “Bad Misses” (too tight).

Penalties of Any Sort Should be Minimized – The ideal penalty is **not playing**, rather than wind sprints or push-ups. When someone should be penalized in a drill, have them sit out for a time period or until a teammate replaces them in the “doghouse” of sorts. Through the concept of “winners stay on,” many great beach and indoor players have learned by watching when they were younger and then keeping the court when older.

What coaches should use, if they feel such physical discipline is required, is short, court-sized sprints, block jumps and spike approaches. A better option is to reduce a workout load by a small factor as a reward (but still working out) to emphasize the positive image of exercise. At the same time, make the punishment the denial of the chance to train or exercise. Otherwise, the workout desired is seen as a punishment, creating an all-too-present attitude that “exercise is bad.”

Teach Attitudes – A bad attitude is simply one that prevents an individual from improving. Many coaches, even at the higher levels of volleyball, find they must first teach players what makes a good attitude. Development of a good attitude must begin on the court. In a related way, both movement and communication skills, including talking on the court, must be emphasized at the entry levels.

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Coach Democratically – Coaches must share coaching responsibilities with players. This is part of making a true team; as a result, the team will have many “coaches” (not assistants, but rather equal status). Former Grassroots Commission member Marty Miller put it best by noting the “fallacy of adult wisdom,” emphasizing that adults seem to think that all knowledge resides only in the adult coach’s brain. The best teams share all levels of coaching with the players, including Olympic teams. Call time-outs and let the kids tell themselves what to do; coaches are often surprised at their players’ insights.

Talk Attention – Many coaches spend a great deal of time worrying and talking about distractions that exist. Get away from such talk and instead focus all efforts on teaching each individual how to attend to what **is** important. Better concentration in practice will help speed skill development. However, no player can concentrate 100 percent of the time. Teach players when to relax and when to re focus. Let them practice this important skill. Ask questions – learning is best when the athletes must figure out most of the answers. This may be a bit slower way of teaching, but the result is better players. This is called the Socratic Method of coaching, and it is the model that **IMPACT** and USAV-CAP coaches should follow. Once the skill, idea or technique is understood, coaches ask questions rather than dictate answers. Volleyball is a game for the players; the coach has very little involvement in the higher levels of the game. Players must learn problem-solving skills and decision-making skills in practice, not just in the game.

The goal is that players will no longer have the habit of whirling their heads to the team bench after an error to get the answers from the coach. Teach them to teach themselves.

When speaking to players, use “I” and “we” phrases such as, “*I see...*,” and “*We need to...*,” not the “*you*” that puts them on the defensive. Ask, do not just tell. When questioning them, do not just ask “Yes/No” questions, where a simple yes or no answer can be made. Ask questions requiring more than these two monosyllabic responses.

When calling a group of players in for a teachable moment, ask the question that caused this moment to occur and then look around. Then ask the question of the person intended. Instead of, “*Cody, where should we be when the second contact is made by the opponents?*” ask “*Where should we be when the second contact is made by the opponents?*”... pause and look around at all the players ... then finish with the intended player’s name, “*...Cody?*” This way everyone stays intent on figuring out the answer to the question, even if not called upon.

Another hint that works wonders is to use the word “*and*” instead of “*but*.” Once the word “*but*” is used, the door is closed and players do not hear or remember the compliments or positive wording, no matter how many compliments coaches use.

Foster the players’ abilities to ask internal questions so they can make good judgments without the coach’s presence. At the same time, coaches should show them why it is desirable to strive in the direction they know is best for that player. “We” also promotes team unity.

There is no “Trying” in Volleyball! – There is nothing a volleyball coach asks that a player cannot do; thus, “*I can’t*” must be changed to something like “*How many times out of 10 can I do it?*”

NOTES:

“Train in Reality!”

-Hugh McCutcheon, USA Volleyball
National and Olympic Team Head Coach

In the same way, “*trying*” simply provides an excuse for not doing something, and “*I’m trying*” must be changed to “*I will*.” Trying does not exist on a court—either one does it or one does not. Each and every trial is a new opportunity to improve. Remember Jedi Master Yoda in the movie *Star Wars*? To paraphrase this very wise coach, “*Do or do not. There is no try.*”

Be Nonverbally Positive – Speaking is only one form of communication. Nonverbal communications, such as gestures of hostility and happiness, facial expressions of joy or sadness, and behaviors of kindness or anger, all express clear messages to players. Remember that how one expresses oneself is often as important as what is actually said. Faced with the pressures and excitement of competitive sports, coaches must think carefully about what they say and the emotions that are communicated. Teach players about teamwork, gestures and actions – their own and the coach’s.

Be a Good Model – While the coach need not be a volleyball player to be a good volleyball coach, the coach must be a good volleyball model, since words have little meaning to beginning motor skill learners. It is essential that coaches have a good idea of how to model fundamental skills. Show players what is wanted, do not just tell them. When given the opportunity, participate at clinics rather than just watch – this will help hone the coach’s own skills.

Teachable Moments – A coach’s effectiveness as a teacher depends on his or her ability to recognize “teachable moments.” These are the times when a valuable lesson can be learned by stopping a drill or even a scrimmage to comment on an incident. However, coaches must exercise caution in stopping play too frequently or players will lose interest and not listen. Many playing mistakes do not need a comment. Indeed, the coach’s attention should be on what should be done, or what was done right, rather than on what was done wrong. Talk individually as much as possible, even if saying the same things a dozen times. This is preferred and has more impact than lecturing the whole group ... unless the whole group is making the same mistake and needs the same feedback.

A coach should create what is needed from the ideas and information gained from this book and clinic, as well as other sources and training experiences. Remember, what you emphasize is what your players will do. Each skill has fundamental keys that the players must know and understand. If correct fundamentals are emphasized, a coach will have a good team. Do not clutter their minds with all sorts of small details. Players can help their teammates and younger players as long as they know the key things that should be done.

Attend to Desired Results – Attention at this level is a powerful reinforcement. If coaches give their attention to mistakes, even if this attention is **negative** in words or action, they are reinforcing the error’s existence. Players and coaches tend to give too much attention to errors. Teammates who moan and groan about an error or spend a long time comforting the player who erred are slowing down their development. Coaches and players need to learn to ignore the mistakes and instead focus on the next play where they still have control over what will occur. There should be no crying over spilled milk, or over a teammate’s error. A player can make one mistake, that of a bad skill execution, but must not make a second one by grieving over it.

Players also lead coaches down this negative path by asking the universal question, “*Coach, what am I doing wrong?*” This forces the first words out of the coach’s mouth to be about an error and focuses on one of the million ways to do a skill incorrectly. Help the player ask the right kind of question and you will be making a big step toward focusing on the right things rather than the wrong ones.

Cooperation Development – Teamwork development takes place both on and off the court. There are going to be a large number of errors made in volleyball and a coach must never get frustrated at these errors. Players are not making mistakes on purpose. The coach’s job is to help every player to react to their teammates with actions that help a teammate. Touching helps build cohesion. Train players to slap hands or huddle in the middle after a play to say or do a positive action on the next play.

Competition and Self Discipline – Competition is a great motivator. Everyone wants to play. In youth volleyball, the teams should first learn to cooperate with each other. The ball is the first opponent for a learner in volleyball. Drills and competition should first be cooperative in that both teams play against the ball, rather than each other. Continue to develop this competitive but cooperative attitude in drills at all levels. At the same time, self discipline creates standards of performance from within. Thus, the second level of focus is on oneself. This is also a key part of the team sport of volleyball. No one player can win a volleyball game alone. The focus in practice and the game should be in improving one’s own performance, to contribute to the team performance, not worrying about winning or the opponents. The will to win is important, but the total development of each individual is far more important. It comes down to self control. The sooner players realize that only they can control how they react and how they deal with everything on the court and in life, the better their lives will be.

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They cannot control the bad pass of a teammate; they can only control how they will deal with it. Every great team understands the concept of “bettering the ball,” which is the individually developed attitude to improve on every previous contact, no matter what it was.

Under the stress of game play, the only thing coaches can be sure of is a certain amount of regression in skill level. This “game slippage,” as Vince Lombardi called it, requires both players and coaches to over-learn. Such over learning requires discipline. There is no room for excuses on the volleyball court. Coaches must know each individual’s abilities and demand improvement, yet not make demands beyond the player’s real capabilities. Players need to make and keep promises to themselves; coaches can help a great deal with this task.

“Since we learn best in training situations that are basically game-like, we should incorporate three contact drills as often as possible. I am convinced that the best hitting drills are pass, set, hit (P-S-H), the best setting drills are P-S-H and the best passing drills are P-S-H. Likewise, the best defensive drills are dig, set, hit combinations.”

~ Marv Dunphy, 2000 Men’s U.S. Olympic Team Coach, 1988 Olympic Gold Medal Coach

We MUST Let Them PLAY – Thousands of years ago Plato said, “It is the essential nature of man to play.” Stuart Brown has spent decades studying how life can be enhanced through play. Visit the website for the Institute for Play (www.nifplay.org), where their trademarked motto is “PLAY is Cross-Training for Life.” Brown writes that he has found “...general well-being and play are partners, and that it accompanies the most gifted in their adult achievements. Perhaps it allows access to the giftedness that we all possess.”

“Our major new functional hypothesis is that play enables animals to develop flexible kinesthetic and emotional responses to unexpected events in which they experience a sudden loss of control. Specifically, we propose that play functions to increase the versatility of movements used to recover from sudden shocks...Furthermore, we propose that play is often stimulated by novel or unpredictable stimuli and is, thus, related to, although different from, exploration.”

- “Training for the Unexpected” by Marc Bekoff et al,
Quarterly Review of Biology, Vol 76, #2.

The research on play also reveals that the opposite of “play” is not “work” but actually is “*depression*.” Letting kids play develops leadership skills, adaptability and flexibility.

Improving a Little Can Win a Lot – Improving a small amount in one’s game of volleyball can result in winning more in the long run. The mathematical theory of finite Markov chains is where this can best be seen, and is found most easily when pitting two players head-to-head, as in tennis. If two players have identical abilities, then they have the same probability of winning each point. If 100 points are played, each will win 50 points.

However, if one player is able to increase his or her ability over that opponent by even just a small amount (to the point of winning 55 of 100 points), then things start to happen.

The probability of winning a game is now 62 percent; winning a set rises to 81 percent and winning two out of three set matches soars to 91 percent. The longer one plays a better player, the more ways there are to beat the opponent. Volleyball is similar, complicated by six opponents and five teammates. Still, research at Brigham Young University found that if one team is equal to its opponents, thus having a 15-15 season, if they get just one point better than every opponent, it will become a 20-10 season.

NOTES:

“The great performers perform as they do, and do so with such ease, because they love what they are doing. It’s not work. It’s play.”

-Chuck Hogan, Director of Athletics and the Intelligence of Play

Eye Focus Errors – While going through the motion without the ball can be a valuable rehearsal for beginners, all players must make sure the action is still as game-like as possible. Without the ball to focus on, players look at some non game-like place (such as the floor), and the skill action is not as valuable as it could be. Some common errors and the correct focus include: blocking–looking at the top of the net instead of through the net at the imaginary hitter; spiking–looking at the floor rather than up at the falling imaginary ball; extension rolling–looking at the floor rather than up for the imaginary ball coming over the net. Make sure players’ eyes are looking where they would in the game, during any rehearsal or no-ball dry run.

Constructive Sandwich – Start with a positive comment/compliment (*“Great hustle, that is just how we do it”*), then follow with next contact instruction (*“If you swing faster, you will hit the ball higher and it will clear the net on the same ball next time”*). What was done is done, and the focus must therefore be on the future. Then close with another positive statement/compliment.

Coach Proactively, Not Reactively – Train players to remember in advance of a situation; do not yell and react after the fact. In the same way, the idea is to coach, not just to state the obvious. Too many coaches communicate what was wrong, rather than coaching on how not to make the same error next time.

Eliminate Dead Time – Avoid or change drills that have players standing around. This can cause boredom and even lead to discipline problems. Coaches may even need to be more of a wandering ball feeder, so players can turn to the coach to get a ball, rather than chase a ball into a far-off corner while the other players wait around.

Practice What You Preach – Explain and model the behaviors you want the players to have in practice, match play, road trips and instructional situations. Encouragement, team support, information sharing and feedback are all very important in behavioral change.

Avoid Sarcasm – Marv Dunphy once said, “There is no room for sarcasm in coaching.” This is especially true with younger players and those who have only played for you for a short amount of time. Some coaches can and have used teasing and sarcasm in a positive way. The key thing is, it can be easily misinterpreted and coaches may not even know that it is happening. Just say what you think and refrain from sarcasm when coaching Junior Volleyball hopefuls.

Shout Praise, Whisper Criticism – In a related way, do an instant replay of a great play on the court with the ball – with the coach holding the ball and moving it in “slow motion” and providing exciting commentary on how good the play was. Create and give athlete nicknames that are only positive, empowering and good. Make sure no negative nicknames are used.

Teach Observation Through The Net – Players focus on the ball too much and not the opponent. Teach them to look at the court/players while the ball is flying in the air. For example, in the skills of blocking and defense, once the set is made, players should take the eyes off the ball and look at the attacker. After setting, the setter should look at the opponent’s defense and talk to her hitter. Players on the bench must know what the other team is doing, and by the end of the game they must be able to report on who their best players are, who talks the most, who is the most verbal player, how many serves were put over, and how many free balls the opponents give. Split the watching of “our team” stats with “their team” stats.

Right Here – Right Now Focus – If coaches have a player who continually focuses on the past/errors, rather than playing in the “right here/right now” focus that players must learn, insert a teachable moment. For example:

Have the player play several points while holding on to some sort of bag or suitcase, maybe even two bags or wearing a backpack; then point out for everyone how much better they play without having to carry such “baggage” as the past can be.

Use Positive Charting – Rather than having the coaches’ “Radar Detection” being turned on only for errors, start “positive charting” to increase everyone’s (even parents’) awareness of how many good things a player or the team is doing. Look not only for things like proper skill execution, but also for the team building side such as great hustle and encouragement. Be honest, with the goal being to have about the same number of “positives” charted (2-6 is great) for each player per practice. Review them at the end of training, and summarize at the start of the next practice.

Make Things Game-like – It is much easier and faster to develop coordination and spatial awareness when players are young. Gymnasts are good examples of a youngster’s capabilities. What coaches should know is that just by teaching the many fundamentals through game-like drills they will broadly develop every player’s coordination, anticipation and imagination. The end result of practice is to be able to play the game of volleyball well. There are thousands of errors that a player can make in each skill.

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What coaches should focus on in practices is improving on each individual's fundamentals. There is no need to spend large amounts of time completing non volleyball actions to develop a base of coordination. The multitude of coordination demands found in volleyball actions will provide this base. The more like the game and skills of volleyball the drills are, the sooner players will have success in the game.

Do not rush ahead to the many options that are found in the game. Keep the focus on doing the fundamentals well. Do the **BASE** and game-like pass/set/hit drills often, and build competition into practice drills to make it worth their while. No matter what the player's age, volleyball should be enjoyable, especially in practice. Help every player see the improvement, no matter how small it may be. Help every player determine personal goals as well as the team's goals.

Ask these game-like questions of each program and each coach:

- What percentage of the time when spiking in a game, do players hit without a block – and what percentage do players hit without a block in practice?
- What percentage of points scored in a game start with a serve?
- What percentage of volleyball is mental and what percentage of the time is the mental side of the game taught in practice?
- What percentage of serve reception is done before the ball crosses the net and what percentage of the time are players learning the same over-the-net information when they and a partner pass on same side of the net?
- What percentage of “free” balls does the team get in games and what percentage is used during wash games initiated by a coach?
- What percentage of the time does the ball come from outside the court in a game, compared to what percentage a coach initiates drills/games from outside the court?
- What percentage of the time does the ball change angles in a game, vs. during a partner drill?
- What percentage of the time can a player run under the net in a game, or throw a ball to the setter?

Three Is The Magic Number – The general pattern of volleyball play uses all three contacts. The fundamental pattern of RECEIVE-SET-ATTACK should be developed early, while also improving single-skill actions. One inherent advantage of focusing on the three fundamental skills of receiving, setting and serving is that rallies will last much longer. The idea is to build a strong skill base in these three key skills.

This will enable players, when more experienced, to have success in spiking and additional skill options. Long rallies mean players are learning to contact the ball, not how to retrieve balls or watch a teammate run after another error.

However, this cooperation is not seen in most levels of play. Instead, one sees the first contact turning into the team's last contact, either because of a reception error or because the first contact is sent back over the net. There is a greater chance of error using all three contacts, partly because the second contact target area—the setter—is not large, especially when compared to the target area of an entire half court for the returned ball.

Remember, this one-touch “teamwork” is further developed by most partner and wall drills. These drills teach players to return the ball to where it came from. In such drills, the final goal is accuracy that requires no movement by the partners. Yet the cornerstones to success in volleyball are movement and rebounding the ball to a target, that target rarely being one which is from where the ball just arrived.

NOTES:

Coaches should refrain from using partner, wall and single-player drills. Instead, foster cooperation and develop game-like habits in groups of three or more to re-create the angles seen in a game. There are fewer contacts in triplet drills, but it is a matter of quality over quantity. When the players are in your gym, keep them in groups of three or more for most drills. Indeed, youth volleyball is in many ways just a fun combination triangle drill with opponents also involved.

When the players leave the gym, they will often only be able to practice against a wall or with one other friend. It is not that coaches should discourage such extra practice. It only means that they should make extra effort to help the athletes overcome the straight line habits and work on the game-like angles of the game during the organized practice sessions. It will pay off quickly in successful, improved, three-contact teamwork instead of ping-pong like, one-contact efforts.

COACHING SKILLS

Too often, practices are seen to have most players touching the ball a couple of hundred times, with some of them getting a lot more touches (the setters), and one person getting more than any one player...the coach! The sooner the players start hitting, setting, and serving themselves, the sooner they will get better. Coaches hit so many balls in old-style training that they have to hit the ball side-arm to save their shoulders. Let the players learn what coaches already know so the result is a team of assistant coaches, rather than "the one adult in charge."

Coaches will need to be involved in certain wash drills they create. There is a key skill that each coach must be able to perform with the ball – that of hitting at/near players for replaying wash drill errors for success, or for developing team defensive skills. Never forget that players must learn this skill as well, yet there are times when the coach will need to perform this action.

Whoever it is, the attack should have control, a high, game-like toss and readable actions. They should be volleyball-like attacks and the ball should fall from a game-like height, so the players can learn proper timing. There is no reason to hit using a sidearm or roundhouse action if none of the opponents have such hitters. At the same time, should the opponents perhaps whiff balls and do all sorts of off-balance hitting, the coach, on a stable hitting platform if doing team defense over the net (NOT on a chair), should attempt the same shots at times. For taller coaches the floor is the hitting platform. Too many coaches toss lower, easier-to-time (for the coach) balls, that are not like the high sets one side will attack and the other side will defend against. These lower-set balls are to come only in the quick hitting areas of the net.

Coaches must learn the skill of keeping their eyes on the player being coached, even if running the drill. Have another player "feed" you balls on your hip; you should not have to take your eyes off the performers to look for the next ball. Learn to give feedback to one player even as you are giving a new ball to the next player. The job of the feeders and ball collectors is very important in every drill; it is not a time to loaf. Contacts increase when collectors do their job. Collectors must cooperate so everyone learns more.

Coaches may have to serve some but the players should also serve. No coach ever won a game by how good his/her service was; it is the players' game. Coaches must pay special attention to developing a setter in practice and let the setters set, set, set. The time coaches spend to make the setter better makes all the hitters better, while the converse is not true.

PRE-SEASON PLANNING

Successful coaches begin planning their programs before the season begins. Many problems can be avoided if coaches take the time to think through what they want to achieve and how they are going to do it. While everyone plays volleyball in the backyard and at picnics, many coaches are not comfortable with how to teach volleyball by the rules. Because volleyball is not on television very often, coaches and athletes often do not have a good image of what the many skills really look like.

Some suggested activities that will help with planning your programs:

- Find out as much as possible about the organization of USA Volleyball programs by reading this Manual and speaking to program administrators and experienced coaches.
- Increase personal knowledge about coaching by attending coaches' training programs (USAV-CAP) and reading books on how to coach volleyball. Coaches will get many ideas about drills and practice that can be filtered and used with their teams.
- Purchase and study USAV-CAP's Performance Coaching Series DVDs for video clips of the best technique models. Utilize drill creation and practice planning websites and tools.
- Attend local collegiate or high school matches and practices. This will help coaches see skills being done properly and they can adapt the fundamentals and drill ideas for skills for use in their practices.

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- Videotape or get copies of volleyball games from television or from college and high school coaches. Players and parents also need to see how the game is played at higher levels so everyone involved can relate what they're learning to the future.
- Arrange meetings for both players and parents, both for the whole program as well as individual groups or teams. These are ideal times to ask for volunteers to be assistant coaches, administrators, etc., and to help out in many other ways.
- Be sure to set up emergency plans, including access to any gym used. Be aware of locked doors, phone locations, etc., when using facilities after hours and on weekends. Have a phone chain that will allow participants to be reached quickly.
- Arrange for sports medicine training for all staff through the local Red Cross or other agencies.
- Practice Plans – By referring to the practices and drills described in this manual, coaches will have information needed to write specific practice plans. One of the very unique and creative things about volleyball is how the coach can create many good drills from the **BASE** drill ideas presented. The last thing coaches need to get is a book of hundreds of volleyball drills. Look for ideas to improve existing drills, but do not use non game-like drills just to do something "new." Drills are simply solutions to problems your team is experiencing. Learn to create the solutions your team needs.

NOTES:

With as little time as most teams have to practice, everything should be as game-like as possible. Good coaches use good drills often, and just change the challenges within the **BASE** drill formats (see Chapter 7). Any clinic attended will supply numerous drills that can successfully be adapted to youth and higher levels of volleyball.

When introducing a new or unfamiliar activity, it may be helpful to make additional notes on practice plans. It is likely that coaches will need to modify these plans as the situation dictates. They are simply guidelines to follow; it is the success levels of the players that should move the practice to a harder drill, not the lesson plans. There is no such thing as doing a good drill too often. Establish medium-high success levels before moving on to make solid and confident players. Be creative and encouraging in all effort and performances.

Make sure to be conscious of the playing ability of athletes. If there is trouble with a drill, look at the choices and make adjustments for the players. It might be that the explanation was the problem – perhaps the coach just talked about it, rather than showing it. Be flexible and try to progress at a speed compatible with the abilities of the players.

Equipment for each practice should include at least one volleyball per player and a net set at the proper height for every team. While water breaks may not be actually scheduled into each plan, remember to include breaks or even use them as a subtle reward for good effort or drill work.

TEAM BUILDING

Teamwork is the essence of life, and volleyball is the ultimate TEAM sport. Unlike other sports where one person can dominate to score the winning goal, baskets, or whatever – this game cannot be dominated without teammate help.

USA Volleyball has looked long and hard at how best to build a team, and this section focuses on sharing other ideas with each coach who may have had to do the same.

No volleyball team can be successful with players who put themselves ahead of the team – selfishness destroys volleyball teams. As the great John Wooden once wrote, *“The team is the star, never an individual player.”*

Coaches must take time to find out as much as they can about their players. This is even more paramount to the non-school high school coach or the Junior Volleyball coaches who do not see their players daily. A favorite way to learn about a new group of athletes is the volleyball player drawing that includes 10-15 important questions for players to answer about themselves. Asking open-ended questions during travel or down time at tournaments builds on this base.

This also will provide the coach with key info to best meet the team needs, and better determine each player's role on the team, which is an essential task for team success. Helping each player, and the team as a group, set well-defined “SMART” goals is also a way to help build your team. Creating a list of team goals is an excellent team-building exercise!

A coach will get what he or she tolerates, so reward all positive efforts during team play. Use Positive Charting, and “Hollywood Star” ideas to acknowledge the efforts/improvements/teamwork moments the coach wants to develop. Recognize sacrifice, for without it a team or player will never know its own potential.

On the court, the best teams know the concept of “bettering the ball.” As players push their own personal envelope, doing things they have never done before in becoming the best they can be, they will err. The poor pass should be made better by the player setting it, while the imperfect set is bettered by the attacker. Errors are just part of playing on a team, while what a team does with the errors is more important.

If two individuals are an Olympic Beach team, they have on the team the following members:

1. The teammate I am
2. The teammate you are
3. The teammate I think I am
4. The teammate you think you are
5. The teammate I think you are
6. The teammate you think I am
7. The teammate I think you think I am
8. The teammate you think I think you are

The dynamics blending facts and opinions, the dance of perceptions and realities, is where all problems develop. The image a coach thinks he or she projects is likely different from the one the players perceive, which may be anywhere on the continuum of coaching, from total control freak to complete player-dominated training.

Group Needs – Each team has needs, and the top three that too many coaches fail to meet are known as affiliation, influence and most important, those of competency.

- **Competency**

Competency is perhaps the most important of these three key needs, for on a team of 12, only six can show on-court competency as players at any one time. This is why it is suggested that coaches play mind games, riddles and brain teasers with the players, for it is often the non-starter who first figures out the answer or who teaches the team how to bowl...or surf...or dance, etc.

- **Influence**

Influence needs allow the players to guide and impact the direction of the group/team. If coaches are comfortable with two or three different places to eat out with the team then let the team decide. Let them set the team rules and consequences, with the coach's guidance. Make sure each player has a fair shot at getting the jersey number they want. Teach them pre-match warm up options and let them pick the ones they want to use. Listen to their music on the radio. Even let them run practices or pick a favorite drill or game to play.

- **Affiliation**

Examples of affiliation needs are found just by looking around the gym or classroom. Several will have volleyball t-shirts on. Players and coaches are affiliated with the family of volleyball when wearing sport uniforms. Teams have songs, slogans, hair ribbons and socks...and other special ways of associating with the team. Public signs of unity are important.

Touching Builds Cohesion – As mentioned earlier, touching builds cohesion. Many of the fun warm-ups/cool downs can serve as team-building exercises, not only through problem-solving, but with the players making physical contact with each other in the activity.

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This is also where coaches should have the team participate in non-volleyball activities where these non-starters excel, such as musical "concerts," ropes courses, other sports warm-ups/cross training, etc. Circle back rubs, trust games like the "blind walk," "cookie machine," back massages with the ball, and so on also work toward this.

Team Building Examples – There are many good books on the specifics of team building for corporations and teams. Some ideas that are common in volleyball include such activities as "Varsity Mentor" and "Secret Sisters." Other team building activities include:

- Sleepovers
- Drawing objects with one "coach" and one "player" back to back, not seeing how they are doing
- Filling out USAV Goal Setting forms or creating SMART goals
- Team dinners with kids cooking
- Team fundraisers
- Team shirts including tie-dyed shirts
- Player handbook with pictures
- Movie clips that matter to each kid
- Stand all team members on a spare tire and many other physical challenges that are positive, powerful and done by the team

More team building ideas may be found on the online **IMPACT Student Resources** page at www.usavolleyball.org.

A LOOK AT WINNING

Again, the simple fact that is too often forgotten is that HALF the teams playing every match LOSE. This section is from **Sportscope**, which has asked **IMPACT** to share this information with all USA Volleyball members. This important topic traditionally has been filled with clichés. At one extreme is the belief that winning is the only thing, and at the other is that winning does not matter or is not important. Reality is probably somewhere between these two extremes. The importance of winning has been considered by virtually every adult involved in youth sports. Unfortunately, glib clichés may interfere with a thoughtful consideration of the problem.

Clearly, there can be too much of an emphasis on winning; however, those who advocate the position that winning is not important often miss the point that without an attempt to win the contest, the activity is no longer sport. The essence of sport is trying to win; without that attempt, the activity is of a different nature. For example, if two athletes of dramatically different skill levels are playing tennis, often the superior athlete will begin to teach the less skilled athlete. While admirable, teaching is not sport. Two individuals on a golf course who are more interested in being together as friends change the situation from competitive sport to a social interaction.

Regardless of each coach's personal point of view on this subject, emphasize that while winning is an essential part of sport, youth sports have many other complementary goals. A key point is to get both athletes and parents to acknowledge that while winning is an important part of sport, it must be kept in perspective with the other valuable aspects of youth sports such as social development, fun, fitness, etc.

THE DOUBLE-GOAL COACH

On their website (www.positivecoach.org), the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) advocates what they call the "Double-Goal Coach" philosophy. Certification through this program ensures that youth sports and school coaches have gained knowledge of what is called "honoring the game," which is a "deeper, more focused evolution of sportsmanship."

NOTES:

Double-Goal Coaches have learned up-to-date, research-based strategies, tools and techniques in sport psychology and Positive Coaching. In their definition, the Double-Goal Coach strives to win and at the same time uses sports to teach life lessons through Positive Coaching. Thus, winning (the first goal) is important, yet doing what is best for the athlete (the second goal) is of equal importance. Coaches interested in becoming a Certified Double-Goal Coach should visit the PCA's website for more information on this program.

WHAT WINNING DOES

With the “double goals” from above in mind, the following section contains some points to consider in any fruitful discussion of the importance of winning in junior volleyball.

Winning Builds Confidence – The old cliché “show me a loser and I'll show you a loser” is often cited here. Winning does build confidence, especially when that winning represents a true accomplishment, i.e., “I have beaten a worthy opponent.” However, winning against other teams when they are not at the same skill level does little to bolster self-confidence.

Winning Gains One Access To Rewards And Special Privileges – Clearly, winners and highly skilled athletes often get better fields, more recognition, greater prestige, more fans, more rewards, trophies and ribbons and perhaps even local TV and media coverage. Denial of this phenomenon does little to keep winning in a healthy perspective.

However, in youth sports programs the adult leadership must continually be watchful that the younger, less-skilled and less experienced athletes are not denied fair access to the opportunity to learn and participate.

Winning Increases In Importance As Kids Get Older – Win-loss records prior to the age of puberty have little effect on the respect and regard that kids have for their youth sport coaches. During the teenage years, win-loss accomplishments do influence the respect young athletes have for their coaches.

Research clearly shows that prior to age 12, 75 percent of the youngsters would prefer to *play* for a losing team ... than *sit on the bench* of a winning team!

Such facts emphasize the importance that coaches of younger athletes should not merely mimic the behavior of successful coaches of older youngsters.

Winning Increases Motivation – While this statement may seem self-evident, research findings point out situations where winning can be quite de motivating. For example, when the probability of success (i.e., winning) is very high, the contest often lacks the excitement and vigor of a more closely contested match. A perceived probability of success of approximately 50 percent produces higher levels of motivation than higher or lower probabilities of success. So in these less-than-competitive match situations, set goals within the contest.

Winning Becomes a More Appropriate Goal if the Definitions are Broadened – For example, winning can be defined as self improvement and/or as goal attainment. Improving on one's previous performance or attaining previously set goals can be interpreted as success in a setting where by definition there are only a limited number of winners (i.e., first places). If sport is to be viewed as beneficial for children, it must benefit the majority of participants in a meaningful way, rather than be limited to the elite few who ultimately win the actual contest.

Winners Handle Failure Better – A .300 hitter in baseball means the player is out seven out of 10 times at bat. The difference between a good .300 hitter and a mediocre .250 hitter is only one more hit in every 20 times at bat.

Winning Does Not Ensure The Quality Of The Performance – One can perform well and still finish second; conversely, one can perform poorly, yet still win because the opponent also failed to perform well. Mastery programs where the athletes are asked to meet a minimum level of performance often produce higher levels of performance than do competitive programs.

Winning In Youth Sports Is Relative To Whom You Play – That is, winning often depends more upon who does the scheduling than the performance level of the athletes. If a coach schedules his/her team against only inferior opponents, their win-loss record might be good but the accomplishment is clearly devalued. Relative skill level is a crucial factor in sport at all levels.

Winning Is How It Was Won, Not Whether It Was Won – Winning within the boundaries of the rules and ethics of sportsmanship can place a great premium on winning without distorting the basic sporting values, which many would like to see children learn. In fact, a strong argument can be made for the fact that true sportsmanship cannot exist unless there is an honest desire to win. Playing fair when one has no concern about the outcome of the game does not adhere to the same level of ethics as when one wants to win the contest and adheres to the same standards of fair play and good sportsmanship.

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Winning Involves Maturity – Winning in youth sports programs is most influenced by the athlete's state of physiological maturity. It is more important than coaching, individual effort, equipment or any other normally valued aspect of sport. "Clean-up batters" in the Little League World Championships (a contest for 12-year-olds and under) have been found consistently to be post pubescent in terms of physical maturity. Coaches often are given credit for an outstanding season when they simply have had the more physically gifted/mature athletes.

**"Players get better every day from the Competitive Cauldron.
We keep score on everything we do in practice.
The only environment you truly develop a player in is in a
competitive arena.
At UNC, you lose in practice every day."
~ Anson Dorrance- Head Women's Soccer Coach**

Winning Is Evidenced In Achievement – Successful youth sports coaches reinforce participation, effort and achievement, in that order. As a young athlete's age, maturity and experience develop, successful coaches shift their emphasis from simply participating to trying hard with one's best effort. As age, maturity and experience factors continue to develop, the coach's emphasis changes further to reinforcing doing well, achieving performance goals and winning the contests.

THE COMPETITIVE CAULDRON

This is a term that has grown more and more popular in the athletic world the last few years. It seems that everyone is using the phrase...*but what does it mean?!* The concept's popularity has been attributed to Anson Dorrance, legendary head coach of the University of North Carolina Women's Soccer Team and the former U.S. Women's National Team head coach. Dorrance's teams have won a mind-blowing 18 of 25 NCAA national championships held in the history of collegiate women's soccer, while compiling an unbelievable record of 602 wins, 27 losses and 18 ties in the 27-year history of the program – a shocking winning percentage of .944.

Dorrance holds an "A"-level coaching license from the United States Soccer Federation, and has analyzed and made a science (and career) of coaching female athletes. It appears that no one may know the ins and outs of that better than Coach Dorrance, who says that the best way to motivate most men is with intensity and personal challenges, but he also understands that this same approach doesn't work well with most women. Unlike most men, most women do not naturally enjoy competing against their friends and teammates. Women tend to value their relationships over the competition and it is important to lead women athletes by relating to them personally. However, Dorrance and others feel that competition (the Competitive Cauldron) is a major key to developing players, so keeping score to track every player's progress, every practice in everything they do, is the key to getting women – and all athletes – to compete and win.

In order to compete successfully in any sport or arena, coaches must encourage very competitive practices, whether coaching males or females. So, one of the first things any player has to learn, then accept, and then believe in, is that it is not just okay to compete against, defeat and even pound on your teammates ... it is expected ... and it is for the good of the group – *the team*. This means that in the Competitive Cauldron everything in practice is recorded, scored, ranked and – at the appropriate levels – posted for the players to see.

NOTES:

In volleyball, players can be scored on their fitness levels, speed, endurance and agility, as well as their skills – serving, passing, setting, hitting, blocking, digging, etc., and in games of 2 v 2, 3 v 3, 4 v 4, 6 v 6, etc. If it is worth doing in practice, then the results should get recorded.

For Dorrance, every drill, every practice, every day and every week, every player on the squad knows exactly where she stands in comparison to every other player in every facet of the game. Thus, players earn the right to play by proving it on the practice court head-to-head against their teammates. They know that winning in practice results in more personal playing time, but it also means their relationship group – the team – wins. Results are posted every day on the board. Someone is going to be at the top of the list, and someone is going to be at the bottom. Those near the top may play more than those at the bottom.

Some might think, “*That’s pretty cruel,*” or “*What about that kid at the bottom of the list? I would never want my child to play for such an insensitive coach.*” Dorrance’s rationale is that competitors and champions want to move up the rankings, and can’t stand being near the list’s bottom. The rankings motivate players to succeed – to **win**.

“We see people not as they are, but as we are.”

-Barry Oshry

“We tend to coach the way we were coached.”

-John Kessel

One example he talks about is how one year a freshman was near the bottom of that list, losing every 1 v 1 competition that season. *Not one single victory*. This player could have been crushed and defeated, but instead went on as a senior never to lose a 1 v 1 game – this senior won every single one. Oh, and by the way, this player went on to captain the USA Women’s Soccer Team (Carla Overbeck), which ended up winning an Olympic gold medal.

In another example, another UNC player competed on the U.S. National Under-20 Team, and they lost a game to the Norway squad. After the game the U.S. coach said, “How does it feel to finally lose a game?” Without missing a beat, the player replied, “Coach, at UNC you lose in practice every day.” Dorrance has a mentor from whom he learned this idea of recording and ranking everything – Dean Smith, another legendary UNC coach, who let him watch his practices. He learned it from him.

The Competitive Cauldron concept has taken off, with some of the best club, high school, collegiate and international volleyball coaches now using the same methods in their practices to successfully prepare their players – male or female – for the competition they will face on the court during matches. The USA Men’s National Team uses this system, keeping stats during practices on a whiteboard next to the court, and leaving them up all week – sometimes longer.

Find ways in your practices to give your athletes the chance to practice being competitive and to find a way to win. A good way to start is by holding a special kind of linear ranking tournament, sometimes referred to as a Bjerring Tournament (originally created for the Canadian Volleyball Association by a British Columbia mathematician named James Bjerring). The tournament is based on the premise that everyone will play with and against everyone else the same number of times. At the end the results will rank order athletes from number 1 to 24 based on their playing ability. Linear Ranking Tournaments can be played in a 2 v 2, 3 v 3 or 4 v 4 format at the start of the season...maybe used at the start of every practice throughout the year. Challenge your athletes by recording stats in practice – **challenge them to win in practice**.

GENDER MATTERS: WHAT COACHES NEED TO KNOW

The following information was approved for inclusion in this *IMPACT Manual* by Kathleen J. DeBoer, author of *Gender and Competition: How Men and Women Approach Work and Play Differently*, Coaches’ Choice Publishers, 2004. Though this approach to competition may be changing for women at the elite levels of sport, the following still applies to most levels for most girls and women in athletics.

So, you still say that coaching girls is no different than coaching boys, right?! Well, not exactly...each views the world in different ways which influences how they practice and how they compete. The best of both worlds might be to train each of your athletes, male or female, to **“practice like a girl”** and **“compete like a boy.”**

As much as we’d like to deny it, as much as we’d like to think that all athletes are the same, male or female doesn’t matter... the fact is it does matter. How female athletes view such things as teamwork, chemistry, competitiveness, motivation, leadership, feedback and criticism is very different from the way male athletes view them. The coaches who understand these differences and vary their coaching approaches based on this information – whether males coaching females, females coaching females, males coaching males or females coaching males – are going to succeed in motivating and training their teams to win more than those coaches who do not understand this.

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Karch and Susan: An Illustration

The following story is paraphrased from DeBoer's book to illustrate the point:

One day two collegiate head coaches, friends and colleagues who knew each other quite well, were talking in the gym bleachers while on a recruiting trip. The male coach said casually to the female coach, "Can I ask you a personal question? Why aren't women competitive?" This question was asked in a very matter-of-fact tone that seemed to assume he was stating a truth and simply wanted the rationale behind it.

The female coach stiffened. "You're crazy," she bristled. "Women are competitive!" "No," he said assuredly. "Women aren't competitive like men are competitive." She snapped back, "I can't believe I'm hearing this – we are, too!"

The male coach then recounted a memory from his days as a USA Men's National team assistant coach.

The team was playing an important match against (back then) world power Russia and were poised to upset them, proving that USA Men's Volleyball was among the world's best. Late in the fifth game the head coach called his last timeout and made a few tactical adjustments. Then he turned to the team's best player, a guy named Karch, and said challengingly, "It's time for you to step it up. You're our best player; you're one of the best players in the world – show that now! Win this thing for us." Karch set his jaw, looked the coach in the eye and nodded. The team cheered, took the court again and Karch proceeded to take charge of the match, playing with incredible aggressiveness, assuredness and energy, which invigorated his team. Team USA won that match.

The male coach in the bleachers recalled that timeout and subsequent win as masterful motivational coaching and filed it for future reference. Several years later this same coach was in a similar situation with his women's collegiate team. They had a chance to beat a perennial NCAA DI power and the scene was the same – fifth game, close score, last time-out.

So, the male coach turned to his best player in the huddle and repeated the words of his mentor: "Susan, it's time for you to step up. You're our best player. Tonight, you can prove you're one of the best players in the country. Win this thing for us – now!"

Susan looked away, paled slightly, looked at the floor and said through clenched teeth, "You don't have to put this all on me." Everyone else on the team looked uneasy and had physically moved away from each other. Susan, still looking away, just said, "Come on, let's just play."

What the coach had intended to be the most dramatic timeout of his career ended with a whimper instead of a bang. The team managed a weak cheer and silently returned to the court.

Susan's play after the timeout was tentative and error-filled. She shanked a pass into the stands, hit the ball so far out that only the gym wall stopped it, and on match point, her team let a "free ball" land on the floor between two players. Point, game, and match to the opponent.

As he finished his story the male coach moaned, "I've never been so upset in my life. They didn't even compete – they gave away a chance of a lifetime." Still wounded from the loss, he demanded, "Now do you see why I think women are not competitive?"

His female colleague replied, "You're an idiot! I knew when you were telling me the story that what was said to Karch was not going to work with Susan."

That exchange was the genesis for DeBoer's book. She was that female coach and she wanted to figure out in her head what her gut had told her was true.

MALE WORLDVIEW

Who's got the whistle?
How do *I* get the whistle?
When I get the whistle...how can I **keep it**?

FEMALE WORLDVIEW

Do we **NEED** someone with a whistle?
If so, is the person using it appropriately?
If I ever get the whistle, should I use it?

NOTES:

Gender Cultures

Male culture sees the world very differently than the female culture views it. While males view their world as a hierarchy or mountain to be climbed and conquered, females see it as more of an interconnected web where everyone is on the same level playing field. Males see and speak in action and result-oriented words – in verbs. Females see and speak in nouns and are relationship-oriented. Males look at life as an “I win-you lose” scenario, while females see it as an “I win-you win” or “I’ll lose so you can win” scenario.

Males tend to think more in pictures, and focus more on outcomes – females think more in words, focusing more on the process. Males bond more through action and find their identities through opposition, while females bond through interaction and find their identities through connection. Each worldview results in very different responses to coaching.

“Female teams engage in more ‘Count Drills’ (minimal game-like work). Male Teams engage in more ‘Compete Drills’ (minimal technique work).”

-Observation made by Bill Neville at the 1990 U.S. Olympic Festival-

Gender and Brain Development

The left-brain actually develops earlier in females and the right-brain earlier in males. As a result, females from an earlier age tend to rely more on verbal skills to understand their world. Males on the other hand, tend to rely more on physical movement and spatial awareness. Males have a larger amygdala – the part of the brain that works primarily on instinct; therefore, they react more in a Fight or Flight (anger or withdrawal) manner. There is some disconnect between their emotions and language (feelings and words). Females have a larger corpus callosum – the part of the brain that connects the two hemispheres; therefore, they are better at multi-tasking and processing emotional situations verbally.

Males have higher levels of testosterone, which means they are more aggressive, more risk-taking and more independent. Females have higher levels of serotonin, which means they tend to befriend each other ... they “herd to be heard,” and take risks only for relationships and connectedness. Left-brainers tend to tune in more to subtlety and nuance – too much information is very distracting. Right-brainers are better able to hone in on a specific task and tune out extraneous information.

Left-brain thinkers think in words:

“When you start becoming reflective about the process it undermines your ability. You lose the flow.”

~ Jonathan Schooler ~

Right-brain thinkers think in pictures:

“...allowing people to operate without having to explain themselves ... enables rapid cognition.”

~ Malcolm Gladwell ~

MALE SYSTEM

- Fight or Flight
- Overt Aggression
- Battle to Bond
- Premium on Proving Self
- Trains to Get Ahead

FEMALE SYSTEM

- Tend and Befriend
- Covert Aggression
- Bond to Battle
- Premium on Expressing Self
- Trains to Get Along

Practice vs. Competition Ramifications

The Practice situation calls for athletes to be more analytical, focusing on the details – postures, positions, precise routes. It requires them to be process-oriented through part-to-whole teaching and step-by-step breakdown of the skills and tactics. Practice is repetitive drilling to master skill performance. Practice is very much coach-centered with primarily verbal feedback. So which gender feels more “comfortable” in this type of situation? Yep – females!

In comparison, the Competition situation on game day is very much integrative, rewarding athletes for having a “big picture” focus on their opponent’s weaknesses, their defensive system and blocking habits. Game competitions are outcome-driven and the method is irrelevant to the outcome – one can play lousy and still win. Athletes who can tune out extraneous feedback and have better reactive responses will be more successful in the game situation. Competitions are very player-focused with athletes relying more on spatial and perceptive feedback. And which gender feels more “comfortable” in this type of scenario? Right again – males!

Self-Confidence, Praise, Feedback and Criticism

Females tend to deflect praise and internalize criticism, whereas males tend to do just the opposite – they will deflect any criticism of their athletic abilities or performance and internalize any praise, however faint, as their just due.

Absolutely give feedback – the absence of it is worse than any negative feedback. Especially for girls, always praise in public, but criticize in private – or you may experience the “sympathy backlash” from her teammates. Teach your athletes to accept compliments in an appropriate manner. Understand that self-confidence increases with success, conditioning and the perceived weaknesses of the opponent (*Coaching Volleyball*, October 2004).

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"I spend most of my time working to convince each boy that I coach that he is not quite as good as he thinks he is, and I spend most of my time working to convince each girl that I coach that she is better than she thinks she is."

**MALES must first
BATTLE to BOND and
FEMALES must first
BOND to BATTLE**

"With the men, so much of it is getting through the ego, getting to the core where they are willing to be vulnerable enough to admit they need to make changes," he says. "With the women, there is a lot of fear and insecurity, so it's more about validating and helping people build trust so they feel like they belong out there." ~ Hugh McCutcheon

NOTES:

What does all this mean for you in your role as a coach?

- Respect the other gender's paradigm; don't give in to it.
- Respect your own gender paradigm; don't give in to it.
- Use sport as a means to achieve balance in yourself and your athletes.
- "The challenge of coaching is to prepare a team in a left-brain environment (practice) to perform in a right-brain activity (competition)."
~ Mary Jo Pepler
- Recognize and help them distinguish the natural predispositions to self-effacing speech (females) and the self-promoting speech (males) from the reality (*Coaching Volleyball*, October 2004).
- For men and boys, push their envelope, their comfort zone, to include more time focusing on the details and repetitions of skill development ...then let them compete!

When coaching women's and girls' teams:

✓ Practice **COMPETING!**

- x Practice competing as much as they practice technique
- x Create the stresses of competition in practice
- x Push their envelope – their comfort zone – increase the practice time spent in competitive drills
- x Know your team and don't overdo it
- x And balance competitive drills with calming, process-oriented "count" drills

✓ The coach's effectiveness will be based on his/her ability to relate to the players

- x Coaches must establish a healthy platonic connection, a personal connection, to their players beyond the game; female players need to feel their coach cares about them personally, or has a connection with them beyond just in the game.
- x Care for your players above and beyond their athletic ability and contribution to the team

✓ Verbally deal with competitive stresses

- x Teach your players how to handle them
- x Deconstruct situations so players know what is going on

✓ Monitor Self Esteem

- x Monitor the success/failure ratios in practice drills such as:
 - ↔ Single-contact count; multi-contact count
 - ↔ Single-contact compete; multi-contact compete
 - ↔ Game-like modifications/wash drills
- x Talk their language in motivation, criticism and feedback

What You Need to Know to Compete:

- Accept your Inner Girl; use her strengths and don't give in to her weaknesses.
 - Find your Inner Boy; use his strengths and don't give in to his weaknesses.
- Use sport as a means to develop your full potential; the Yin/Yang; Heart/Strength

In other words, if have your athletes practice like a girl and compete like a boy and you will have ***trained the complete athlete!***

SPORT PSYCHOLOGY AND GOAL SETTING

It is part of your duties as a coach to help each player, and the team as a whole, to set well-defined **SMART** goals to help them measure their development and progress as individuals and as a team or program. What is a **SMART** Goal? It is a goal that is **SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC, and TIME SPECIFIC**. **SMART** Goals should also be *written!*

Google the phrase "*SMART Goals*" on the Internet and you will find many helpful resources to help you guide a discussion with individual players and the team about setting smart, and SMART, goals for their season! At the end of this chapter we have also listed some specific resources to help coaches explore this topic. You can also look for new Webinars on sport psychology topics on the USAV website under the Events/CAP Course schedule tab.

SPORT PSYCHOLOGY RESOURCES

There are many books available specifically relating to sport psychology that can help you in this discipline. If you live near a university, call to see if there is either a specialist in the Physical Education Department or in the Psychology Department who specializes in sport psychology. Coaches might be able to get volunteers to work with their programs. For additional information, you can also contact the following organizations.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States Olympic Committee
Sport Psychology Dept.
Colorado Springs, CO 80909
(719) 578-4516 www.teamusa.org • American Psychological Association
Washington, DC
(800) 374-2721 www.apa.org | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA Volleyball –
Sports Medicine & Performance Commission (SMPC)
Colorado Springs, CO (719) 228-6800
www.usavolleyball.org CAP@usav.org • Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP)
Madison, WI
(608) 443-2475
www.appliedsportpsych.org |
|--|---|

CARE TO REVISE YOUR PERSONAL COACHING PHILOSOPHY, NOW?!

Take a moment to edit the draft of your coaching philosophy here, based on the material just covered. Keep a copy of your Philosophy in your coaching file. At least once a year, preferably before your season begins, pull it out, read it over and do



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some revising if necessary, especially if moving up or down an age group to coach.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

⇒ **If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website - click on the **Education heading**, then on the **Coaching-Education-Programs tab**, then on **Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources**.**

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #1- Philosophy and Ethics](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #3- Physical Conditioning](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #4 - Growth and Development](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 - Teaching and Communication](#)
- [Play Positive](#), Liberty Mutual's sponsored resource page on www.usavolleyball.org for Parents, Coaches and Athletes
- [USAV's Education Department Video "The IMPACT of Coaches"](#)
- [Linear Ranking Tournaments/Bjerring Tournament Formats](#)
- [Competitive Cauldron: sample score sheets and other tools](#)
- [Training Without a Net or Friends](#), John Kessel
- [Sports Quotes](#), John Kessel
- [Kessel's Handy Guide to Ruining a Player](#), John Kessel
- [USA Volleyball Athlete Development Competencies](#)
- [USAV Pre/Post Season Coaching Evaluation Form](#)
- [USOC Coaching Effectiveness Evaluation Tool](#)
- [Get to Know Your Volleyball Player Figure - Front and Back](#)
- [Goal Setting Worksheet](#)
- [NCAA/NFHS Rules Comparison Chart](#)
- [From Positive to Perfection](#), John Kessel
- John Kessel Growing the Game Together Blogs at www.usavolleyball.org
- [Jeff Janssen Sports Leadership](#) provides great team-building resources

ALSO LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY OR ONLINE:

- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. ***A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours***. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1992.
- ***Outliers***, by Malcolm Gladwell, Little, Brown and Company, 2008.
- ***The Talent Code***, by Dan Coyle, Bantam Books, 2009.
- ***Gender and Competition: How Men and Women Approach Work and Play Differently***, by Kathleen J. DeBoer, Coaches Choice publishers, 2004.
This is a MUST READ for ALL coaches, male or female, coaching either gender! This book candidly addresses gender differences and discusses in detail the impacts of these differences on communication and competitive behavior. Kathy DeBoer, current executive director of the AVCA, is also a USAV-CAP Cadre member, a former elite athlete, collegiate volleyball coach, and athletic director. Most examples are volleyball-related. The author discusses practice, match and recruiting situations, as well as the larger issues of dealing with superiors, players and assistant coaches.
- ***She Can Coach***, edited by Cecile Reynaud, Human Kinetics Publishers, 2005. Examines the profession of coaching from the perspectives of 20 top female coaches in 13 different sports. More than a playbook of X's and O's, this resource is designed to inspire, motivate and challenge women to excel as coaches.
- ***The Man Watching: A Biography of Anson Dorrance, the Unlikely Architect of the Greatest College Sports Dynasty Ever***, by Tim Crothers, Sports Media Group Publishers, 2006. This isn't just a book about a soccer coach, but about the man and how he has inspired the 200+ young women he has coached to believe that anything is possible.
- ***The Vision Of A Champion: Advice And Inspiration From The World's Most Successful Women's Soccer Coach*** by Anson Dorrance, Huron River Press, 2005. This fifth printing is co-authored with fitness writer Gloria Averbuch. If anyone still believes that coaching girls is no different than boys – this will prove otherwise.
- ***Catch Them Being Good: Everything You Need to Know to Successfully Coach Girls***, by Tony DiCicco, Colleen Hacker & Charles Salzberg, Viking Adult, 2002. DiCicco coached the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team to victory in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and Hacker is a psychology consultant for the team. Most of the examples in the book focus on soccer, but coaches of all sports will learn a great deal from this straightforward guide based on impressive experience.
- **"No More Mistakes and You Are Through,"** John Cleese, *Forbes Magazine* (U.S., pp. 126+, May 16, 1988)
- **"Decisions, Decisions,"** *Discover Magazine*, July 1985 issue
- ***How We Know What Isn't So: The Fallibility of Human Reasoning In Everyday Life***, by Tom Gilovich
- ***Linear Ranking Tournaments***, on CD available from Mike Fleming at www.LinearRanking.com.

NOTES:

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CHAPTER 6: MOTOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Since the early 1980s, there has been tremendous growth in the area of research on teacher and coaching education. One of the findings reveals that a university education produces three kinds of graduates and they fall along the following continuum:

- ⇒ At one end are found those who are unaware, uninformed, and unenlightened about current practices in teaching and coaching.
- ⇒ In the middle are those who are aware of current practices, but do not implement them. They have been swayed, but they lack the confidence and procedural knowledge to implement the concepts.
- ⇒ At the other end, there are those who are “imprinted.” These are the teachers and coaches who clearly reflect many of the methods advocated at the university, in the current literature and in modern practice.

Methods used in **USAV-CAP** and **IMPACT** programs are based on current literature and on the practices that were employed in training the 1984, '88, '92, 2000, '04 and '08 Men's, and now Women's, U.S. Olympic Volleyball Teams. These methods are mainly those of Dr. Doug Beal, Bill Neville and Dr. Marv Dunphy, three coaches to whom all coaches owe a great deal of thanks. The biggest thank you, however, goes to their teacher, Dr. Carl McGown of Brigham Young University, the 1999 and 2001 NCAA men's national champion head coach, for all his sharing and teaching, specifically on the subject of motor learning in coaching volleyball.

“I Hear and I Forget; I see and I Remember; ***I Do and I Understand.***”
~A Chinese Proverb~

FOLLOW THE PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

How many great teachers have most people had? What are their traits? There really is no difference between great teachers, parents or coaches – for following the Principles of Learning is the best way to get kids to learn the best. If yelling was the best way to teach, then second grade teachers, history professors, and *all* educators would yell at their students after each punctuation or historical date error. While it is traditional in sport, yelling does not follow the principles of learning.

Principles of Learning can be used to establish the foundation of skilled performance. These are referred to as motor learning principles (motor learning is an area of psychology that studies factors that influence the learning of motor skills), and research has shown that if used as coaches' essential truths, then their athletes will both improve and retain their ability to perform skills.

One such principle involves deciding on the **keys** and **verbal cues** to use to teach the skills and the order in which they will be presented. There is some evidence to suggest that more successful teachers do this better than less successful teachers. It is also important to combine demonstrations and keys into an effective teaching method. At a past **USAV-CAP** National Seminar/Level III course on International Coaching, the fact was revealed that the No. 1 factor influencing success is athletic talent, not coaching. Even coaches with loads of athletic talent on their teams will become more effective and successful teachers **because** they follow the Principles of Learning when training their players.

NOTES:

PLANNING EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

In the model presented, the learner must formulate a motor program. Many motor learning experts believe that the motor program is a type of central representation (an image in the mind) that controls actions and movements. The actions and movements of volleyball players (like serving, passing, spiking) are controlled by their motor programs. Obviously, making certain that athletes develop effective motor programs as soon as possible is one of the most important tasks facing coaches.

Dr. Peter Vint, USOC Director of High Performance based at the Colorado Springs U.S. Olympic Training Center, has this to say about the Motor Skill Learning Theory and achieving the optimal results:

Sure, learning quickly would be really great! However, the literature is clear in stating that the deepest and therefore “best” learning (as indicated by performance retention under varied conditions) is usually accomplished by a process called “**IMPLICIT LEARNING**” – where the learner comes to understand a principle, or concept, or relationship in a deeply personal way. That is, they have their own “*Eureka!*” moment. Unfortunately, this process may take much longer than other types of learning.

By way of example, let’s assume we want an athlete to improve his or her middle blocking performance, and in particular, his/her ability to read the play to improve the speed and accuracy of their initial decision making.

IMPLICIT LEARNING:

In this scenario, the coach would define the skill and expected outcome for the middle blocker: “You need to read the play so you can make faster and more accurate decisions,” but they effectively leave it to the athlete to determine how to do that on his/her own or to figure out to what information he/she must attend. Hopefully, the athlete would figure it out and by doing so on his/her own, the middle blocker would come away with a very strong understanding of this aspect of the game. Unfortunately, it may take a long time for this to happen and perhaps it **never** would.

EXPLICIT LEARNING:

In this case, the coach not only defines the skill and the expected outcome, but also defines the stimulus and response for the middle blocker. “*When you see this, do that.*” No attention is given toward the middle blocker understanding or actually internalizing the cue, but just presents a superficial “if-then” situational response. This is generally a learning technique that can yield very rapid changes in performance (and therefore useful during in-game, time-out situations) but results in very poor retention and very shallow understanding. This may cause athletes to resort back to prior habits under conditions of stress and anxiety.

GUIDED DISCOVERY:

In this third (and best) option, the coach defines the skill and expected outcome, and also provides some guidance on which cues to focus on without explicitly stating the cause-effect relationship. “*Watch what happens when the setter arches his/her back...*” By providing “hints” to the middle blocker without giving a “rule,” the athlete is still able to “discover” the answer and learn the relationship in their own more meaningful way. The advantage of this approach is that it typically takes less time than Implicit Learning, but may also yield results comparable to those obtained under Implicit Learning.

To continue this discussion about Principles of Learning and how to develop motor programs efficiently, the issues of specificity vs. generality, transfer, whole vs. part practice, state-dependent remembering, random vs. blocked and variable vs. constant practice need to be examined.

SPECIFICITY vs. GENERALITY – Does general athletic ability really exist? Most people believe in general athletic ability. They believe that someone who can play baseball very well should be able to play golf very well; that someone who can play basketball very well should also be able to play volleyball very well; and so on. Back in the 1920s and 1930s, several prominent physical educators even went so far as to develop a number of general athletic ability tests. Modern physical educators, led by a scientist named Franklin Henry, no longer accept the notion of general athletic ability. Instead, they believe that abilities are specific to the task or activity. This statement by Henry (1958), even though it was written more than 50 years ago, is typical of the current beliefs:

“It is no longer possible to justify the concept of unitary abilities such as coordination and agility since the evidence shows that these abilities are specific to the task or activity.”

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Consider then that it remains the same, decades later, where Geert Savelsbergh and John van der Kamp (*International Journal of Sport Psychology*, 2000) “defend the thesis that information and movement are tightly coupled and as a result specificity in training is required to get meaningful learning effects...If motor performance has to be learned and improved, a coupling between information and movement has to take place. Because such coupling only emerges under a set of specific constraints, specificity of learning it needed. That is, coupling is specific to the situation in which it is learned.”

As Dr. Vint points out, “Savelsbergh’s comment is referring to **PERCEPTION-ACTION COUPLING**.” That is, learning is more effective when all components (cognitive, perceptual, and motor) of skill are included in its execution, which also pertains to the “WHOLE vs. PART” discussion to follow. The general message here is that specific practice is required (or best) to perform a specific motor task in a specific situation, though I would contend that the practice design literature also shows that such specificity can be quite limiting.

Dr. Vint goes on to say, “I believe we sometimes make the mistake of failing to synthesize the specific vs. general concept with that of CONSTANT vs. VARIABLE practice. While constant practice **can** be useful for execution of skills in constant environments, variable practice tends to extend the motor schema and facilitates more robust and higher-level performances in different situations or environments. I like to relate this idea to that of specific vs. general practice or experience: Those who are trained in narrow and specific performances may in fact develop to be quite talented, but those who are trained in broader and more varied performances, while lacking perhaps some of the nuanced technical execution, are often able to perform at equal or higher levels because they have used their bodies in more varied ways and developed a more comprehensive (albeit general) set of motor abilities.”

TRANSFER – How much will playing “pepper” help develop backcourt defense? If the conclusion that motor programs are very specific is accepted, then it is possible to make a number of predictions. One of the predictions is that there will not be motor transfer from task to task. Pepper might not transfer very much to backcourt defense. The issue of transfer is of crucial importance to coaches because every drill that players perform and every practice a coach designs is expected to produce large amounts of transfer to game situations. However, if playing pepper does not do much to improve the skill of digging hard-driven spikes, then it may be because there is not enough transfer between the drill and the competitive activity.

The research here seems to say: “There is not as much motor transfer as we might think.” Sports psychologist Richard Schmidt (1999) summarizes the research when he says, “There has been a great deal of research conducted concerning transfer from one variation of a task to another variation of the same task... One is forced to the conclusion that the amount of motor transfer is quite small.”

Additionally, Dr. Vint also has this to say on the subject:

“While there may not be direct 1-to-1 transfer between a baseball pitcher’s ability to attack a volleyball, there is likely to be some POSITIVE transfer. A baseball player who has never played volleyball is likely to be more capable of learning to attack a volleyball with an ideal form than a wrestler who has a less mature overhand throwing pattern would be. Put into the context of a volleyball practice, I would still prefer to teach the wrestler-turned-volleyball player to attack a volleyball rather than to first throw a ball and then learn to attack a ball... but there are some similarities, which can in fact – and do – transfer. Understanding that positive transfer is good, negative transfer is bad, and greater positive transfer is better than less-positive transfer, drills should be designed to maximize any positive transfer and minimize (if not completely eliminate) any negative transfer.”

NOTES:

*“Are you practicing for
practice, or are you
practicing for
performance?”
~ Dr. Richard Schmidt ~*

WHOLE vs. PART – So, should players practice all of the spike or only part of the spike? This area is complex because there are problems with the definition of a “whole” and of a “part.” In spiking, the whole is the approach, the jump, the armswing, or contact of the ball, and the recovery. A part might be just the approach or the armswing.

Unfortunately, there is not space to go into all the issues, but it is possible to say that if motor programs are specific, and if there is not much transfer between various tasks, then when we are trying to develop a motor program, whole practice should be better than part practice.

J.E. Nixon and L.F. Locke (1973) studied the research in this area and discovered that:

“In the 30 whole-part studies reviewed, not one favored teaching methods that used the part or progressive part methods of instruction. In the majority of studies, some variation of the whole method was associated with superior learning.”

Coaches often break spiking into parts for instruction: first, the spiking action or armswing against a wall, then the approach without a ball. Finally, they combine the two. According to Nixon and Locke it would be better to start with a whole spike in the beginning, as has already been recommended, and use keys to teach the armswing and approach.

Dr. Vint believes there is sufficient evidence to state that motor variability is a good thing and athletes should be encouraged to “explore” this space by playing live games and by being coached by coaches who promote environmental and situational variability.

This is compatible with what Schmidt calls “schema theory,” which essentially accounts for an ability to execute a generalized motor response (an attack, for example) in a number of novel ways and under a number of novel conditions (set is too high/low; tight/off; fast/slow). So, when an attacker correctly adjusts to a poorly set ball (or poorly timed approach), he/she is able to elicit an appropriate motor response by drawing upon a pool of available and compatible motor abilities.

“It’s still an attack – it’s just a bit different this time than it was last time. The broader the repertoire, the more adaptable the response can be. This repertoire may be extended directly through variability in training conditions – which I believe can include participation in other sports.”

~ Peter Vint, USOC

STATE DEPENDENT REMEMBERING AND TRAINING – What things do our athletes remember? Cognitive psychologists have shown that remembering is very state-dependent. This is a complex term, but what it means is when a person learns something and it becomes a part of memory, information about the mood of the learner and the surroundings of the environment is also stored in memory with that information. Performance is significantly better when the environment in which performance must occur matches the emotional state and the environment in which learning occurred. No wonder an inexperienced athlete has difficulty performing before a large audience and that there is such a thing as a “home court advantage.”

“Random practice probably operates by preventing the learner from simply repeating the movement output on successive trials, requiring the learner to generate the entire movement process on each trial.” ~Schmidt (1975)

RANDOM PRACTICE IS BEST

The concept of RANDOM vs. BLOCKED practice pertains to the distribution of repetitions on a given motor task (or drill). Serving 20 times in a row would be indicative of blocked practice. Serving two times, then passing a few times, then serving three times then...is indicative of random practice. Relative to blocked practice, where trials of a single given task are repeatedly presented, random practice produces far better performance and retention. Random is how our game is played; therefore, random practice should produce better performance, retention and transfer.

VARIABLE vs. CONSTANT practice pertains to the conditions in which the skills are performed. Serving 20 times in a row from the same side of the net is blocked and constant. Serving two times, then passing a few times, then serving three times from the other side of the net, etc., is indicative of random and variable practice. So, Variable Practice involves intentional variations of a given task and compared to constant practice, where only a single variant is practiced, facilitates retention and generalization, particularly to a novel situation whose specific variant has not been received prior to practice (Schmidt).

“When teams practice on the same court in the same direction with the same balls at the same time of day, it is constant. When they practice on different courts or on different sides or at different times of day or with different balls or against different teams, it is more random.” ~ Dr. Peter Vint

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So, should practice be blocked or random? Should it be variable or constant? Armed with knowledge of specificity, little transfer, superiority of whole practice, and the state-dependency of learning and remembering, it seems logical to make one last prediction... drills that introduce the variability we normally find in a game (this would be random/variable practice) will transfer better to game conditions than drills where the trials are blocked/constant. For instance, forearm passing skill is necessary for volleyball, but it is often practiced in situations where the ball comes from the same place and returns to the same place.

The previous scenario would be an example of “constant” practice (and blocked practice as well if this activity is not interspersed with other practice activities), and many successful repetitions can occur with this type of practice. However, a volleyball skill is rarely performed under such stationary, consistently perfect or repeatable conditions in a game, so constant practice doesn’t transfer very well to our game conditions.

It is clear that practice situations with unpredictable events must be created for performers to experience **before** encountering the unpredictability of the full game.

NOTES:

“Anything less than a game situation, unless very well-planned, has the possibility of introducing artificial situations and complete transfer to the game might not occur. When drills are constructed, the teacher should carefully consider the environmental movement relationships in the drill to determine that they are as close to the game as possible.”

~ Ronald Marteniuk

MASSED vs. DISTRIBUTED PRACTICE – The main question here is how should the work and rest in practice be distributed? **MASSED** vs. **DISTRIBUTED** relates to “work-rest” ratios (time between repetitions or drills) while **Blocked** vs. **Random** relates to the distribution of repetitions (20 serves in a row vs. a few throughout different parts of the entire practice). So, if a coach wants to practice serve reception for 30 minutes every practice, how should the time be scheduled? Would it be better to do all 30 minutes at once without resting (massed practice) or would it be better to break the time up in to smaller blocks, maybe 10 minutes each with rest or other activities between (distributed practice)?

Similar questions have resulted in a complex research area that has been studied extensively for almost 90 years. There have been problems with the basic findings, but there is recent evidence that massed practice reduces both the performance and learning of a motor skill (Lee & Genovese 1988).

Therefore, the best procedure for a coach is to provide distributed types of practice. For example, it would be better to do smaller bouts of serve reception as opposed to one long 30-minute session. In fact, instead of simply inserting rests between bouts of serve reception practice, it is wise to insert other activities (like serving, or spiking, or any other volleyball activity). With this system, the advantages of distributed practice (no depressed performance or learning) and massed practice (many opportunities to respond) are both realized.

Ideally, practice designs should be random and variable. Particularly for athletes who have a good working skill base, we should not have extended periods of blocked practice (e.g., 20 serves in a row), but make athletes combine a prior or following skill with each serve to replicate the distribution of skills within the actual game of volleyball.

LONG-TERM ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT (LTAD) MODELS

LTAD is an integrated training, competition, and recovery program that establishes guidelines for coaches/athletes/administrators/parents in all areas, including planning. It takes into account the program training and competitive schedule and the overall demands on athletes. LTAD is about identifying potential and providing appropriate developmental pathways for that potential to be realized fully, as well as ensuring that anyone, at any age and experience level, who wants to learn the sport has that opportunity. Sports scientists have reported that there are some critical windows of optimal training for young athletes during which learning and training can be maximized. They've also noted that it can take anywhere from eight to 12 years of training (10 years/10,000 hours rule) for a talented athlete to achieve elite status. These conclusions led to development of athletic models, which identify appropriate training goals and strategies at each stage of physical (as well as mental, emotional and social) development.

Research has also shown that a youngster's chronological age is not the best indicator on which to base athletic development models for those between ages 10 to 16, because there are wide variations in development during these years. In other words, all 12-year-olds are NOT the same in their development physically, cognitively or emotionally.

Yet most coaches tend to treat them all the same when it comes to developing a training plan for their U12 teams. One practical solution suggested is to use the onset of "Peak Velocity Height" (PHV), which is influenced by genetics and factors such as climate, culture and social environments, as a reference point for the design of optimal youth training programs.

PVH is the point in a child's development when he/she reaches his/her maximum growth rate. The average age for reaching PVH is 12 for girls and 14 for boys. Peak weight velocity normally follows shortly after PVH. After PVH is reached, VO₂max and strength increase significantly as a result of growth. Most girls experience their first menstrual cycle approximately one year after their PVH.

Using periodic measurements (such as standing and sitting height) an athletes' PVH can be monitored and appropriate training programs can be created to match the athlete's development.

Sports may be classified as either early specialization (like gymnastics) or late specialization (like track and field, and many team sports such as volleyball). Early specialization sports require fewer phases in their LTAD model, while a late specialization sport model requires more phases.

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

"...in the men's game, players develop much later because of the lack of opportunities at younger ages. If you look at the average age of the U.S. Men's National Team, it has been 30+ for the last three Olympics. Half of our guys didn't start playing volleyball until they were 17."

~Lloy Ball, U.S. Gold Medalist~

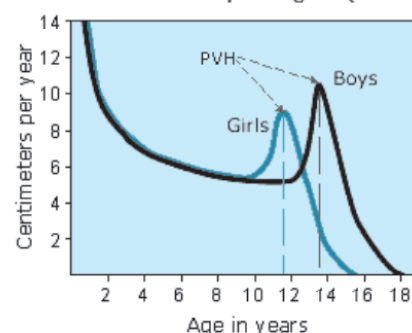
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At first glance, who would you pick for YOUR team?! And WHY?!



Each of these players is 12 years old, and each is in a different stage of development, mentally/emotionally as well as physically. We do a disservice to those we "eliminate" or "choose" from consideration for a team or a position at just a first glance, often based on physical appearance/stature alone.

Peak Velocity Height (PVH)



The United States Olympic Committee (USOC), in partnership with the National Governing Bodies, created the **American Development Model** in 2014 to help Americans realize their full athletic potential and utilize sport as a path toward an active and healthy lifestyle. **Long-term athlete development** concepts are utilized to promote sustained physical activity, participation in sport, and Olympic and Paralympic success. These concepts have been tailored to create a framework for developing American youth through sport.

U.S. National Governing Bodies, including USAV, agreed on inclusion of the following principles within an American LTAD Model (ADM):

- Developmentally appropriate activities emphasizing motor and foundational skill development, along with quality coaching at all levels.
- Modified equipment, playing surface and rules to fit youth development for future success, as defined by each sport.
- Multi-sport base to provide broad base of quality movement skills at younger ages, in a fun, engaging/challenging atmosphere.
- Allow for recognition of early/late specialization sports, and defines pathways for early and late entry time lines for reaching elite levels.

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- The youth sports environment should be safe and directed by screened adults. All NGBs will follow the USOC Safe Sports program.
- The ADM explains an athlete's advancement through a five-stage pathway supporting healthy sport experience based on physical, mental/emotional levels, and potential for growth.

Key Outcomes of the ADM include:

- Grow both general athlete population and a pool of elite athletes from which U.S. Olympians and Paralympians are selected.
- Develop fundamental skills that transfer between sports.
- Provide appropriate avenues to fulfill individuals' athletic potential.
- Create a generation that loves sport and physical activity, and then transfers that passion to the next generation.

You can read more about LTAD development models in the Resource section found at the end of this chapter.

SEE-DO-TELL or SEE ONE-DO ONE-TEACH ONE LOOP

For this **USA Volleyball/RVA IMPACT Manual**, the following illustrates a simplified model of the way young players acquire motor programs, including all volleyball skills. While coaching, keep in mind that youngsters learn better by seeing and then doing than by hearing. Remember, you must have good modeling skills, even if you cannot play volleyball. All other **USAV-CAP** courses spend a significant amount of time on court, helping coaches develop their ability to demonstrate the proper skills, not just talk about them!

LEARN TO CREATE WHAT IS NEEDED

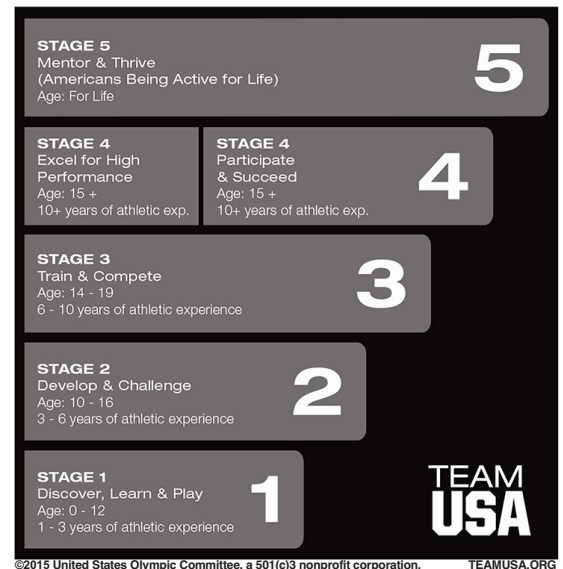
There is no "one way" to play this great game. **IMPACT** and **USAV-CAP** instructors care only that coaches are as efficient as they can be in getting their ideas across to their players, for coaches have only a few hours a week to train athletes in this unique sport.

The diagram at right is a presentation of basic concepts regarding motor skill acquisition. This includes a learning model, Gentile's Model (from A.M. Gentile, "A Working Model of Skill Acquisition with Application to Teaching." *Quest* 17:3-23, 1972) that has been modified by Dr. Carl McGown, former professor of motor learning at Brigham Young University. Much credit for the following section must go to Dr. McGown, researchers like R.A. Schmidt, R.G. Marteniuk, Renshaw and others. Indeed, every single one of the coaches in this clinic should have Dr. Schmidt's book on their shelf, *Motor Learning and Performance*. It is available through Human Kinetics. If all coaches would read it, their practices would change even more than can be shared through this **IMPACT Manual**.

A player sees a goal – a technique – tries to do it and then compares how he or she did to the image of the goal. Volleyball is a complex series of acquired habits. Make sure the habits players gain in practice are actually habits that will help them in the game itself.

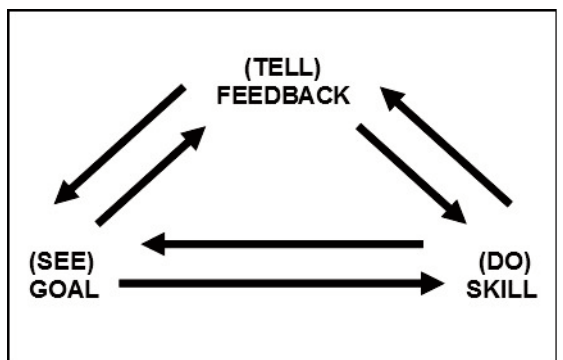
THE GOALS

What this means is that young players need to see what they are supposed to be attempting. In sports, a picture is truly worth a thousand words. This picture may be in the form of the coach as the model, a teammate who is doing the skill correctly or a more experienced, better-skilled team. Seeing the model in person is best, and the use of a video can also be a great way to present a technique goal.



"Drills and lead-up activities take considerable practice time and do not produce much transfer, so use them sparingly in later practice stages. It is fruitless to try to train fundamental abilities, (e.g. quickness, balance) so concentrate on the fundamental skills instead."

***~ Dr. Richard Schmidt,
Prof. of Motor Skill Research ~***



When developing goals, keep the following six statements in mind:

- Humans have a limited ability to process information. Therefore, performance at all levels of learning can be facilitated by reducing the amount of information to be processed (smaller “chunks” of information.)
- The group of subjects who received the most complete instruction made strikingly little improvement (Renshaw and Postle).
- Words have little meaning for the beginner in motor skills (Berlin).
- Movement information is retained in short-term memory in the form of an image (Marteniuk).
- Learn what all good teachers must learn: images are better than words; showing is better than telling; and too much instruction (feedback) is worse than none (Gallwey).
- Most tasks are learned at a faster rate when repeated demonstrations are shown (MacCoby and Sheffield).

Show Then Tell – As stated above, words have very little meaning to beginning skill learners. Generally, the smallest percentage of new players are auditory learners. If coaches were to give a Learning Styles Questionnaire to their athletes, the results would most likely show that very few athletes on their team learn best by just hearing instruction. Most need to see it and or do it to learn best.

Once coaches have shown the desired goal, and players have had the opportunity to observe the goal presented from two or three different angles, ask questions to see if the players understand. Players should be able to tell the coach in their own words what they are learning. Players must know that they should copy the model as closely as they can, to the best of their ability, while allowing for some individual variations. Only the core actions need be the same.

There can be goals presented that are not just visual that must become part of the motor program as well. The sport of volleyball has three important areas of training: technique (how to do it), tactics (what to do) and experience. As coaches model and train their players, the tactics will also need to be introduced as they apply to that level of the game. Let players know why the skill is being learned and how that goal relates to their team play.

More Individual Demonstration – Once everyone has seen the completely new action in a demonstration, only stop the entire team to correct errors that everyone is making. Individually correct errors, showing what the correct action is and avoid demonstrating the erroneous actions. Coaches are the source of information and if the information the coach is presenting to one player is incorrect (“*See, you are doing it wrong, like this*”) a player not privy to this may interpret the individual error demonstration as a “special” hint to use rather than an error to avoid. Coaches must keep demonstrations limited to what they want players to do, not showing what they are doing wrong, because they already can do it the wrong way. Feedback and instruction should be given in an affirmative tone. That is, “*DO THIS...*” is far more effective than “*DON’T DO THAT. ...*”

SKILLS: THE GAME TEACHES THE GAME

There are many skills and variations to learn in volleyball. Each skill is a separate motor program with a response to be compared to the goal. Research has shown that transfer is limited between tasks and skills.

Throwing a baseball is a motor program that is stored differently and separately from the motor program for serving a volleyball. They may be similar motions, and some positive transfer (or negative transfer if the athlete has learned a sidearm throwing motion) may exist, but each must develop a separate motor program. To get better at a skill, one needs to perform that specific whole skill many times. Therefore, progressions should not be needed for most players. This is a very important factor for efficiency in training volleyball players.

DELIBERATE PRACTICE:

***Deep Practice ...intensely focused start-stop observation and experimentation, in which the practitioner is constantly making mistakes and looking to correct them one by one.**

***Earning Myelin ... building skill, as effectively and rapidly as possible. Myelin increases via deep practice and, in turn, increased myelin affects the signal strength, speed and accuracy of electric signals traveling through nerve fibers.**

***Motivation (Ignition) or Deep Passion... Where deep practice is a cool, conscious act, ignition is a hot, mysterious burst, an awakening. Deep passion is a necessary part of the attainment of great skill.**

***Master Coaching ...world class talent requires help, feedback and guidance from disciplined, committed coaches; everything a master coach does, down to the slightest interaction, is meant to maximize skill transfer.**

***10,000 Hours ... of disciplined practice (in any/all sports) necessary to be GREAT!**

~ Daniel Coyle, *The Talent Code*

**The Ball Teaches the Skill...
The Players Teach the Players...
The Game Teaches the Game!**

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Players should attempt the whole skill in its simplest form, then get information from themselves or the coach on what needs to stay the same and what needs to change. No athlete was born with innate volleyball skills. Players may not do it perfectly the first time, but with enough trials they can do just about anything they are asked.

Limit Progressions – Part of a coach's job is to limit the errors being made, keeping success high enough to develop consistency and confidence. A progression – in this case the performance of just a part of a whole skill – may be needed with some players who have a consistent flaw in their skill action. These types of corrective progressions are implemented on an individual basis, not with a whole group – unless **everyone** is making the same error!

Coaches may start (or review at any time) without a ball by simply having the player rehearse the skill. Has the player copied the model fundamentally? There are often major parts that are already being done wrong, even though the ball is not involved. Coaches can perform many trials in a short time with an individual or a group, if they are only rehearsing the model.

Such errors in volleyball, even for the younger players, are often caused by prior motor programs that negatively transfer. Other sports previously played or even imagined can override the image of the goal for the volleyball skill. The basketball jump shot, for example, has movements that form the basis of an incorrect spike approach and improperly shaped hands for setting – both which may have negative transfer to learning volleyball skills.

In other examples, cheerleaders may have odd arm swings and basketball players may step incorrectly for volleyball techniques. Coaches cannot change those prior motor programs, but instead must help athletes instill new ones for the correct volleyball skill.

The problem with chopping up skills into progressions for teaching is that they are an inefficient and ineffective way to teach the motor skills of volleyball, and they certainly do not follow the principles of specificity, transfer, and whole practice that were outlined in the above discussions.

However, it is clear that “*progressions*” of another type (simple to complex) must be used to teach motor skills. If a coach wants to teach a young boy or girl how to spike a volleyball they cannot start by having two intimidating blockers block every ball he or she hits. The principles of motor learning should also indicate to the coach that hitters shouldn't start with the ball on a spiking tee, either. So what rules can be outlined for progressions? There are three:

- Progressions should be limited in number...because players need appropriate regulatory stimuli.
- The progressions that are used should be as much like the game of volleyball as possible.
- Extensive progressions can be used if there is fear or danger involved in learning the skill.

Nixon and Locke (1973) add support to the idea that extensive progressions are not effective when they write:

“Progression is a near-sacred principle in physical education and is taken most seriously in teacher training. Evidence indicates that the faith ... may be misplaced ... Progressions generally appear not to be significant factors in learning many motor skills.”

If coaches want to teach players to set the ball, the first thing they should have them do is observe the model and then set the ball. Setting the ball while lying on your stomach or attacking the ball down to the floor to

NOTES:

bounce against the wall is not even close to how those skills are to be used in the game of volleyball.

If coaches want athletes to learn to attack, then the first thing to do is have them observe the model and then attack the ball. Remember the recommended teaching method? Have them set with emphasis on a key (with appropriate verbal cues as shorthand reminders), or have them attack with emphasis on a key, and work through the three or four keys that will be used to teach the skill.

Please don't waste their time by having them perform all sorts of activities that are not in any way going to develop the specific motor programs required for volleyball. There isn't much transfer from lying on the stomach to setting an actual ball, so why practice it? If coaches structure practice sessions that have a greater percentage of transfer to actual game play each day than the opponents' practice sessions do, then it won't be long until their team is much better than the opponents' team.

Make Beginners Move – When the ball is first introduced, use only moderate amounts of movement – but there must be some movement. As long as the player can do the skill correctly without the ball, he/she is demonstrating an acquired skill. Now the player must learn to get to the ball. Indeed, making a player first move to a ball over a long distance (with likely little success) and then quickly bringing the movement demands down to a much smaller amount, makes players focus on moving. Too often, beginners do not move to the ball, “better the ball,” or get to the ideal position for ball contact. They must clearly understand that nearly all of the movement in nearly all ideal volleyball skills is done prior to the player actually touching the ball!

Add the options as found in **BASE** drill development (covered in Chapter 7) such as different ball flights, higher goals, more movement demands and simple-to-combination skill performances as a way to both challenge athletes to improve and to maintain success in any skill development.

*“I was taught to hit the ball as hard as I could, and find the court later.”
~ Andre Agassi*

Speed First, Accuracy Second – Learning the whole skill means that speed is first and accuracy is second when judging success in learning a new skill. Learning below the normal speed just means one must re-learn the skill at the correct speed later. Coaches may understand that speed should come first and accuracy second in learning a skill, but then they will say in a match, “Just get it in!” Where did their patience go? This point about game speed also solves many skill problems; if a player cannot serve over the net or set very high, have him/her stop worrying about accuracy and move his/her arm(s) **faster**. The end result is the ball goes farther or higher or faster and the accuracy will follow!

SECRET WEAPONS: Teaching Anticipation, Reading, Timing and Judgment

Volleyball techniques and skills must be taught with reading and anticipation cues and clues included. Otherwise, learning the skill without this “advance” knowledge is near worthless. Timing and judgment are also important in that they enable the player to determine when and where to perform the necessary skill.

Check for understanding of a technique with players by having them perform the skill **WITHOUT** the ball. If they demonstrate a technique error then this is evidence that they do not understand the technique goal or model. If they demonstrate solid form without a ball then there is no longer the need to remind them of the right technique, because they know it. Instead, when a player shows “poor technique,” it usually is the result of an error in:

Anticipation ~ Reading ~ Timing ~ Judgment.

These four keys to playing volleyball successfully are truly only learned in game-like situations, at game-like speeds, with balls rebounding at varying angles, and coming or going over the net on the first, second or third hits...like they do in a game! If athletes would simply play and practice in groups of three or more, rather than with a single partner, in nearly any variation of a drill or game then they will learn the “magic” of Anticipation, Reading, Timing and Judgment!

In an article titled “Reading the Play in Team Sports – Yes, it is Trainable!” (*Sports Coach Magazine*, Vol. 27, #3, 2004), Dr. Damian Farrow reports on the debate over whether the ability to read the play is innate or trainable. He is talking about a player's ability to forecast a game's future accurately, thus appearing to have all the time in the world to play the ball. Farrow reports that while some players may naturally always be better than others at this, there is a great deal of evidence that indicates that players are able to learn to read and anticipate a situational outcome. This is called “pattern recall” or “pattern recognition.” While the pattern of a developing play on the other side of the net may look meaningless to beginning volleyball players, to an expert player or coach it will look completely logical and will give them several early clues as to what will happen with the ball next. This in effect gives them a “jump” on the reading and reacting to the play that beginners will not have.

SECRET WEAPONS: continued

Teaching Anticipation, Reading, Timing and Judgment: The Myths

This seems to be because the experienced players have the ability to “chunk” all of the action on the court into fewer and larger “chunks” that are easier to remember and recall when facing similar future situations. Through years of practice and game experience, they have developed the ability to recognize and memorize opponents’ patterns of play rapidly.

So how can volleyball coaches train these abilities? Well, obviously, the more games the athletes play, the more likely they are to learn specific attacking and defensive strategies to develop an understanding of where and how the ball will be passed or attacked. As Farrow explains,

“Whether a player then becomes a skilled decision-maker relates to whether their coach draws their attention to such details. Coaches who provide their players with game-based training opportunities rather than stereotypical drills with minimal decision-making requirements are likely to develop more competent decision-makers.”

Reading skills can also be developed and trained off the court by asking players to predict what is going to happen next when watching videotaped game play. Ask the players actually to put themselves into the action to answer questions such as, “Where should the setter set the ball off this pass?” or “Where would you hit this ball if you were the attacker?” Volleyball coaches can give a court diagram to each player, let them watch the play develop, then stop the video action and ask them to draw what they think should happen, then play the tape and compare their answers to the actual result of the play. This works especially well when training young setters on set selection and placement.

While some players may already have this innate ability, most athletes can improve their reading and anticipation skills by having a coach who provides them with game-like practice activities that require players to make the same sorts of decisions they will be required to make in a competitive match.

In another article titled “Perceptual Expertise in Sport: Some Myths and Realities” (*In the Dawn of the New Millennium: Proceedings of the 10th World Congress of Sport Psychology*, 2005). Dr. Mark Williams (Research Institute for Sport and Exercise Sciences in Liverpool, UK) lists some common misconceptions about such “Perceptual Skills.” Williams presents several observations regarding Perceptual Skill in sport that demonstrate experts have several advantages over beginners, which are reflections of the experts’ superior ability to process sport-specific information. As a result of experience amassed through many hours of planned, purposeful practice, experts have developed a wide-ranging base of sport-specific knowledge that allows them to form accurate expectations of likely events. Experts confirm these predictions through the effective processing of contextual information. These skills seem to develop at an early age and are open to improvement through transfer from related activities and via specific training and instruction.

The Myths

Myth #1 – Skilled performers possess superior visual systems compared to less-skilled athletes.

The general consensus is that they do not; however, an effect was observed that was related to the age of the performer. Results also suggested that the visual system might set the limits for sport performance, but was unrelated to the skill level of the performer.

Myth #2 – There is no evidence to suggest that Perceptual Skills transfer across sports.

More recent research shows that there may be some transfer of pattern recognition skills between similar sports, such as between soccer and field hockey. The amount of positive transfer is very dependent upon how similar the typical patterns of play, the strategies and tactics within each sport are to each other. Evidence also suggested that participation at an early age in a wide variety of related sports might also be beneficial to development of Perceptual Skills.

Myth #3 – Perceptual Skills cannot be improved through instruction and practice.

The widely held belief is that Perceptual Skills are genetically determined and not very receptive to practice and instruction; however, there is evidence that indicates that cognitive exercises that develop the knowledge based underlying skilled perception have practical value in assisting with the acquisition of expert performance. Video simulation may be especially effective in helping to develop Perceptual Skills, particularly when joined with appropriate instructional techniques. Already skilled performers may benefit from this type of training even more than less-skilled players.

Teaching Anticipation, Reading, Timing and Judgment: The Realities

Key Facts about Perceptual Skills in Sport

Key #1 – Experts are better able to recognize and recall structured patterns of play (“chunks”).

They are aware of typical offensive/defensive patterns used by opponents, and as a result are able to recognize and “read” the developing pattern of play much earlier in its development, thereby making “anticipation” seem easy.

Key #2 – Experts are better able to anticipate opponents’ actions using advanced visual cues.

Because of the time constraints placed on athletes to react in a game situation, the ability to anticipate opponents’ actions based on advance sources of info is essential. Experts are able to rely on (“read”) earlier sources of information...from the volleyball attacker’s angle of approach and plant, the angle of the hitting shoulder, the take-off position relative to the set ball and the blockers, the elbow and hand position, etc.

Key #3 – Experts employ efficient and effective visual search strategies.

These experienced athletes are able to use their superior knowledge to control the eye movement patterns necessary to seek out and pick up important sources of information in order to anticipate the next action. As in all sports, beginning players are guilty of “ball-watching,” whereas skilled players fixate on the positions and movements of players “off the ball.” Expert players alternate their eye focus and attention between ball and player more frequently than novices, which is important in anticipating opponents’ movements.

Key #4 – Experts are better able to pick up the minimal essential information underlying skilled perception. Research has shown that experts are better at pulling out important opponent motion information from video and point-of-light displays than beginning players. This may be that the relative motion information present in the transition from one body or court position to another provides the expert with the minimal essential information source that underlies skilled perception.

Key #5 – Experts have superior knowledge of situational probabilities.

This means that more experienced volleyball players use knowledge stored in their long-term memory to determine accurate expectations of probable events as the action unfolds. Advanced players can dismiss some possible events as being “highly improbable.” They can then assign a hierarchy of likelihood to the remaining events, thus making possible their “anticipation” of which players are in the best position and are more likely to receive the next ball. It seems experts “hedge their bets” more than beginning players by putting both their expectations and processing of situational information to effective use to “read” and “anticipate” future actions.

Key #6 – The perceptual processes of experts are less affected by changes in emotional state.

This means that advanced or experienced volleyball players’ visual search abilities are less affected by their emotions and anxieties during competition. Beginners often let their emotions and anxieties rule their play.

Limit Partner Training – This interferes with making key decisions. When coaches let kids train in partners, they take away a vital part of the game, that of making a decision as the ball is in flight of, “Mine” or “Not Mine.” Many skill errors in volleyball can be observed, even at the highest level at times, but indecision and players not knowing if the ball is theirs to play or not may not be as easily identified. Partner training does not develop this vital mental skill of decision-making, nor does it provide the proper game-like stimuli for players to react to, only small group and full team training does.

Develop Skill Now, Condition Later – One final point about each skill – fatigue is detrimental to skill performance and learning. There’s no need to learn to “play while tired” in practice. Give players mental and physical rest when needed and condition them separately. Conditioning for endurance itself should be done at the end of any practice, or on off days, or as “homework” if at all.

If players have a low skill level in relation to their opponents, then simply skill train more. Conditioning may even be eliminated as a part of gym practice, except that which is incorporated into game-like drill design. For example, in most serving drills the players wander around, never sprinting to their area of back-row defense. This is a missed chance to condition in a game-like way during practice.

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FEEDBACK/FEEDFORWARD

Better feedback leads to better learning. Information feedback is the most important variable that controls learning and performance. Perhaps a better term is “**feed-forward**” because coaches want their players to be thinking of what should be done better next time, not what he/she might have done wrong last time.

Remember the discussion above on Intrinsic vs Extrinsic Learning Theory? Feedback also comes from both intrinsic and extrinsic sources. Intrinsic feedback comes from within a player, and is best, as shown in the prior discussion. Extrinsic feedback is augmented by things outside the player, including the coach. The coach’s modeling skills may be needed for the valuable feedback they provide to each player.

Information obtained **after** a response is called information feedback (IF) and is generally viewed as the most important variable for determining learning, apart from practice itself. It is beneficial to establish a few principles that will assist coaching:

- The amount of information that is presented must not overload the information processing ability of the athletes. Coaches who do not use *keys* (like the ones discussed earlier) are more likely to overload than those who do use them.
- Two types of information can be given: knowledge of results (information about the outcome of the response, like “that was a straight down spike”) and knowledge of performance (information about the way the response was performed, such as “your four-step approach was perfect that time”). Because knowledge of performance (KP) is not easy for the learner to obtain alone, it is especially important for the coach to provide KP in the early stages when the learner has not yet developed an internal standard of correct performance.
 - o “Though too much, too detailed feedback may slow the learning process for beginning learners, advanced performers can better sift through the noise to get whatever they need out of the feedback. However, a player who serves a ball out **knows** he/she served out (knowledge of results) and doesn’t need that information from the coach. Here, providing too much instruction on the performance (toss too low/high/forward/backward, contact point too low, etc.) may be, in fact, worse than no instruction at all, but more because no instruction requires the athletes to figure out the problem on their own – which again is **Implicit Learning** – very deep and very robust learning, but which may take a long time.”
~Dr. Peter Vint
- **Use Videotape.** If there is any way of borrowing and using one, a videotape system can provide great models and game examples, as well as be a valuable tool to show each player what they look like. Because well played volleyball is not well known, tapes of real youth volleyball and adult games can be a great help. Tapes may be available from the RVA or National Offices. When using the system to tape each player, continue with positive coaching during the replay.

Another is the full report of what one’s body did in the trial, not what the ball did. Yet another might be to highlight certain areas of feedback with a judgment of each trial according to the goal. Performing any of the skills in front of a mirror is an excellent form of feedback, as would any coach “mirroring” or modeling.

NOTES:

It is too easy to focus only on what the players do wrong; make all efforts possible to point out what they are doing right, or nearly right. Catch them being good! Keep the guideline of immediacy whenever possible. Teach players how to make judgments; ask many questions and help them judge what they are seeing.

Better Feedback vs. More Feedback – Remember, players have a limited ability to process information. They will only be able to process so much feedback; too much feedback may mean coaches are either wasting time, not letting their athletes “figure it out themselves” (“Eureka!”) or, in some forms of feedback, causing players to reach a point of “paralysis by analysis.” Constant instruction may take players out of the “groove” of practice, which is the track to optimum learning.

A key reason for coaches to help players to self-regulate their learning is by increasing their awareness of intrinsic feedback. The sooner coaches give the feedback and reinforcing comments after the action, the better. This is all part of speeding up the learning process, because it motivates the athlete toward self analysis (“Eureka!”) and the achievement of correct performance.

Intrinsic Feedback is Best – There’s that word again! The information feedback from performance can help maintain the intent to learn for long periods of time. In other words, an attacker can see a ball hit its target, get past a block, shank off a digger, etc. Setting goals can help in keeping this intent, as well as providing good feedback. Intrinsic motivation encourages greater persistence. There are instances when coaches will need to direct feedback in order to help keep this intent. A blocker’s success is not always evident because the direct results (blocked balls) are not as frequent. In these cases, coaches must let players know when the block correctly did the job of channeling the ball to the defense, even though the player(s) may not have even touched the ball, much less blocked it.

Intrinsic feedback can be increased in many ways. Having athletes “freeze” in a position on command or perform the skill without the ball and their eyes shut can help increase their kinesthetic awareness and internal feedback. Players can also verbalize on each trial just after the skill is performed. A simple “yes” or “no” could be said in answer to success or failure in performing a “key” during the skill.

This same guideline has importance for coaches with regard to their positioning in drills and training. It is very important that coaches stay out of almost all drills so they are able to give positive feedback through both words and modeling, individually and specifically. Your job is to be a COACH, not just a ball machine! When coaches are involved in a drill, everyone must wait while they give one player feedback that is important only to that player. Remember, they will have to perform the skills during games without a coach’s presence on the court.

Marv Dunphy, former USA Men’s National Volleyball Team head coach, uses the terms “precision praise” and “precision criticism” when describing how specific feedback should be given. Too often a coach will say, “That’s it!” or “Nice job,” which does not mean much to the learner. BE SPECIFIC! “Way to keep that arm up!” is the kind of coaching praise players should be hearing. Say, “That’s it, _____,” and fill in the blank with what “IT” is.

The vast majority of the things coaches say and do should be giving specific instruction to individuals or a group. In a study of the great UCLA coach John Wooden, it was found that 75 percent of his messages, both verbal and non verbal, gave specific instruction. Twelve percent of those messages were requests to hustle, seven percent were praises and six percent were scoldings.

Positive Wording – The subconscious does not register the negative in a phrase. A player who is told, “Don’t serve into the net!” is hearing and focusing on “Serve into the net.” Words must be positive, giving the player an image of what should be done. “Don’t swing your arms,” needs to be rephrased to “Keep your hands by your waist.” This small, subtle difference is just another part of combining self-control with the right focus.

Two very good questions coaches can be asking their players are, “Did you look like the model (or goal or demo)?” and “What happened?” If coaches ask these questions after the players perform the skill or exhibit the desired behavior, so much the better. But they can also be asked after an error to make sure the goal is correct in their minds. Keep modeling the behavior desired, reinforcing it in the many ways available when observed and ignoring the errors they make (as long as they know it is an error).

MYTHBUSTING:

The actual answer to this question (and not what “tradition” says) may surprise you! How much “power” does the wrist snap actually add to the spiking motion?! Place a percentage of what you think each body segment adds to the power of a spike...

- A. _____ % Wrist Snap
- B. _____ % Shoulder Rotation
- C. _____ % Elbow Rotation
- D. _____ % Trunk Rotation
- E. _____ % CM Velocity (Approach)

If you want to know more about the “Myths” of Coaching Volleyball, be sure to look for a CAP Webinar by that title on the CAP Schedule page of www.usavolleyball.org.

ANSWERS: A=2.1%, B=30.5%, C=44.9%, D=10.8%, E=15.7%
Other factors - lateral trunk flexion and error = (-4.0%)

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Teach them the “Whys” – Tell players *why* coaches know things and players may not. Why is it that most coaches can get a tip shot by walking out from the bench, when the team on the court cannot get to the ball, even though they are much closer? Too many coaches then go back to teaching technique – rolling and diving – while still standing on the floor in front of the net and throwing the ball to players underhanded or flinging out hard-to-get shots.

Instead, coaches must first check for understanding of the technique, without the ball. If the athlete shows understanding then focus on teaching the “when, where and why” of what just happened in that play. Too many coaches give feedback on technique, when in reality the error was made in reading, anticipation, timing, and judgment. Coaches must help guide players to know *why* they knew where it was going, and more than that – train the players on the court to see, anticipate, time and judge the same type of play with the same type of ball – in the situation above, the tipped ball coming over the net.

One Key At A Time – Until the players are very strong in their basic skills, coaches must not tell them different things each time they give feedback. Focus on just one or two things; it takes time to modify anything. After giving someone information, walk away and help another player, coming back later when the player is ready for more information. There are plenty of others who need attention.

A coach’s attention is a powerful reinforcer and if used to reinforce what actions are wanted, the player and coach will be ahead in the long run. Too often, coaches run around reinforcing with their attention exactly what they do *not* want.

Feedback given will become positive reinforcement of the desired behaviors if coaches will ignore the bad behaviors for the most part. The feedback on what they are doing wrong should not be immediate and if not will then be less effective. It still should be very specific and positive (modeling and “key words”) so they have clear information as to what is to be corrected.

High Intensity = Less Information – The higher the intensity of the drill, the harder it is for players to process specific feedback. Provide more general, reinforcing feedback in high-intensity situations. The lower the intensity of the situation or drill, the more specific the feedback should be.

Indeed, for most athletes, the match itself is a high-intensity situation and thus, some specific “*bench*” feedback goes in one ear and out the other or may confuse them. During the competition, supply general feedback and positive reinforcement and ignore most of the errors. Intensity levels and feedback processing abilities vary individually, so the feed forward/information degrees may vary also.

Target Success/Teach Anticipation – Most coaches walk into the gym and turn on their error detecting “radar,” sweeping back and forth across the gym floor with probing eyes, paying attention to – and coming up to – athletes only after spotting an error. Then, with feedback on that error delivered, they return to radar mode, sweeping the gym for the next mistake. Instead, coaches must focus on looking for and giving feedback to errors in reading, anticipation, timing and judgment. The players already know the technique; they just do not know well enough yet *when* and *where* to apply what they know.

“Success in top-level sports is no longer just an athletic contest – it’s a learning contest that takes place on the frontiers of science, technology and the human body.”
~Dan Coyle

NOTES:

Coach on the Averages – Too often coaches make comments on one specific contact. If the comment concerns a safety factor in a skill, then the coach should not delay in making the comment. However, it is generally better for the coach and the player to watch four or more trials then make a coaching observation based on all of those contacts rather than the most recent one. This also allows the coach to give attention after good skill execution.

When commenting on the average of the past few touches, coaches can give the player attention after a success, while still focusing on the previous few, regardless of whether the comment is about a good or bad habit. Motor skill researchers know this as “summary feedback.”

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES PLAYERS HAVE TO RESPOND

At the beginning of the information feedback discussion this statement was made: information feedback is generally viewed as the most important variable for determining learning, except for practice itself. Practice trials are needed in order to have information feedback. There have been a number of studies that have shown that the number of times a player practices a skill (at an appropriate level of difficulty) is the best predictor of improvement. So coaches should do everything they can to make sure that the number of practice trials, or the number of opportunities to respond, is maximized.

There are four main ways to increase opportunities to respond:

- **Skill warm-up.** Instead of starting each practice with a warm-up that requires the players to jog around in circles, start the warm-up with ball-handling drills. The drills do not have to be intense; they can be at a level that will allow gradual warm-up. After this game-specific warm-up, then coaches can add stretching activities to guard against injury. The 10 minutes or so that the players have devoted to ball handling will give them an advantage over those teams that have been running around in a circle for that same time.
- **Tutoring.** Tutoring is an activity where the coach and one, two, or three players work together in a session designed to practice a specific skill. Because there are only a few players at a tutoring session, each player obtains numerous opportunities to respond and, receives a great deal of good feedback. Virtually every practice can be preceded by a tutoring session, and it doesn't hurt to end every practice with a similar session.
- **Small groups.** It is true that a certain amount of practice should include six-on-six game-like drills, but when players are playing six-on-six, the number of chances they have to touch the ball is diminished. It makes sense to schedule a number of small-group games, like doubles or triples. Generally if a team of 12 players is divided into three games of doubles, they will play the ball three times as often as when they are playing 6 v 6.
- **Wash games or in-a-rows.** Bill Neville and Doug Beal devised many different types of practice situations in which their players had to win two or sometimes three, four, five or more rallies in a row. The routine was as follows: every time a ball was served and the rally terminated, a coach would immediately throw another ball into play. If the objective was to win two in a row, the team that won the first rally would also have to win the second rally. If the first team was successful on the first ball and then the other team was successful on the second ball, then no points were scored and it was called a “wash.” It is possible to set any number of “in-a-rows” as the goal, so if the goal is to win five in a row, then after the serve, four balls would be thrown into play one after another (as long as the same team kept winning the rallies). In this system, with all of the extra balls thrown into play, there is a much greater number of opportunities to respond.

For novices to become experts, the main difference is in experience. Simply put, each coach should look to give more game-like contacts in the same amount of time. Train more often with smaller groups, using two or even three balls per court. Use both sides of the net to split your training groups in half, if space does not permit giving each group a court. “Wash” drills give more touches (about 20-25 percent more than just scrimmages) in the same amount of time.

A beautiful example of this method can be found in an article about teaching a child to fish by Dave Engerbretson (“Parents, Kids & Fly Rods,” *Fly Fishing Magazine*, August 1979). Dr. Carl McGown paraphrases this article a little to make these ideas apply to volleyball. McGown states:

“Remember, too, that children learn best by imitation; that is, by watching and doing, rather than by long, involved, technical explanations. A discussion of horizontal momentum, optimum jumping angles, force conversion and so on could as well be given in a foreign language for all the good it will do most spikers. The majority of instructors talk too much. Show them what to do. Even the simplest jump is made up of many components, and it is usually a mistake to try to emphasize all of these at one time. A beginner cannot mentally concentrate upon timing, the footwork, the jump, the armswing, ball placement, the contact, and the recovery simultaneously. Therefore, after the child has been given a general introduction to spiking, it is best to concentrate on only one component at a time. For example, have the child do a complete spike, but concentrate only on the footwork at the end of the approach.”

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Don't worry if the rest of the spike isn't exactly right; just emphasize the last two steps. As that particular component becomes a fixed habit, start to concentrate on another aspect of the spike. The rule, then, is let one thing become a habit before moving on to the next.

Some Final Thoughts from Bill Neville

On "Principles" vs. "Laws": "Principles" refers to guidelines – with thought. "Laws" are absolutes – meaning no further research or study, is required.

The more I work with this the more I do believe in transfer. However, my definition is a bit different. I've discovered that people with athletic experience understand how to learn and prioritize key information. I like Peter Vint's example of the baseball player and the wrestler – and completely agree. The general motor program of throwing certainly lends itself to the application of hitting. Likewise, a wrestler (who never has thrown objects other than humans) who is enlightened by the opportunity to play volleyball, needs to focus on learning how to spike over learning how to throw - but throwing instruction certainly wouldn't hurt. However, the wrestler also brings an aggressive, competitive mindset, knows how to learn and how to apply athletic skills.

I think there is one absolute: there aren't any – other than natural laws (the effects of gravity, rain is wet, etc.).

I think we must focus on explaining or defining for new coaches the terms and applications of blocked, constant, variable, and random practice; the importance of guiding principles and keys (chunking information and 4x4 cues); and the importance of positive, reinforcing feedback (verbal and non-verbal). I also think we should promote and live by two very sound principles:

- 1) Simpler is Better
- 2) The Game Teaches the Game (also loosely translated as, "Players teach players how to play – Coaches guide the process.")

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website – click on the **Education heading, then on the Coaching-Education-Programs tab, then on Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources.**

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #1 - Philosophy and Ethics](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #2 - Safety and Injury Prevention](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #3 - Physical Conditioning](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #4 - Growth and Development](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 - Teaching and Communication](#)
- [Canadian Sport for Life Long-Term Athlete Development Model \(LTAD\)](#)
- [Volleyball Canada LTAD Model](#)
- [USA Hockey American Development Model \(ADM\)](#)
- [USOC/USAV Draft American Development Model \(ADM\)](#)
- www.trainugly.com
- [Sample Learning Styles Inventory](#)
- Full article – [Motor Learning Comments and Observations](#), by Peter Vint and Bill Neville

NOTES:

⇒ Also look for the following in your local library or on-line:

- ***The Talent Code***, by Dan Coyle, Bantam Books, 2009.
- “**Parents, Kids & Fly Rods,**” Engerbretson, *Fly Fishing Magazine*, Aug. 1979.
- “**A Working Model of Skill Acquisition with Application to Teaching,**” A.M. Gentile, *Quest* 17:3-23, 1972.
- “**Reading the Play in Team Sports – Yes, it is Trainable!**” Dr. Damian Farrow, *Australian Sports Commission’s Sports Coach Magazine*, Vol 27, #3, 2004. Portions reprinted here with permission.
- “**Perceptual Expertise in Sport: Some Myths and Realities,**” Dr. Mark Williams. Published in *The Dawn of the New Millennium: Proceedings of the 10th World Congress of Sport Psychology*, Editors A. Papaioannou, M. Goudas and Y. Theodorakis, Thessaloniki: Christodoulidi Publ., 2005.
- ***Motor Learning and Performance: Principles to Application***, 5th Edition, Schmidt, Human Kinetics, Nov 5, 2013.
- ***Faster, Higher, Stronger: How Sports Science Is Creating a New Generation of Superathletes—and What We Can Learn***, by Mark McClusky, Hudson Street Press, Oct 30, 2014. “*Success in top-level sports is no longer just an athletic contest- it’s a learning contest that takes place on the frontiers of science, technology and the human body. If you’re interested in understanding and competing in this new world, you need to buy Mark McClusky’s smart, invigorating and useful book right now.*” ~ Dan Coyle
- ***Developing Sport Expertise: Researchers and Coaches Put Theory into Practice***, 2nd edition, by Damian Farrow, Joe Baker and Clare MacMahon, Jun 7, 2013.
- “**Motor Learning Principles and the Superiority of Whole Training in Volleyball,**” by Steven Bain, and Carl McGown, Dec, 2010. Published in the *AVCA Coaching Volleyball Journal* as a response to “Whole vs. Part Training”, which was published in the 2010 April/May issue.

Just as great coaches challenge their players to be creative on the court, coaches in this IMPACT course are being provided with key fundamental ideas and drill formats and are also now challenged to create what they need to develop the best drills that will be applicable to their own teams and situations. The best coaches are always seeking to learn more and aren't satisfied with just being handed more drills. Every year spent coaching should improve a coach's performance. Good coaches go watch the best volleyball played in their area, whether it is collegiate or USA Volleyball open tournaments. Good coaches attend coaching clinics beyond this IMPACT clinic. Good coaches will watch video and DVDs, and read volleyball and coaching books, like the excellent book *Coaching Successfully* by Martens, Christina, Harvey and Sharkey. **Good coaches are lifelong learners!**

MAXIMIZE MEANINGFUL MOVEMENTS and SUCCESSFUL CONTACTS

In this process of drill development, remember to teach and improve on skills – do not just teach the athletes more drills. One of the worst things coaches can do is to keep changing and using new and different drill formats every practice, so the players spend much of their mental energy trying to figure out how to do the drill, rather than how to perform the skills. The **BASE** drills (Building All Skills Efficiently) that are covered later in this chapter can form the basic routine for many skill exercises. The same goes for team system creation – coaches should fit the system around their players, not plug the players into a pre-determined system, unless the coach has the luxury of recruiting specific players into that system. Coaches should limit the number of options available until the system is well understood. The key is to maximize successful meaningful movements and contacts in every drill during every practice.

Skill development at beginning levels is simple – demonstrate, practice it, then demonstrate it again with a new focus and practice it again. There are many ways to acquire skills. In developing drills, coaches must be aware of how to improve their drill efficiency. Players do not have the time to acquire skills they generally never use.

Some drills can be made more efficient by speeding up the pace. However, coaches must still allow for sufficient time to make a comparison to process the feedback internally as well as externally. Certain drills can be positively modified simply by adding an additional ball into each group, or making each group smaller.

Coaches can develop self discipline, self direction and self-coaching in their players by removing themselves from the drills as soon as possible. Make players understand that their coach only has one pair of eyes and cannot be everywhere at once. If players are to get better faster, then they – not their coach – need to control their improvement.

Many players (and some coaches) think that just by doing something they will get better. Practice itself does not make perfect. If that were true, everyone would have good handwriting, as everyone does it every day. Athletes must learn to be intent on improving, with or without the coach's direct attention. Make sure to incorporate enough ball feeders to keep all drills moving without wasting players' time through inaction. The idea that *practice makes permanent is true*. The only thing is, if athletes practice incorrectly, they will perform incorrectly in the match.

***“Coach – When can we ...
...?”***

That question predictably ends with “PLAY?” How often do coaches hear this question and better yet, how often do coaches heed that question by designing their practice drills to be played like the game?!

***Again...are you practicing to
“win the practice”...
or are you practicing to win the
competition?
And if so, do your drills and
practices reflect this
objective?!***

NOTES:

Grouping is also important. The fundamental group size is three, often called triangles or triplets. Groups that are any smaller will cause the vital angles of the game to be eliminated. While playing with a partner and/or executing drills alone or against the wall does allow for more contacts, the players are acquiring a skill action (motor program) that will not help them much in the game. Groups larger than three lessen the number of possible contacts per player. This is a big reason for the smaller team size found in youth volleyball. Indeed, scrimmages in teams of doubles and triples are in many ways just competitive small group drills.

Another “trick” while keeping the same key **BASE** drills is to set up stations. Each group of three or more rotates to do a certain skill or combination drill after a certain amount of time. This will save a good amount of time in the long run and provides yet another way to make practice the same, but not boring.

SUCCESS

- ***A coach's definition of success will change as his/her players' skill levels increase.*** Therefore, learn to individualize the definition of success in a skill, drill or game. It can be directed at shaping a part of a skill or at successful ball contact.
- ***Establishing and then changing goals is also possible.*** Once a certain success level is reached (for example, five good in a row or seven out of 10), simply raise the demands. Other goals can be set by using a clock to see how many successes can be reached in a certain amount of time. Points can be scored between the ball and the performer or some other adversary, using a plus/minus scale for tabulation.
- ***Medium Success or Above.*** Players learn the fastest when their success level in a drill is medium to high. Once perfection is attained in anything but a fundamental drill, the player should be challenged by an increased game like demand. Concurrently, players do not learn from constant failure. Drills must have the flexibility to be made easier or tougher, as the skill levels dictate. Medium to high success is defined in volleyball as a 50-80 percent success ratio.

Beginners may not be able to achieve this ratio immediately when the ball action is introduced. However, these new learners are to be judged first by the fundamental skill action, regardless of where the ball might end up due to an error in judgment or timing. Learning requires change. Good judgment is the product of experience and experience is the product of bad judgment. Remember, patience and enthusiasm are two of the biggest assets in dealing with beginners' frustrations.

Keeping medium-high success levels in all drills is a part of confidence building. Coaches should build confidence in players to perform in public competition, not just in practice in front of teammates.

- ***Start and End on a Positive Note*** – It may mean that coaches must wait longer for certain drills to reach a positive end point, but starting and ending on a positive note is part of developing confidence and success.
- ***A Frame Of Reference*** – Each coach must understand volleyball's unique elements. The net provides a frame of reference that must be included in all drills. There is less value in learning to serve along the net, since all serves must go over the net in the game. Just as specific feedback is important to each player, drills must contain the specific aspects of the game. There must be an objective, and with young players who have little time to acquire skills, this should be primarily skill development while having fun. If there is time, conditioning can be added, but remember, fatigue is detrimental to learning.
- ***Specialize when Appropriate*** - In six-on-six volleyball, specialization of player position may now be added. Once this level is reached, consider the player's specialized position and skill demands in each drill. For example, it is not as meaningful for a player who is not a setter to set balls from the setter position. These non setters should be setting balls from anyplace except the setter slot at the net. Also consider the rotational patterns of the team system, no matter what the level of play. Especially if a team cannot train very often, consider specializing players in practice. While all players should learn to perform all the skills adequately, every individual player does not need to be equally strong in all six skills of the game. Instead, have the best passers passing while the best hitters hit. *Maximize the players' strengths and minimize their weaknesses.*
- ***Movement*** – Most of the game of volleyball is played without athletes contacting the ball. Even while one player is touching the ball, the rest of the team and all the opponents should be doing something involved with reading and anticipation of the next contact. Movement and reading, without being involved in contact, is a very important skill coaches can help players to acquire. Players should always be reading and anticipating what might happen next, and moving into the best position for the next contact in the game.

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A great amount of learning can be accomplished at the younger levels without using the ball. The players must be able to model the skill as the coach desires, without the ball. Once the fundamental skill is established without the ball, the next step is to add the ball to the drill, thus increasing the difficulty.

Too many times coaches will start drills first without involving any movement, then progress to *some* movement. Instead, have the players move to the ball (tossed away from them, by degrees) so they learn early on that most of the time the ball does not come directly to them, but they in fact must move to the ball. More than 90 percent of the movement in each volleyball skill is done prior to contact. Every drill should help the players acquire the movement that is a part of each skill before contact.

Movement in a drill should also include proper positioning for the next skill. Indeed, movement between contacts can extend the range and success in skills once they have been learned.

Drill movement begins with the single-skill **BASE** drills. Once these are understood, many of them can then be developed into the more complex combination drills. Combination drills need game-like movement between contacts. Be cautious of creating a series of movements that would never happen in game play. The last stage of movement complexity is team transition drills, where the group executes team offenses and defenses.

- **Contacts** – Individual skills must also be developed into the complex options and team systems. Create what is needed, building on the solid fundamentals to add any other skill options. There are dozens of skills to learn. When including the team offense and defense systems, the drills get more complex. Specialization at the higher levels means coaches must be aware of who is doing what contact where. Once again, there is no reason for a non setter to be trained to set at the net. The non setters should be practicing overhand passing and setting the kinds of balls that a setter would not reach.
- **Drills Or Games (or “Grills”)** – When asking players if they would rather do a drill or play a game, the answer universally is “a game!” Take advantage of this and stop “drilling” and start playing “games.” Even in this manual, when reading the traditional word “drill,” mentally change the word to “game” in the gym. It will help make game-like drills that include scoring and also help ensure that the game places the players in game-like positions and situations.

Why is it that teams will compete in a one-day tournament and at the end of the day, large jumps in improvement can be seen? “We started slowly, but we almost made the playoffs,” is a common statement made by coaches. In actuality, in a pool of four, teams were on the court playing for about two to five hours – so why not get the same jumps in understanding and competitiveness in each practice? Make each drill a game and play!

CREATE “BASE” DRILLS

There are thousands of drills that coaches have created. Sadly, a great many do not fit the key concepts found in maximizing meaningful movements and contacts. Too often drills are inefficient for learning or they develop volleyball habits that are counterproductive in game play. Other drills do not take specificity in training or modern motor skill learning theory into account.

NOTES:

FACT:

The best passers in the world
(including all the USA Liberos and Misty May)
report that 80% of their serve
reception success on floaters
(90% jumpers for women, and
95% on jumpers for men)
happens before the ball
ever crosses the net!

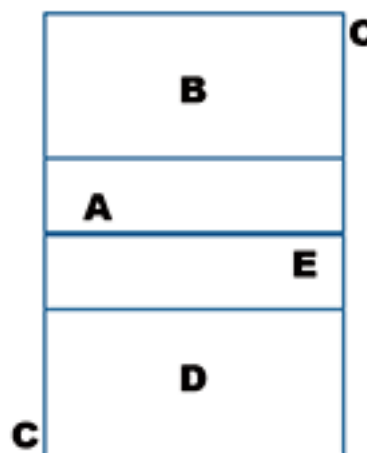
The drills included with each skill section are drills that are **Building All Skills Efficiently**, or **BASE** drills. They are built around the way a ball moves during the game. There are many angles and targets that players encounter in a game; therefore, some sort of triangle formation must be present in nearly all quality drills.

Coaches can take any **BASE** drill and, keeping the core mechanics, make up dozens of options for most skills. Because the game is simpler, youth coaches should use simple drills that allow players to focus on skill improvement and consistency. Repeat these basic drills and the game-like modifications throughout the season.

Each drill has many ways to be modified that will change the difficulty and/or the skill demands. These are also ways to individualize drills so everyone achieves success. This is part of the creative process in coaching. Progress the skills from simple to complex; progress drills from simple to complex in the same manner. To build success into game play coaches should build their own drills and build in success experiences within each of those drills.

Initiation Points – Start the drill by initiating the ball from different areas of the court (as in the adjacent diagram). Keep in mind, for example, why a ball might be coming from off-court (likely after a bad first contact), and make sure the habits athletes are developing are good, game-like habits.

Ball Flight Variations – The tosser/readable ball hitter (a coach, or better yet – a player) can change the speed of the ball so it moves slower or faster than the average speed for that level. Training with a slower ball gives players more time to react and is a good way to help individuals begin acquiring the perceptual skills of reading and anticipation. The faster ball certainly makes things harder, but once the player returns to the normal speed, the ball seems to go in slow motion. Many women find this especially true when switching from co-ed play to same-gender play.

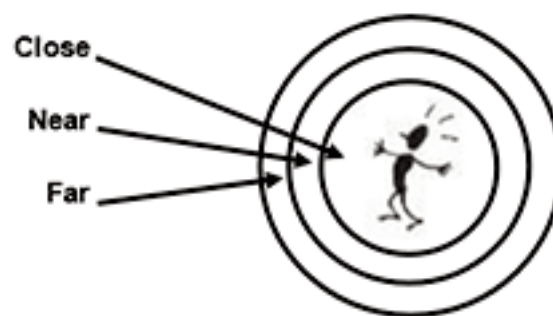


Much like learning to ski or drive, even slow speeds can seem very fast.

The ball can seem to be moving at frightening speeds for a beginner. Help everyone overcome any such fears by individual confidence building in all skills.

While a skill may have a standard ball flight or trajectory, as the pass to the setter should, players need to also experience balls that are higher and lower, as well as faster and slower, than normal. This is another way of changing the reaction time a player has to influence success levels. Its also part of developing each player's all around skills.

Coaches may also combine these two kinds of ball flight variations, such as tossing a ball lower and faster than the player had previously experienced, as illustrated in the diagram below left.



Player Movement Demands – Players learn to do a skill successfully further and further away from their “home base” start position, with balls that are their responsibility. As they learn to move, read and anticipate better, their range will increase. Movement that begins with a hop or even a jump, progresses to slide steps and finally moves to a crossover or run. Even beginners need to learn to do most skills both while stopped and while moving. Running past the point of contact with the ball, generally while staying on their feet, will improve the quality of skill execution.

Decisions – Drills can be changed, requiring players to make game-like decisions. Reaction drills are created by having the player open his/her eyes upon a call from a teammate. Because each skill is preceded by some other action, coaches can add a previous skill to any drill. The same is true of adding any subsequent skill performance. In either case, the player might not be able to touch a ball, so the drill should incorporate what the real game-like action would be. Add new skill options from the **IMPACT Plus** chapters of this manual. By creating more combo drills, coaches will be able to have a single player touch the ball twice before sending the ball back over the net.

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Goals – Changing goal levels is yet another way to vary a **BASE** drill. The goals that are set must be realistic for players at their level of development. There are very creative ways to reward a team as part of any goal. Make it fun, challenging and easy to do given the inherent fun that volleyball practice provides. Once some level of skill control is reached, even at the youth level, drills should also add some element of competition.

The winners of such drills could get a break (such as not have to stay to clean up) while the losers would stay. Scoring variations are also important in seeking to include “competition with criteria” in your drills often.

Skills – In each **BASE** drill, simply add a tougher skill option from the higher level choices. Standard formats help players focus on the skills demands themselves, especially when new options are introduced.

Skill Development Without a Ball – In addition to mental skill rehearsal practice covered previously, players can perform physical skills without the ball. This is an excellent way for the coach to see if the player is doing the skill wrong or just having problems with judgment or timing. If the player can do the skill correctly without a ball involved, then the skill action is understood. The player simply needs help in positioning relative to the ball, in timing of the action, or in reading what is occurring before contact. Coaches and players can never watch too many videos or DVDs, either of accomplished players or of each player doing the skills correctly. Use the video to show and focus on the actions that are desired, not on the errors.

Combination Drills – Even before players have the single skill drills completely mastered, coaches should add combinations to all drills. Single-skill drills should be next built into double-skill combinations. The initial combination drill is **PASS–SET**. This is especially true in youth volleyball where the attack also will often be an overhead pass. Other combos like **SERVE-PASS, SET-HIT, ATTACK-DEFEND**, are other common game and drill examples.

As quickly as possible, add longer combinations. The key combo is **RECEIVE (Pass)–SET–ATTACK**. The pass can first be received from a toss and then progress either to serve or attack reception. Again, keep game-like drills simple and vary the skills, not the drills.

The shorter the competitive season, the sooner coaches must begin combination drills. Combination drills are just that much more game-like. If success is not achieved in simple combinations, game play will be that much less successful. Coaches will also be able to coach two or more players in one group, which allows for more coaching possibilities on more contacts per player.

The final level of combination drills are coach-controlled serve reception, defense and scrimmages (the coach or some other player puts the ball in play in a game-like manner), especially wash versions. Once the players are able to handle the serve of their teammates, the players themselves should serve to initiate the drill or game. The youth game variations and resource sections of the *IMPACT Manual* also contain some good ideas for team drills, not just games. Playing is fun, but until the three skills of passing, setting and serving are well-acquired, along with three-contact cooperation, bad habits can form. It is too easy to aim for the whole court target to win, rather than the smaller and more difficult “*team-mate target*.”

NOTES:

Players are not equal in skills, and rather than teach everyone to do all skills equally well, specialize the skill development. In this case, even though each skill should be taught to each athlete, the better passers will pass more, while better hitters will hit more during each practice. Doug Beal, former U.S. Olympic Men's Volleyball Team head coach and current CEO for USA Volleyball, points out that,

"Players do not get bored doing what they do well – that is their natural tendency and coaches should make use of it."

SCORING VARIATIONS (compiled by John Kessel, USAV Director, Sport Development, and Diana Cole, USAV Director, Coaching Education)

- ⇒ **"Coopetition" Scoring** – A point on the scoreboard can only be recorded once a cooperative task/goal/objective has been accomplished, i.e. two teams must successfully rally across the net five times in a row, and then either team can compete to try to score a point.
- ⇒ **X before Y** – One team has to get "X" number of points before the other team gets "Y". This is most common with 4 before 2 and 7 before 3. You can set this ratio to fit your team, and let the starters have a real challenge to beat the bench players.
- ⇒ **X out of Y** – The team who gets the most points (X) given the number of balls (Y) introduced by the coach.
- ⇒ **X in a Row** – The winner has the highest number of points in a row. When the team (A) getting the points in a row errs (including the opponent's success in any way) the counter is reset back to 0; on the next rally, one team will score point #1 of a new "in-a-row" attempt.
- ⇒ **Criterion** – In any game, certain point numbers are designated as criterion points. The first team to reach that point gets bonus points. You can also "bet" additional points at these criterion points (double or nothing, etc.).
- ⇒ **Bonus Points** – Teams or individuals are awarded extra points on a rally if they perform a specified skill or play; great for getting players to take a risk and try "new" things.
- ⇒ **Bonus or "Money" Ball** – Teams or individuals are awarded extra points on a rally if they score using the specially marked/colored "Money Balls," which come out of the ball bucket on a random basis. Money Balls can be worth a specified number of added points.
- ⇒ **Team Spelling** – Rotationally, the team spells a word out loudly before the tossed ball hits the floor.
- ⇒ **"Horse" or "Pig"** – Individuals or teams compete to spell out the specified word (positive actions) or force the opponent to spell the specified word (negative) on an error. Team mascots or names could be spelled.
- ⇒ **X in Y minutes** – Playing games by time and not score is one option. Playing to see who can accumulate the largest number of points (X) in each unit of time (Y), with an overall total at the end is another option.
- ⇒ **Bucket of Balls** – There is a stated time limit and a set number of balls in the cart. When a ball goes dead, it is gone. The players have only the balls in the cart to keep going for the remaining time.
- ⇒ **Handicapping and Reinforcing** – This concept is at the discretion of the coach. Commonly the starters might have to perform something three times, while the second group has only to get two successes. In any game, you can give 2 points for the team behind and 1 point for the team leading.
- ⇒ **Start in the Frying Pan** – Start at 12-12, 23-22, 20-20 or 14-13, etc. (not at 0-0 unless the team needs work on how to score points early in the game).
- ⇒ **Negative Scoring** – Points can be taken away for pre-discussed attitudes, lack of hustle, or other performance situations coaches want to stress.
- ⇒ **Bongo** – A team must win "X" number of rallies in a row to get a chance to serve for a point on the scoreboard.
- ⇒ **Two-fer Serves** – Each player serves two in a row, no more or less, taking momentum out of the game – and at the lower levels, eliminating the 15 serves in a row by one server situations.
- ⇒ **Score Flip** – At any time, for learning, competitive and intensity reasons, the coach can reverse the scores. Without complaining, each team must then deal with the score as it then stands, using whatever point scoring variation being used. Thus the starters might go from a 14-10 lead to suddenly being down 10-14. This could be a timed situation, i.e. every 2 minutes the score will flip, or flip on a random timer.

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- ⇒ **Final Point Mountain** – Teams have to score “X” number of consecutive little points to score that final point to win this game; could be for the completion of a set number of specified skills or plays.
 - ⇒ **Spell “supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” or “IT”** – Best used in the cooperative and transitional scoring phases, where long or short words must be spelled out, getting one letter for each three-hit combination crossing the net by the at-the-moment **cooperating** teams. Once the word is spelled, the teams can go into **competitive** mode for that rally and can then score an actual point, or can continue to cooperate to achieve the highest number they can reach.
 - ⇒ **Negative Points** – A point does not count if a player performs an undesired action. For example, if Sue hits a spike with a closed fist (and you as coach want an open hand with wrist snap), the rally does not count on the scoreboard.
 - ⇒ **Wave Wash** – Winners go under net, while on the losing side the back-row moves off court, and new players wave onto the court.
 - ⇒ **Weighted Scoring** – Example: 0 for free ball, +1 for down ball, +2 for attacked ball, (- 2) if not over net, (-1) if not into opponent’s court.
 - ⇒ **First Ball Killed** – A point can only be scored on the first rally, by the team getting the ball, while the team defending will get a point for winning the rally at any time. The “wash” comes when the team getting the ball puts it away, but not during the first rally over the net.
 - ⇒ **Eternal Rally** – Simply keep throwing balls into play, monitoring the players’ fatigue factor, to see how few balls, how many balls, or how long the team can play in a constant rally.
 - ⇒ **Scramble** – Give each side “X” minutes to score points successfully in free/down ball situations. Unforced errors can be negative points, while no effort by either side can take the teams back a rotation.
 - ⇒ **Peer Pressure Goal** – Play for one continual minute, with everyone going for the ball hard, and/or everyone staying low, or whatever the main goal is. Should someone not do the demanded skill, then coaches can 1) Stop drill 2) Announce name 3) Restart drill at zero.
 - ⇒ **Time Ball in Air** – A set amount of time that no ball can hit the floor, as the whole team must keep the balls off the floor. If coach sees or hears a ball hit the floor, team restarts the clock. Can be cooperative or competitive scoring.
 - ⇒ **Hat Scoring** – Put all sorts of scores in a hat: 22-24, 12-14, 12-12, 14-12, 21-21, 10-20, 20-10, etc. A player draws out a score and the game starts with that score.
 - ⇒ **M&M Chair** – Remember vertical targets are NOT good for serving, but they ARE good for passing. Position an empty chair with a package of M&Ms on it; first passer to hit the chair gets to sit and slowly eat M&Ms until another passer hits her and takes her place.
 - ⇒ **Activation Scoring** – Team (or individual) cannot begin to score points within the game until a specific player/task/skill/play has been accomplished and thus activates the scoring.
 - ⇒ **Tic-Tac-Toe (or Bingo)** – As a team wins a drill/or rotation or completes a specific task, they get to make their mark on the “Card” on the sidelines. The object then becomes not only to win the drill as scored, but to also be the first team to complete either a shared (both teams play) or an individual/team game board. Whichever team wins the game board game wins that practice activity. These are just a couple of examples...you could have teams compete to play “Candyland” or any such board game throughout the practice.
 - ⇒ **Classic Board Games** – Use any board games to add fun extra scoring elements to any game/drill, such as Connect 4, Chutes & Ladders, Yahtzee, dice games, puzzles, deck of cards/card games, etc.

NOTES:

VOLLEYBALL GAMES (compiled by John Kessel, USAV Director, Sport Development)

Research shows that “the game teaches the game.” Game-like training is the BEST way to get the skills to transfer from practices into matches. The idea is to increase the “opportunities to respond,” those chances for players to touch the ball, not watch someone else touch it.

Of course kids want to play, but this does not mean that teaching proper technique or skill performance will stop during that play. Too often kids can perform with the desired technique in a non-game-like drill, but not in the game. Players must perform the skills in competition, within the games developed, not just in isolated drills. Teaching games for understanding skills is used for all levels from kids in their first experiences of the sport, all the way up through the USA National Teams.

⇒ Wash Drills

Created first by former USA National team coaches Doug Beal and Bill Neville in the 1980s, Wash Drills are just one way to enhance how the game teaches the game. This is done by having the coach add one or more balls into the game immediately, while players need to learn how to clear the ball off the court fast and safely to be able to focus on the next ball. An important fact of these kinds of fast-added ball drills is that research shows players get up to 50 percent more touches on the ball in the same amount of time as in a standard scrimmage. Equally importantly, the players learn a key game-like concept – **competing** – with winners and losers in some form. The higher intensity also teaches each player how to handle a pressure level that is higher than in most matches.

⇒ Wash Scoring

This type of scoring is named after the concept, “I paid for lunch and you picked up dinner so it’s a wash.” Thus, in order to get a point on the scoreboard, a team must win two or more rallies. If one team wins the served-ball rally, and the other team wins the coach-introduced-ball rally, it is a “wash.” Rally scoring is used. Keeping track of the scoring in this higher intensity situation can be its own challenge. Coaches can use their fingers, raising one or more on the side of the team that has won the “little points,” before a “big point” is reached. Other coaches use the balls being carried to be introduced into the drill, while others use a team manager or player out of the game to keep score. Some coaches will put objects out on each side of the net, with the team winning the “big point” getting to “steal” an object from the losing team. The art of coaching includes letting them argue about the scoring, to see who has the best recall of the team, though the objective is to touch more balls in the same amount of time, not practice arguing. This art also includes determining which team gets the coach-introduced balls, as they can either be given to the rally-losing side, or to the rally-winning side, and can be given easily or aggressively attacked by the person putting the additional ball(s) into the court.

⇒ See Ya! Tournament – This is an instant-winner/single-point game run on as many courts as are available. When the player loses she moves on to the next court; when at the last court, the player returns to the first court and starts all over again. Scored by whoever has the highest total number of one-point-game wins.

⇒ Monarch of the Court – Otherwise known as “Queen of the Court” and “King of the Court” in single-gender competitive situations. Coaches can designate one side that the winning side defends, so that the challenger runs under the net to that side when they win the one-point rally. Coaches can also say that the winning side must change sides or rotate in some fashion each time to add more conditioning to the game.

⇒ Speed Ball – Similar to Monarch of the Court above as the winners stay on, but teams are on both end lines waiting to enter the court when their side loses a rally. Both waiting teams have a ball and are ready to serve the instant their side loses. So on one side, if Team A loses, they are off and Team B is on... while on the other side, if Team Y loses, then Team Z is on. As the losing team runs off the court, and runs quickly to get a ball to serve (should their side miss the serve/lose the point), the next team to come on behind them serves over the top of them.

⇒ Match-ups - Hitter vs. Blocker, Server vs. Passer, Digger vs. Hitter, Setter vs. Blockers

⇒ Two vs. 0 Warm Up Game – Players A and B start on same side of net; A tosses to B, who sets it back and then ducks under the net; A passes/sets ball over net to B and ducks under to set the ball to B; A sets/passes to B and ducks under the net to same side they started on; rally continues in this format until ball is dead.

⇒ Two vs. Four – The doubles team can hit from anywhere on the court, the four-person team can block with one blocker only and must attack from behind the 3-meter line.

⇒ One vs. one vs. one – Over-the-net short-court games.

⇒ Five vs. Five – Play without a player in position #5 or #6, or in #1, #2 or #3.

106-DRILL DEVELOPMENT

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- ⇒ **Six vs. Three or Six vs. Two** – Starting with 3 vs. 3 or 2 vs. 2, the side that puts the ball over after their first three-hit rally then goes to four or six players on the court. Should the other side get the ball back over also with their three hits, it then goes to 4 vs. 4 or 6 vs. 6. The winning side gets to split up, and stay on both sides, while the losing side splits to become the add-ins when the ball crosses the net.
- ⇒ **Prisoner Volleyball** – For each rally point scored, the winning side gets one of the other side's players – either the player who made the error or who was closest to the ball as it was killed, or the winners may get to select a player from the other side; can begin with odd or even numbers – 4 vs 4, 5 vs 5, 4 vs 5 and 6 vs 5.
- ⇒ **Tip/Hit Scrimmage** – Players can spike only if a one-person block forms; if two or more blockers form, they must use a one-handed or two-handed tip to beyond the 3-meter line.
- ⇒ **Softball (or baseball)** - This game has as many innings as there are players on one side of the court.
 - Each half of an inning is over when the pitching team (serving) gets three outs on the receiving (batting) team.
 - An out is achieved when the batting team (team receiving) either errs or the pitching team stuff blocks/ace serves/transition kills.
 - An untouched ace serve could be a double play (2 outs).
 - A stuff block could be a double play (2 outs).
 - Home Run – could be awarded to the batting team that kills the ball on first attempt.
 - Triple – could be awarded to the batting team that gets the point before or at the second net crossing of the ball .
 - Double – could be awarded to the batting team that gets the point before or at the third net crossing of the ball.
 - Single – could be awarded to the batting team that gets the point before or at the fourth net crossing of the ball .
 - Any longer rally could be a foul ball.
 - Serves into the net could be a ground rule double for the batters.
 - Serves out over the net could be a walk for the batting team.

One can give any kind of hit or out for any actions desired, letting the team define things as the game develops (e.g. a triple play if no one even moves for a ball or a stolen base because of the extra hustle or team play by the batting team). Or if the batting team wins the served ball (the pitch) then the coach enters free balls for the batting team to score "runs" – as long as they score a run, they will get another free ball; once they lose a free ball that might be an "out." Coaches could apply a "5-Run Rule" per pitch per inning.

- ⇒ **Football** – Creating football levels of wash scoring, you get to keep getting the ball, and after two successes in a row, you can opt for a "field goal," getting three points. If the opponents block your attempt, however, they "run it back for a touchdown." You can wait and go for six in a row, thus a touchdown, and then go for an extra point, or go for two by killing the ball from the back row. Play for 5 or 10 minutes per "quarter" and switch sides at each quarter, giving them a 2-minute break for "halftime."
- ⇒ **You Da Star** – 1 vs 6; if the single player can touch it, s/he gets to stay on.
- ⇒ **Got the Whole World** – 5 servers vs. 1 passer on both sides of the net at the same time. If the passer can touch the serve, s/he stays on.
- ⇒ **Golf (shoot for hula hoops)** – Keeping track of the number of serves to hit into the hoop/target. Lower-skilled players get holed out if they hit any part of the target. Higher skilled must hit completely in the target boundaries.

NOTES:

- ⇒ Play sitting volleyball, Special Olympic volleyball, Sepaw Takraw (foot volleyball).
- ⇒ **Hit or be Hit** – Everyone hits the same hit (back row or high outside most often). If the ball is hit out or even touches the net, that player must lie down on other side past the 3-meter line. All players hit until just one is left who then gets to hit five in a row from wherever desired.
- ⇒ **Sweets** – Use granola or candy bars, individually wrapped candies, or frozen fruit/ice cream bars as pattern-interrupter awards. It is amazing how hard a player will train for a mini chocolate bar reward!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the **IMPACT Resources page** of the USA Volleyball website – click on the **Education heading**, then on the **Coaching-Education-Programs tab**, then on **Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources**.

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #1 - Philosophy and Ethics](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #2 - Safety and Injury Prevention](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #3 - Physical Conditioning](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #4 - Growth and Development](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 - Teaching and Communication](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #7 - Organization and Administration](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #8 - Evaluation](#)
- [USAV-CAP Continuum for Drill and Practice Preparation](#), Diana Cole
- [Twenty-Five Questions for Volleyball Coaches and Teachers](#), John Kessel
- [The Game Teaches the Game](#), John Kessel
- [Training Without a Net or Friends](#), John Kessel
- [2 v 0 Warm Up Drill Video](#)

- ⇒ **ALSO LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY OR ONLINE:**

- *Volleyball Systems and Strategies*, by USA Volleyball, Human Kinetics, 2009.
- *Coaching Successfully*, 3rd edition by Rainer Martens, Human Kinetics, 2004.
- *Volleyball Fundamentals*, by Joel Dearing, Human Kinetics, 2003.

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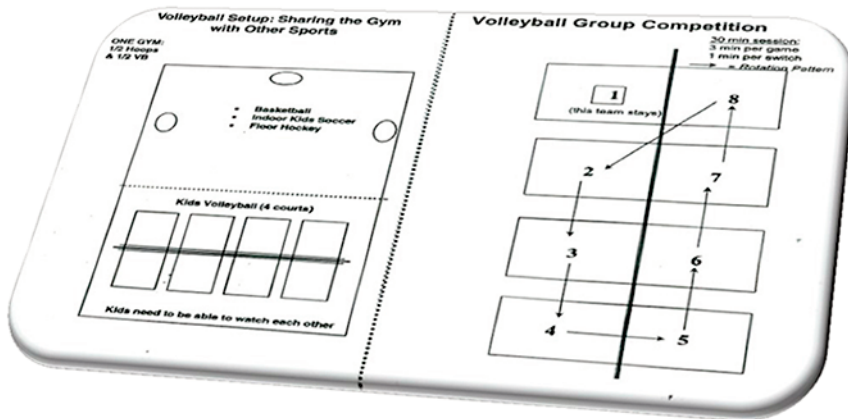
CHAPTER 8: THE YOUTH, MINI AND BEACH GAME

NOTES:

USAV TOP 10 GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH VOLLEYBALL SUCCESS

1. MORE NETS AND COURTS IN THE SPACE YOU HAVE

This means that instead of being able to control or watch the one ball move around (as the group plays six vs. six or, horrors, nine vs. nine) that you will have more than one ball/net/court to watch and teach. Of course, your training area needs to be safe at all times. Volleyball is the most space-efficient ("crowded") court sport and you can get 24, even 32 kids per single regulation basketball court. Share the gym with hoops, soccer, or other programs, by stringing nets up for just half the gym; lots of kids will fit on one half. Buy a divider net that can be tied up to eyebolts wall to wall. Use the big mesh netting, so those playing the other sports can see kids spiking and playing the game, and want to get involved.



Put up nets next to soccer/football fields. Pick a time that the gyms are not used, even at 7 a.m. (look what ice hockey and swimmers do for training). Put up asphalt and grass courts when weather permits. The public schools all have facilities that need to be used after school for programs. Private schools are more likely to offer space if a program will pay or provide a service (i.e. train their kids). Build standards and courts, and buy new gear and safer padding rather than pay rent. Use tennis courts; attach a rope or net to the poles in the fence and leave the net up.

Corollary – Make these nets EASY and FAST to set up.

Use rope or Kevlar nets – not cable – and wall anchors rather than standards if need be. A nice Spalding sleeved-pole system that goes up fast works well. Mark the corners of the court with tape, or put down markers (flat thin rubber discs, Sport X's and lines) in the corners. Outside, put down socks and play barefoot, or mark the lines by dragging a foot in the sand. USAV has produced a video on creating fast, easy spaces to play: *The Maximum Contact Net System*.

Corollary – A net does not have to be a regulation adult net.

Each 10-meter long adult net can be made to host TWO kids' courts, with a 2-meter buffer in between. Rope nets are fine, with markers hanging down to separate the court areas. Badminton nets are great for all kids. In a pinch, one kid standing there can be a net/barrier to play over! Not the old "one net and 20 kids per side," but 4-10 nets with 2-4 players per side. If no rope, link jump ropes together. Or use two kids as the "standards" on each court to hold up the jump rope as the net while the other four kids play 2 vs. 2; rotate through, playing short games. The kids holding up the "net" are getting conditioning, too. Not anchoring the bottom of the net is fine, even though the ball will not play out of the net.

Corollary – Get more volleyballs!

Each volleyball program should have just as many volleyballs in the storeroom as there are basketballs and as many nets as well - how popular/fun would basketball be if your gym only had one hoop and one or two basketballs for your whole group?! These balls must NOT be rubber, which hurts and turns kids off. A great choice is the Molten VB "Lite" ball – made regulation size but lighter in weight, and used in the USA Junior Volleyball National Championships 12 & under division. Brightly colored beach balls, available for about \$1 each, are great for younger kids because they travel slower. "Market" balls, the ones that are about \$2 and permanently inflated are also fun options. Even round balloons for any age on a small court can be fun because they also travel slower and are safe. The pattern for a cloth/balloon ball can be found in the online IMPACT Resource section.

Corollary – Play on any surface.

Use tennis courts, play sitting volleyball on a stage or in the lunchroom, play on grass, sand, concrete and asphalt. The March of Dimes hosts a mud volleyball tourney each year in which they raise about \$100,000. Play in the pool or play in a racquetball or squash court. Sport Courts have allowed USA Nationals to be held on 70+ courts under one roof (www.sportcourt.com). PowerGrips (like those big suction cups used to carry window glass) allow outdoor court systems to be set up inside. Park & Sun nets are great options for nets that can be used on grass, sand or hard-court, complete with standards and anchor ropes (www.parksun.com).

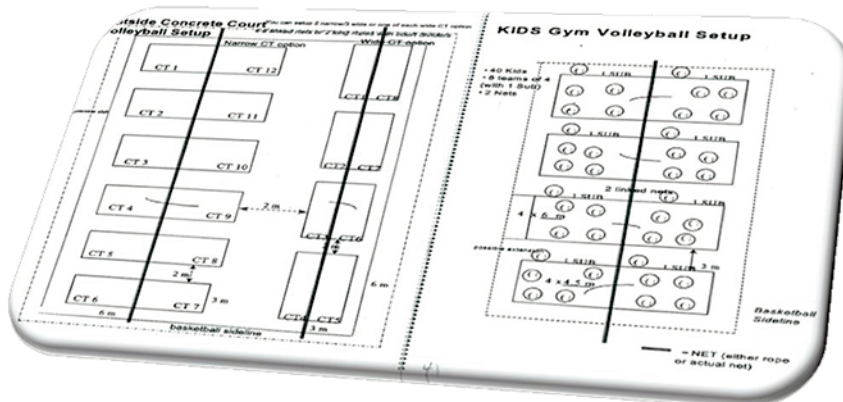
A badminton court with the net raised on extenders is also fine. The court lines need not be fully laid out, but may be created from existing lines, as the court dimensions are just suggestions. For example, put up two nets lengthwise on an adult court, and the end lines and 3-meter lines become the youth sidelines; the sidelines (or the basketball sideline) become the youth end lines, and without even laying down lines there will be two courts where one only existed before! Courts may be modified as necessary, based also on safety and available space, as long as they are basically the same in the same gym. Badminton and racquetball/wallyball courts are also EXCELLENT net systems and court space options.

2. MAKE FOUR THE LARGEST TEAM SIZE

If possible, put up lots and lots of nets, as in #1 above, and play all games like the Olympic Sport of Beach Volleyball, where players cover the entire court, 2 vs. 2. Kids will get tons of learning and touches since when the ball comes over the net, they have a 50 percent chance of being the first contact, and a 100 percent chance of touching the ball and very actively learning on the second contact.

3. PLAY FOR HALF YOUR PRACTICE

Kids are not training for the Olympics; coaches are teaching players to LOVE activity and fitness. Learn to teach technique to each player as they PLAY the game – just step in and show what to do right, as all eyes will be on the coach. Never show what they are doing wrong; show what to do, over and over and over again.



Start with the game, and go back to the game. Drills are used to introduce a skill, but learning how to use them in the game is the key. Enjoy the game, as the game teaches the game. Why would kids want to play a sport that is no fun, or if they rarely get to play games?

4. SPIKE FIRST AND OFTEN

This is THE skill that all players (no matter the level) love to do, and right now everyone in the world is forced to beg for it ("Coach, when can we hit?"). Do it as their first introduction to the sport at ANY age, using the overhead pass to set things up, NOT the arm-bruising, wince-making, shank-happy forearm pass skill that is too often taught first. By spiking and serving first and often, more and more kids will join the sport, rather than be driven off by the forearm pain-inflicting frustration experience.

Corollary – Lower the nets, so they CAN hit. Put them waaay down so everyone can hit over them easily.

5. TEACH AND REWARD COOPERATION, CHARACTER AND EFFORT

This is a game that has a national championship for Co-ed Open level play, that tens of millions play at the park and recreation/church levels as a way to meet new friends. Let them move, run, throw and play hard. Help kids train hard both BEFORE and DURING the practice. Karch Kiraly set up the gym and prepared it himself when he was captain. As leaders, coaches need to do the basic "grunt" work of the sport – running an event. This is a blue collar, hard work ethic sport to win. Marv Dunphy, USA 1988 gold medal coach, noted that one of the rarest things is to see a player make full effort in training all the time. Reward cooperation and effort, have FUN and worry about technique less/later. Remember, if players can show the technique without the ball then they know it; they just need more experience to read, anticipate, react, judge and time the ball in motion.

Corollary – Good teams know the "Better the ball" concept ... as a good citizen and as a team player.

6. TEACH THEM TO TEACH THEMSELVES

If you have a class of 25 kids in a 30-minute session, only a minute of individual attention can be given to each kid. Each athlete needs to "get good" during the other 29 minutes when coaches are not paying individual attention to them. The tossers and servers should be the players, acting as "assistant coaches." Active learning is always preferable. To quote a bull riding camp brochure, "Plenty of bulls, lots of riding." A team can also perform practices, drills and plays designed by the players.

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7. SHOW THEM RATHER THAN TELL THEM

Remember, words have very little meaning to beginners. The more coaches know, the more they try to tell their players, and the more they confuse them. Ask them questions; do not just tell them the answers. Guide players to make timing and judgment adjustments, not just technique adjustments.

*"I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand."
~A Chinese Proverb~*

*"See one; Do one; Teach one."
~This Old House TV Show~*

8. CREATE A POSITIVE, FUN ENVIRONMENT

There should be no fear of mistakes. Get excited about players "doing it right," and ignore most of their errors. Teach them to make good mistakes, rather than bad ones. Coach proactively, not reactively. Be consistently specific and positive in giving feedback. If it starts with the word "don't," then don't say it. Avoid all sarcasm. Talk only in the positive. Say what they should do, and avoid the "don'ts." Problems are stepping stones, not obstacles. Be enthusiastic. *"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm"* (R.W. Emerson).

Corollary – Be Consistent.

Kids need their coach to be positive in practice and in any competition, not a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. or Ms. Hyde.

9. MAKE THINGS AS GAME-LIKE AS POSSIBLE

Given the choice of a drill or a game, everyone chooses the game. At this level, learn to create "games" that are actually drills, and make them game-like with the ball going over the net, keeping score. Even the "warm up" should be a game using balls, such as 1 v 1 one over the rope (three hits in a row by the same player is OK here). Set up stations, even using the "volleyball training devices" (commonly called basketball hoops) for games of one bounce for setting and passing accuracy.

Corollary – Help kids MOVE on the court.

Stop doing things that teach players not to move. Start playing 6 vs. 6. One of the unique things about volleyball at the starting level is that tactically to win, teams often will play poorly – a one-hit team will often win against a three-hits-per-side team. Pair passing teaches players NOT to move. Warm up with running to and through the ball, not running around the court. Stop playing "bump ball" where the kids just stand and pass the ball over the net.

Corollary – Let them serve OFTEN, but in brief 1- to 2-minute periods.

This is more like the game is played. Serving, which is a closed motor skill (i.e. the only skill kids do all by themselves), will be the skill with which they succeed the fastest. Indeed, coaches may need to change the rules and only let a kid serve a maximum of three serves before a new server rotates in.

10. MAKE SURE TO HAVE SCORING AND "CONSEQUENCES"

Use rally scoring for kids. Play for 5-10 minutes each "match" with the winner being whoever is ahead at the buzzer. Modify league play so the score is not kept. Use "festival finishes" at the end of the league. Delay the start of competition using scoring until the end of the season and find ways to REWARD learning.

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Corollary – Use loss of playing time as the “consequence.”

Do not use physical activity as the punishment (e.g., running, sit-ups or pushups), as this teaches kids to dislike physical activity rather than embrace it. The beach game teaches the idea of “winners stay on” as does the #1 favorite of all kids ... King/Queen or “*Monarch*” of the Court, where the winning side gets a point, then they move to or get to stay on the winners’ side.

Corollary – Score cooperatively first, use transition scoring second, and competitive scoring third.

⇒ **Cooperative scoring** – A point is scored by the entire team each time the ball crosses the net after three hits. Scoring can vary, but for most groups track how many in a row both sides of one court get in competition against other courts. In this version, teams would not get points for hits going over the net in one or two contacts, but they would not go back to zero until an error is made. For fun, throw in the unique “Alaskan Rule” of letting the ball be hit four times per rally to keep the total going, or use the Chinese nine-man rule of allowing out-of-the-net play as an additional contact.

⇒ **Transition scoring** – The players cooperate to a certain level or point, and once reached, the rally becomes competitive using any of the competitive scoring methods. This is much like the tradition of rallying for serve in table tennis (“*Coopetition*”).

⇒ **Competitive scoring** – Use rally scoring. This point-on-every-serve is the way the game has been played by children all over the world since 1999 and in the Olympics since 2000.

Youth Registration Process

Registration is handled by the local USAV Member Organization Agency, or the USAV Regional Volleyball Association covering each state. In addition, USAV is working closely with the United States Youth Volleyball League for its programming nationwide. Contact them at (888) 98-USYVL or by email usyvl@aol.com and get involved! Decals, roster forms, programming and other items are available through the USYVL.

In closing out these Top Ten Guidelines, coaches are urged to share their ideas and secrets in order to help grow the game for all kids. As seen in the rest of this chapter, there are many more ideas that are valuable, if not in the top 10 list. Everything changes, so take time to read all the new ideas in this project, as many will help coaches at all levels of the game! Kids all over the world play volleyball over any barrier they can find, such as low chain-link fences, logs, rope or string. American coaches must learn to be as creative in making places to play for all kids.

MINI-VOLLEYBALL FOR YOUTH

Many studies show that the motor experiences such as youth volleyball provide improved intellectual development. Cooperation, anticipation and imagination skills are an inherent part of what is fondly called “mini-volley” in all countries and is often called “youth” volleyball in the U.S. (internationally “youth” is 17 and under).

It takes time and it is difficult to become proficient at volleyball. Most other American sports permit the players to pause with the ball without penalty or allow a player to take the ball “coast to coast” without interacting with teammates to score. In volleyball, however, every contact must be rebounded, which results in many errors. A maximum of three contacts makes for even more possibility of errors because no one player can make all three contacts. Feedback during skill performance is also limited. Patience is paramount, both in those teaching and in those learning. Volleyball does not copy the experiences of any other sport and needs unique training, both mentally and physically. The more like the game of volleyball the drills are, the sooner players will have success in the game.

Teaching is More Important than Training

By teaching fundamentals through game-like drills and the Socratic Method that promotes problem-solving and self-coaching, players will be able to play the game better than if only games were played. In drills, focus on individual fundamentals and improving each player’s performance. Help every player see his/her improvement, no matter how small that improvement, or that player, may be. Above all, it is a game, so keep it FUN!

Additionally, youth volleyball provides an improved environment for teaching youngsters some important values. In volleyball, more than in any other popular sport, *teammates must cooperate for success*. Valuing and stressing process and performance over the outcome of any game is important. Develop skills in the areas of anticipation, handling pressure, decision making and fairness, working together and accepting responsibilities. Remember, and reinforce, that players come first and winning second.

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Volleyball is meant to be fun; in competition, one finds the excitement of confrontation. It is a chance to compare where one is at in terms of skill level, and to learn and improve. Competition can affirm oneself or, through continual failure, strengthen self-doubt. Contests in youth volleyball should be a daily event, not a final event – cooperation should always be stressed.

While one need not be a volleyball player to be a good volleyball teacher, one must know how to be a good volleyball model. It is essential that coaches have a good idea of how to model the skill fundamentals without using a ball. Show young players what is wanted from them. Do not just tell them. Again, words have very little meaning to beginners. **Young players learn most by imitation.**

CONCEPTS FOR TEACHING MINI-VOLLEYBALL

Keep in mind the following:

- **Play on a Smaller Court**

Suggested court dimensions are 3 X 6 meters or 4 X 8/9 meters for two against two; 4 X 8/9 meters for three against three; and 6 X 12 meters for four against four. A small court requires less movement and power demands.

- **Use Smaller Teams**

An increased number of contact chances per player are found within teams of two, three and four. This is important in keeping every player very active, as well as in speeding the development of fundamental skills by increasing the number of ball contacts per player. A smaller team size simplifies playing tactics.

- **Use a Lower Net**

The height of the net can range between 1.50 and 2.0 meters. For more experienced youth, and even to introduce the game to any age player, hook them with the thrill of spiking from the start (and blocking, later) by using a lower net that allows them to hit down – this is the motivating skill!

- **Use a Different Ball**

Use either a softer or lighter No. 5 ball, like the Molten VB Lite, Tachikara Volley lite, Mikasa Ultralite or a #4 sized volleyball. This lighter weight makes for a “painless” ball. Special oversize volleyballs that are like leather-covered beach balls are also available for training. Beginners, especially in the under-eight age group, can use foam balls covered with waterproof and tear-resistant “gator skin.” USA Volleyball designed a “balloon ball” and information on pattern instructions may be found on the website’s IMPACT Resources page. There is also a new “ultralite” volleyball available from Molten for kids ages 6-11.

- **Follow Simplified Rules**

Judgment of ball handling errors should be loosened to promote the acquisition of skills. The attempt to do the skill right is more important than if the ball were cleanly handled.

Illegal double contacts are still not permitted. However, the regular rule which does not permit the ball to “visibly come to rest” is loosened. Rotation order is still used. Encourage players to call their own violations. Youngsters want organized games but not complicated game rules. Create and use non-standard methods for scoring.

NOTES:



Photo by Brad Van Dam

Use Age Groups for Competitions

Co-ed play within three age groups allows for fair contests. Players are always permitted to play up in higher age divisions, but not in one lower than their standard age bracket. One of the unique aspects of volleyball is that it is a sport that can be played co-educationally at all levels, a common situation in school classes. Developmental differences are not that great before age 12 and any skill level can be played co-ed. Mini volleyball can be, but does not have to be, divided into the following three age divisions:

- Setters: 7- and 8-year-olds
- Diggers: 9- and 10-year-olds
- Spikers: 10- to 12-year-olds

These are just guidelines and should be based more on the experience level of the players, not just their age. Junior Volleyball youth divisions now exist for six on six teams aged 12 and under at the national level and even 10 and under in some local leagues. USA Volleyball has instituted a new membership category for youth 11 years and under. Players older than 12 can also benefit greatly from competing in 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 game play. Practices and contests can be co ed in all mini volleyball divisions. There may be an overlap in ages as long as the skill performance abilities are roughly equal within the group; experience with the game is more important to all levels than age or even player size.

Participation is Priority

Get every kid to play. Do this by working with the school PE teachers, the Youth Activity programs of Boys and Girls Clubs, YM/WCAs, Girl Scouts, Park and Rec and other programs, where gym access is more established. Getting enough coaches is part of the need and the challenge, too. Recruit parents, current and past players, and teachers. Offer to teach the game to younger fans after each collegiate or high school home match, as part of the booster program. Have the 14- to 18-year-old junior players COACH once a week for just one hour. This is for kids 4-10 years old, including 20 minutes of teaching and 40 minutes of playing, as part of that evening's 2- to 2.5-hour practice. The older kids will become better players by coaching, and the younger kids will have fun and get a great early start to the game.

Disabled players may play easily with able-bodied, and all levels can play sitting volleyball, where the game is the same except the net is 1 meter high, the six-person court size is 6 x 5 meters, and players may not lift up off their behinds to attack the ball, but may go lower to defend or pass.

Players should be given equal playing time through the use of unlimited substitution and rotation. Permanent teams are an option, but are not required. One of the main objectives, which can be met while learning the fundamental techniques, is simply to have fun.

When playing and practicing, long-sleeved shirts (or sweatshirts) are strongly recommended, especially in the first weeks. This will protect the forearms when passing and on floor defense. Uniforms are not required, nor are numbers. If competing against other schools or clubs, matching numbered uniforms are encouraged, as they provide special elements toward team unity and program identification. Kneepads are not required since the focus of floor defense is to move to the ball on the feet. However, for safety's sake when just beginning, for more experienced and aggressive players, and on some surfaces, kneepads are encouraged.



Photo by Steve Rheinschmidt

Safety

Jewelry of any sort should be removed. If an item must be worn for religious or medical reasons, it should be taped down or padded well. The playing area should be checked regularly for safety. Standards should be stable, well anchored and padded. Any wires should be padded near the floor and marked along the entire exposed cable. Ropes or net cables and accessories should also be padded, especially any winch or protrusion on the standard or net. Antennas should be secure. Wall fixtures and windows should be given a close look and the entire gym floor should be examined from a safety point of view.

Bip, Bip, Bam!

The desired general pattern of play uses all three contacts. The fundamental pattern is PASS ("Bip") - SET ("Bip") - ATTACK ("BAM!") and should be incorporated into practices, drills and games to help players to develop quickly. The "attack" contact in the younger age divisions can be done using the overhead pass. Players should first learn to be clever and place the ball where the opponents are not. Then introduce the standing spike or roll shot. Finally, let players attack daily using a jump, at which time the net may be lowered and/or the court lengthened to 6 meters. Rules and equipment guidelines are flexible. Having fun, acquiring solid fundamentals and playing safely are prime areas to emphasize in both practice and competition. Even when modifications are needed for either rules or equipment, these two critical areas are not to be sacrificed.

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WHY PLAY BEACH VOLLEYBALL?

The beach game is **GREAT** for improving your indoor skills/game. Whatever the player weaknesses, they get to work on them often. Unlike the six-person game, players touch the ball in every rally, and with just two to cover the court, players learn to read and anticipate much better. Dealing with the sun and wind helps players become more adaptable. Player height is less important outdoors – ball control and skill are most important. It is a great way to improve players' jumps. Communicating effectively is essential in this sport, and the game helps teammates to grow stronger together.

"A lot of indoor players are specialists, but on the beach you need to play all phases well, and you need a lot of ball control."
~Karch Kiraly, Olympic Gold Medalist

Scrambling Around

In the past, coaches of indoor volleyball programs wanted their players to avoid playing games at the beach. Rick McLaughlin, a former Loyola Marymount University men's volleyball coach, explained how the sand game benefited his players:

"I've always told my players to play in games at the beach during the off-season. It helps in so many ways. First, there are fewer guys around that can bail out your mistakes. Playing at the beach works your ball control skills. It seems it's always the beach player who steps in from the back row to set the ball after one of those inspirational digs by the setter. Those transition plays win matches.

"The sand also helps you work on your speed and agility. Indoors you'll expand your digging range and be quicker in pursuit after balls. A player like Corin Bemus (AAA) really shows that he played a lot of beach ball. He can do it all out there – hit, set, block and coaches love to have those types of athletes. Staying focused during a beach game requires a big level of concentration. Deal with any distraction after the game. During the game, focus on jump serving and passing. Set personal goals. And, of course, I remind them of the LMU way – compete, don't just play."

Many top-level coaches encourage their players to play as much as they can on the beach. Just refrain on the day of the match.

Play Better Indoors...Through Outdoor Competition

Give players a break from coaching, while increasing the number of touches they get on the ball, by letting the Junior Volleyball athletes play in summer outdoor two-, three- and four-person competitions. Let them play!

Play Games Outdoors Often

One inaccurate thing heard too often is, *"My coach does not want me to play outdoors"* because:

- a) The Olympic teams stop playing a year before they fight for medals because the games are different.
- b) He/she thinks I need a break from playing volleyball or I will burn out.
- c) Beach volleyball coaches/players are too laid back.
- d) I should become a better-rounded person by playing more sports than just volleyball and the team needs me, too.
- e) All of the above.

NOTES:

The following are some “best answers” to the above concerns:

- A. Yes, the game is different, so is the high school game from the collegiate and the international game from the “AA” level. It is still playing the game and we need to do more of it. The NCAA lets schools identify sports as varsity, so why not have your local college start a varsity doubles program in the spring/summer? Why not make the matches be played by men and women, then co-ed, with all games counting to final victor? If track athletes can run in both indoor and outdoor track seasons, giving them 44 weeks of training permitted, why not have indoor six-person teams head outside and have six squads of Olympic development training players? In fact, the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) successfully lobbied the NCAA for just that – competitive Beach Volleyball is now a collegiate sport!

Those who have had the fortune to work with Dr. Carl McGown, or have read and understood Dr. Richard Schmidt’s motor learning and performance books, are aware that random training helps players solve new situations better and helps retain what is learned better and longer. There can be no better situation for random experiences in game-like ways than in outdoor doubles volleyball. Athletes are playing with a different ball, each covering half or more of the court, with sun, wind and uneven court surfaces, plus changing sides every four to five points scored.

For something really different, play Wallyball! It is a great chance to put players into new situations using volleyball skills and learn new things. Visit www.wallyball.com for more information on this sport.

- B. For most athletes (and some coaches as well) “burn out” is translated as, “Someone has made this game not enough fun anymore.” Too often for the players, it is the coach who makes the game not fun. Fill in the blank in this statement, “Coach, when do we get to _____?” The top two answers are always hit or play. Others include...scrimmage...compete...perform. Players have said this countless times and coaches are not hearing the message which really is, “Coach, when do we get to stop these drills and start to put the ideas into effect where it matters – the match?” Burn out is caused by practices that are not playful or play-like enough. We play games...we do not “work” or “train games!”

Coaches often note how players get better after a one-day event. Many a coach, driving back from a one-day USA Volleyball event, has observed, “Gosh we sure got better in this tourney today; I am so proud... pleased...happy...with their play...we really learned a lot...they started to understand what we have been practicing...we almost made the playoffs.” Stop and count how many hours of game-like training under competitive situations those matches added up to. A pool of five means four matches of two or three games for about four hours. Coaches then wonder why they don’t get that kind of productivity in two-hour practices. Play more instant winner triples, king/queen of the court doubles, wash-scored four person to three points, etc. and they will!

- C. According to 2013 SFIA surveys (formerly the SGMA), 4,505,000 beach volleyball participants were counted in 2012 as having played at least one time a year. So who is coaching them? Most play without official coaches – how can they play so well without coaches? In the past, when one mentioned the concept of a “beach coach,” names like Pat Zartman, Mary Jo Pepler (1960s Olympian and WPVA veteran) and even Sinjin Smith came to mind as clinicians. USAV has now instituted training and certification (Beach IMPACT and BCAP) for those that want to coach beach volleyball formally on the junior, collegiate and elite levels, but the fact is that the game of doubles is still its own best coach. It is fun and it teaches players to work on their weaknesses in game-like, competitive situations, relying more on players self-coaching.
- D. No matter where they are, people are floored by the fact that Americans are so limited in training time in high school and college sports. They consider it “un-American.” Is a chemistry whiz forced to stop after three months of learning and become an English major, only to stop three months later and become an economics major? Do cheerleaders only get to cheer for three months before they are banned from training with their coach until August of the next year?

Do students in band, after three months of lessons, have to change from the tuba to the flute and then to some other musical instrument in another three months’ time? Do golfers only play three months a year or swimmers only swim with training for a certain period of time? No, this is not done, because following one’s passion and doing it year round is a big part of what made the USA the power it is today in all areas, not just volleyball.

- E. If players, parents and coaches want to increase skill level indoors, in order to win starting positions, championships or scholarships, then it would be wise for them to encourage their athletes to play outdoors.

How often? Until it stops being fun! The more they play, the better they’ll get. There are few clearer motivators than the phrase, “Winners stay on.” Junior coaches must learn to let players play outside and not worry about them not being “in your control.”

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NCAA BEACH VOLLEYBALL

In August 2010, Sand Volleyball officially became an NCAA Division II Emerging Sport for Women and in August 2011 it achieved that same status for Division I schools. And in the spring of 2015, Sand Volleyball became **NCAA Beach Volleyball** with full championship status granted for the 2016 season...the fastest any sport has achieved official championship status!

NCAA Beach Volleyball facts:

- Addition of Sand Volleyball to both NCAA Division I and II programs as an emerging sport for women by August 2011.
- 40 or more universities must start the program by 2021 to be eligible to hold a national championship. DONE! 60-plus schools had signed on to play Beach Volleyball by Spring 2015, attaining the fastest growth and achievement of Championship status!
- NCAA's national Student-Athlete Advisory Council supported the sand volleyball initiative.
- Adds new opportunities for women to compete collegiately in a popular domestic and Olympic sport.
- Opportunities to engage a new generation of volleyball players at the youth levels.
- Expands the existing pipeline of athletes and coaches for the U.S. to maintain its competitive advantage in the international levels of the sport.
- USAV beach programming includes annual Beach Collegiate Challenge, Beach Coaching Education (BCAP), Beach High Performance and National Teams, the Junior Beach Tour, grassroots and development camps, as well as training opportunities for new beach officials.
- The first three Women's Collegiate Sand Volleyball Championships were sponsored by the AVCA and the Gulf Coast Region of USA Volleyball and held in Gulf Shores, Ala.

Important NCAA Ruling: Bylaw-Competition WITH Professionals:

"An individual shall not be eligible for intercollegiate athletics in a sport if the individual ever competed on a professional team (per Bylaw 12.02.4) in that sport. However, an individual may compete on tennis, golf, two-person sand volleyball or two-person synchronized diving teams with persons who are competing for cash or a comparable prize, provided the individual does not receive payment of any kind for such participation" (Effective Date: Aug. 1, 2002).

Coaches can read up on NCAA Beach Volleyball rules here:

www.ncaa.org/championships/playing-rules/sand-volleyball-rules-game, and about the sport here: www.ncaa.org/sports/beach-volleyball.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website – click on **the Education heading, then on the Coaching-Education-Programs tab, then on Resources-IMPACT-Student-Resources**.
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #1- Philosophy and Ethics](#)
 - [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #2- Safety and Injury Prevention](#)
 - [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #3- Physical Conditioning](#)

NOTES:

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #4 - Growth and Development](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 - Teaching and Communication](#)
- Video on creating fast, easy spaces to play: [The Maximum Contact Net System](#)
- [Beach Volleyball Drill-Book](#), by Hayden Jones and Daniel Dalanhese (in print and online in e-book on the www.FIVB.com website)
- [Top Ten Secrets About Coaching Kidz Volleyball](#), John Kessel
- [USAV Cloth/Balloon Ball Pattern](#)
- [The USAV Mini-Volleyball Book](#), and [The USAV Mini-Volleyball Book](#) in Spanish, by John Kessel
- [One Time Kids Skills Clinic](#)
- [Beach Volleyball Olympic History](#)
- [Beach Volleyball Basics and Rules](#)
- [USA Beach Volleyball Coaching Programs](#)
- [USAV Beach Program Information](#)
- [How to Run a Beach Volleyball Clinic](#)
- [Sand Volleyball Court Specifics](#), Ali Wood Lamberson
- [Play Better Indoors...Through Outdoor Competition](#)
- [Sand Volleyball – Emerging NCAA Sport](#)
- [Collegiate Sand Programs](#)
- [Volleyball for All Ages](#), John Kessel
- [NCAA Beach Volleyball Rules](#)

⇒ **Also look for the following in your local library or online:**

Coaching Youth Volleyball, 4th Edition ©2007, by American Sport Education Program and USA Volleyball. This 4th edition was produced with a definite USAV National Office flavor, as staffers and kids took part in the efforts to produce this updated version. This book is available on the USAV website, and is used as the textbook for the ASEP Coaching Youth Volleyball online course.



Go Girl! © 2003, by Natalie Cook with Robert Drane. Natalie shares four pivotal years spent searching and preparing for gold-medal excellence. *Go Girl* reveals just how Natalie overcame the demons we all face in trying to achieve success: self-doubt, fear of failure, physical inadequacy and lack of focus.

Beach Volleyball ©1999, by Karch Kiraly and Byron Shewman. Kiraly explains and demonstrates every technique: serving, passing, setting, spiking, blocking and digging. He also presents the 23 best practice drills to improve each of these important skills.

A Guide to Winning Doubles Volleyball © 1997, by Dennis Hare & Daphne Sanderson. This book explores beach volleyball history and covers the fundamentals of the game. The offensive and defensive strategies of the game are outlined, along with the unique aspects of the women's game, co-ed and the grass game.



*"One mother teaches more than 100 teachers."
~A Jewish Proverb~*

THE TEAM AROUND THE TEAM

Parents are one of the three key parts of the stable tripod of a player's life. The three "legs" that support players to become the best they can be are teammates, coaches, and parents. A couple of insightful articles on current situations in sports with parents are included in the online **IMPACT Resource** section for you to consider and even discuss with both coaches and parents.

Reviewing and clearly discussing program and coach/team philosophy, competition, and travel requirements needs to happen at the start of the season and also needs to be revisited during the season. Utilizing parents in positive roles can provide stability for a program.

Positive Roles for Parents

⇒ Program Administration

- Help find and secure new facilities
- Provide travel assistance to out-of-town tournaments
- Attend team organizational, season planning and evaluation meetings
- Work with coaches and parents to adapt program guidelines
- Deliver and pick up players in a timely manner, carpooling if possible
- Keep attendance for all practices and games
- Call children who miss or skip a practice and inform them of the next one
- Be a PR person – listen to all complaints, compliments, etc., and get answers for any questions other parents may have
- Get all information to every team member's parents, especially about game schedules, pictures, fund-raising events, etc.
- Distribute and collect all picture envelopes for each team member and help organize the team on picture day
- Dispense and keep track of all uniforms/numbers
- Make sure water is available at all practices and games
- Help the coach watch children's behavior, attitudes, and sportsmanship at practices and games

⇒ Financial Support

- Pay dues and competition costs in a timely manner
- Solicit corporate support for team and/or program
- Work with the coach on players' collegiate aspirations and recruitment
- Serve as a treasurer for the program
- Be responsible for fund-raising events the team is involved in, distribute the information, keep track of what items are in and out, and collect money and any leftover items not sold, etc.

⇒ Community Relations

- Report player progress to high school coaches
- Arrange for team and action photos
- Report team news to local media
- Serve as hosts for out-of-town coaches and teams

⇒ Education

- Attend or host parent skill and uniqueness training and attend a match session/potluck
- Attend or host a college recruiting session
- Attend, if possible, an officiating/rules training session

NOTES:

Promise of Good Sports/USAV Parents as Partners Initiative

The mission of **The Promise of Good Sports** is to enrich the lives of young athletes and their families through community-based educational initiatives.

It is available to all interested RVAs, featuring published materials and use of the "Team Enhancement Program," a player-empowered leadership development program.

"We mobilize and train youth sports leaders to improve their leadership skills, assume constructive roles in guiding youth sports organizations, and become mentors in their communities."

– Dave Epperson

Visit: www.volleyball-festival.com and click on the Community link. Email john.kessel@usav.org for more information.

A Child's Self-Esteem

All of these are important points and apply to more than just being a supportive coach/parent for one's own child. They should apply to everyone else's children on the team as well.

- **Always treat each child with respect.** Avoid making any remarks that are sarcastic, too adult in nature, or that leave the child confused about the intent or meaning.
- **Always provide specific praise for the effort made.** As outlined above, be precise, thoroughly encouraging, and praising the effort, not just the performance.
- **Always give the child a sense of responsibility, independence and freedom to make his/her choices whenever appropriate.** This is the essence of being a responsible parent; let the child experience the responsibility of making decisions and choices in life.
- **Always remember to respect each child's uniqueness.** Each child is different from every other. Understand that and accept it. Just because a child wants to do something his/her way on the court doesn't always make it the wrong way.
- **Finally, always be a good role model for each child.** Maintain a strong sense of personal self-esteem. If a parent presents him/herself to the child in a healthy, responsive, responsible way, then the child will pattern his/her view of life upon the parent's healthy outlook.

NASPE/NCACE National Standards for Coaches

Coaches, coaching educators, administrators, athletes and the public can utilize these national standards to provide direction regarding the skills and knowledge that coaches in their programs should possess. Improve the quality of your program and instruction – use the national standards for sport coaches to:

- Provide quality training that will have a positive impact on coaches' performance
- Establish benchmarks for hiring quality coaches
- Provide a performance guide for individual professional growth and skill development

There are eight domains of coaching competencies outlined in the National Standards for Sport Coaches. Each of the 40 National Standards are identified under one of the eight domains, presented with an explanation of its purpose and accompanied by benchmarks to provide concrete examples of actions and orientations that constitute coaching competence:

- Domain 1: Philosophy and Ethics
- Domain 2: Safety and Injury Prevention
- Domain 3: Physical Conditioning
- Domain 4: Growth and Development
- Domain 5: Teaching and Communication
- Domain 6: Sport Skills and Tactics
- Domain 7: Organization and Administration
- Domain 8: Evaluation

USAV's IMPACT and CAP/BCAP certification courses address and teach the 40 standards within our courses and accompanying materials. You can read more about the National Standards for Sport Coaches at www.shapeamerica.org or order a copy of *Quality Coaches, Quality Sports: National Standards for Sport Coaches*, 2nd Edition.

National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA)

The NYSCA organization has also created its own National Standards for Youth Sports. Sports can be an excellent learning experience for many and a career option for a few. To ensure that youth sports is a winning combination, parents and coaches must be aware of certain pitfalls which have hampered some young players in their emotional and athletic development.

Because parents generally want to do the very best for their children, they may feel obligated to give their talented athletes every advantage and opportunity. But when families make too many sacrifices and find themselves overextended – financially, time-wise, or emotionally – then they may actually be hurting their children's athletic potential rather than helping it.

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Sports are exciting because you never know what might happen. For this reason, parents must help their children have productive lives, even if specific athletic dreams do not come true. In today's changing world, children need to develop not just athletic skills, but other skills as well, which allow them to pursue other careers if or when they are unable to earn an income from professional sports, which happens for only a few.

Sometimes parents and children focus so much on sports development that other important aspects of life – education, friendship, good health, and other talents – are often neglected.

Unscrupulous Advisors

Because most sports parents and young athletes are not experts on the business of sports themselves, they often turn to others – agents, managers, coaches, and so on – for advice. They will get it, though not all of it may be good advice.

In every profession, there are good people and bad people. Usually parents and young athletes can make the right decisions if they know what to look for, can sort out the hype from reality and know what is best for THEM, not just for their advisors.

The NYSCA Standards

- **Proper Sports Environment** – Parents must consider and carefully choose proper sports environments for their child, including appropriate age and development for participation, type of sport, rules of the sport, age of participants and proper level of physical and emotional stress.
- **Based on the Child's Well-Being** – Parents must select youth sports programs that have been developed and organized to enhance the emotional, physical, social and educational well-being of children.
- **Drug/Alcohol Free Environment** – Parents must encourage a drug and alcohol-free environment.
- **Part of a Child's Life** – Parents must recognize that youth sports are only one small part of a child's life.
- **Training** – Parents must insist that coaches are trained and certified.
- **Parents' Active Role** – Parents must make a serious effort to take an active role in their child's sports experience by providing positive support as a spectator, league administrator and/or coaching parent.
- **Positive Role Models** – Parents must be positive role models, exhibiting sportsmanlike behavior at games, practices and at home, while giving positive reinforcement to their child and support to their child's coaches and teammates.
- **Parental Commitment** – Parents must show their commitment to their child's sports experience by signing a Parental Code of Ethics annually.
- **Safe Playing Situations** – Parents must insist on safe playing facilities, healthy playing situations and proper first aid training and applications of such, should the need arise.
- **Equal Play Opportunity** – Parents, coaches and league administrators must provide equal sports play opportunity for all youth, regardless of race, creed, sex, economic status or ability.
- **Drug/Alcohol Free Adults** – At all youth league sporting events, adults must remain drug and alcohol free.

NOTES:

Establish Your Own Team Enhancement Program!

You are committed to taking sports to a higher level, but how can the school or club join in creating a youth sports climate that brings the best out of everyone – athletes, coaches, and parents?

The Parents for Good Sports “Team Enhancement Program” provides athletes, coaches and parents with opportunities to develop their abilities to work together to create mutually supportive team communities that maximize everyone’s ability to get the most out of their sports experiences.

Step 1: Tell the local youth sports leader (perhaps a school administrator or club director) about the Team Enhancement Program and ask him/her to contact the Positive Sports Parenting (PSP) national office.

Step 2: PGS staff will work with your local school and youth sports organizations to identify parent leaders to receive preparation to become local Team Enhancement Trainers.

Step 3: The trainers will prepare small groups of athletes, coaches and parents from each team to facilitate sessions with their teams using the PGS curriculum. Team Enhancement exercises will be administered designed to promote team unity and establish clear expectations among athletes, coaches and parents.

Take the first step! Contact Parents for Good Sports: www.parentsforgoodsports.org, at 19855 Southwest Freeway, suite 220, Sugar Land, TX 77479; Phone (281) 343-7213; Fax (281) 207-1071; or email at dave@volleyball-festival.com.

12 ESSENTIAL DRILLS: FOR THE PARENTS

Writing articles about volleyball is easy when you enjoy the sport and have a passion to coach; however, it is difficult to select just one important topic. The article could be about skills and drills, or it could be motivating to players and coaches. But how do you determine which of these is the most important?

With all of the drill books and videotapes available about coaching, the easiest task for coaches is to create structured practices that are reasonably high in information and are fun for the player. Coaches also have access to training courses through volleyball or at work that provide motivational techniques; but I have never seen a guide or a course for the parents. I hope this article will help the parents help their child.

~Rich Drake, USAV-CAP III Coach, Garden Empire Region

Whether YOU get it or not, your child is enamored with sports, and it is likely they will commit a significant portion of his/her life to pursue athletic adventures. For parents that reserve the highest aspirations for your children, here are a dozen drills that will enable you to help your child during the season.

⇒ Drill #1 – Enable Your Child to Pursue His/Her Dreams and Aspirations

Do everything in your power for your child so he/she achieves goals on the court, in the classroom, and in life. You are and will be the one constant influence throughout his/her life, so make the most of it.

⇒ Drill #2 – Frequent and First-Class Communication with Your Child

Talk with your child every day about homework, friends and activities. Since you cannot learn anything when you are talking, practice being an attentive listener.

⇒ Drill #3 – Candid Communication with Club Officials

There is a tendency nowadays to send e-mails and consider that communicating. Candid communication can best be achieved in person or, when needed, by phone. Talk with the team coach and club officials, even when everything is fine. Please avoid discussions during practices or tournaments, so the players and coaches can concentrate on the task at hand.

⇒ Drill #4 – Get Involved

It is important for children and adults to be involved with an organization that provides a sense of belonging. Team programs such as volleyball provide structure and meaning to life, build social skills, create lasting and memorable friendships, instill well-being, and help children become well-rounded citizens. Being involved with your club and sharing in the experience is important to your child, and it demonstrates that you support his/her decisions.

⇒ Drill #5 – Fix the Problem

Some coaches believe that applying punishment, such as push-ups, for missing a play will improve the player's performance. But this only confuses the players, because they believe the coach is someone who is supposed to nurture and support them, and they are playing hard. This tactic eventually reinforces the players' beliefs that they will never be rewarded for a great effort and that they will only be punished for mistakes. It does not address the issue of why the player made the mistake, either.

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The same is true for life off the court. When your child drops a grade in school or does something out of the ordinary, there is a reason that needs to be addressed and repeated punishment rarely solves the problem.

It is much wiser to discuss the situation with your children in their terms, understand their point of view, and then explain how to do things correctly to improve, and let them do it. If punishment is required to correct a behavior, be predictable and consistent.

⇒ Drill #6 – Be a Fan

If you have time to watch football, baseball, tennis, golf, or other sporting events... you certainly then have time to attend your child's tournament. It is safe to say you will be more excited and will have more pride watching your child compete than watching any professional.

⇒ Drill #7 – Reality Check – Get an Education

Each year about 50 national and international high school seniors will realistically have the opportunity to make a top-10 college team. The chance of your child being one of these elite players is remote. It is better to personally assist your child to choose a college that will provide him/her with the best education in a chosen profession on a campus he/she will enjoy. If he/she plays volleyball, consider that a plus. Also, help him/her select a minor, or even better, a double major. Most colleges enable students to apply credits toward two degrees, so why not get two degrees?

⇒ Drill #8 – Dependability

Imagine shopping at a store and the cashier was not at the checkout line, or if you were going to meet someone for lunch and canceled at the last minute. We rely upon people every day, even complete strangers. Your child's teammates rely upon each other, so teach your child the importance of commitment and enable him/her to complete homework and chores so he/she can get to every practice and event on time.

⇒ Drill #9 – Responsibility

Your child has chosen volleyball so they must be responsible for their actions and prepare for practices and events. This includes homework, chores, cleaning practice gear and uniforms, preparing food for events, and arranging or rearranging schedules. Teach your child how to do the laundry, prepare the cooler for tournaments, and to explore options in his/her schedule to make things happen.

⇒ Drill #10 – Feed Me

Athletes have greater nutritional needs than non-athletes. They require more calories, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, fat, and water; however, fast food and junk food are not the answer. During the season, with the exception of special occasions, athletes should avoid soda, French fries, and licorice. Giving up these three items is a simple way to stress the importance of proper nutrition. A simple rule to remember is if any item contains high fructose corn syrup, or is high in saturated fats, or has nitrates... don't drink it or eat it. Before you automatically give your child vitamins or food supplements, check with your physician/nutritionist. Most children and adults on a proper diet receive plenty of nutrients and do not require any supplements.

⇒ Drill #11 – The Decision Maker

Excessive influence by parents or coaches to sway a player to choose volleyball or any sport or activity over another is inappropriate. It is better to discuss the situation and options with your children, provide them with your ground rules, ask what they think, and let them make the decision.

NOTES:

Some ideas for getting the "Out of Control" Parent or Spectator...

...under control!

•**The Lollipop Time Out** – coaches carry some lollipops in pocket to hand to parents or spectators who need a time out from verbalizing

•**Yellow/Red/Green Cards** – coaches carry a set (several of each color) of "officials" cards to hand out to parents who need a warning (yellow), an ejection (red), or a "way to go!" (green)

•**Adopt a Cheer** – parents adopt another player – not their own – to cheer for each game/match

•**Give'Em a Clipboard... or an App** – and an assignment to keep them busy

•**Required Reading: *My Mom Thinks She's My Volleyball Coach, But She's Not***

Some facts to consider when selecting an activity are the physical and mental aspects of the program, the social benefits, the staff organizing the activities, parent involvement, future opportunities such as college, the possibility of continuing as an adult player or entering the coaching profession themselves, and how much fun they are having with that activity. In the end your player will be happy and will enjoy his/her chosen pastime.

⇒ **Drill #12 – Working the Sidelines**

When you attend tournaments you represent your club, your team, and most importantly your child. Always conduct yourself in a highly courteous manner, be drug- and alcohol-free the night before and day(s) of the event, and do not smoke or use inappropriate language in front of any of the players.

You should also employ proper cheering techniques:

- Do not boo or intimidate any player, official, coach or spectator
- Avoid “The Gasp” – players know when they make mistakes and your gasp only highlights their error. Instead yell something positive, like “Let’s go, you can do it,” and eventually they will.
- No “coaching” from the sidelines. Coaches spend many hours teaching your child the game of volleyball and how to become a better player – let them continue this endeavor at tournaments. Otherwise you’ll have six players looking to the stands at parents hollering coaching advice and none of them will hear the coach.
- It is fine to appreciate great performances – by either team! When the opponents make a magnificent play, give them a cheer. If the play is just unbelievable, stand up and cheer.

By following these essential supporting principles, your athletes, teams, and coaches will reap great rewards. Then, when you share them with other parents, everyone will benefit.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

⇒ **If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website – click on the **Education** heading, then on the **Coaching-Education-Programs** tab, then on **Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources**.**

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #1 - Philosophy and Ethics](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 - Teaching and Communication](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #7- Organization and Administration](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #8 - Evaluation](#)
- [Florida Region Spectator/Parent Code of Conduct](#)
- [North Texas Region Spectator/Parent Code of Conduct](#)
- [USAV’s Resource Page for Parents](#)
- [The Agony of De Parent](#), by John Kessel
- [So You Want To Be A Better Spectator?](#), by John Kessel
- [The Magic Hockey Helmet](#) (www.youtube.com)
- [Hockey PSA’s for Parents](#) (USAV Growing the Game Together Blogs)
- [Frequently Asked Questions By Parents Regarding Junior Volleyball](#)
- [Implementation of Scholastic Boys’ Volleyball](#)
- [NCAA/Collegiate Men’s Volleyball Programs](#)
- Many other articles written by John Kessel for volleyball for coaches, parents and athletes can be found in the Education section of the USAV website or under the Grassroots heading. A list of some of them include:
 - [Dear Vocal Coach](#)
 - [Dear “Stupid” Player](#)
 - [Splinter Siblings](#)
 - [A Player’s Handy Excuse List](#)
 - [It’s Not Where You Are, It’s Who You Are](#)
 - [25 Questions for a Volleyball Coach](#)
 - [You’ll Be a Better Player if You Coach](#)
 - [An Open Letter to All Coaching Kids 14 & Under](#)
 - [Guide to Disabled Volleyball](#)
 - [Ten Commandments of Camp](#)
 - [FUNdaMENTal Volleyball](#)
 - [My Son Wants To Play Volleyball](#)
 - [What Is There To Do In Volleyball After High School?](#)
 - [Volleyball By Mail Lessons](#)
 - [Recipe For An Elite Player](#)

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⇒ Other Parenting Resource links, books and courses:

- Play Positive, Liberty Mutual Insurance's sponsored resource web page on www.usavolleyball.org for Parents, Coaches and Athletes.
- NFHS Free Online Course – Positive Sport Parenting
- NFHS Free Online Course – Sportsmanship
- NFHS Free Online Course – Engaging Effectively With Parents
- Parents, coaches pursue high school athletes' success from different perspectives, By Ernie Clark, BDN Staff
- ***My Mom Thinks She's My Volleyball Coach...But She's Not!***, by Julia Cook with USA Volleyball, 30 pages, ©2007 CTC Publishing. A quick but "must" read sport parenting book, written through the eyes of a kid. Available on the USAV Website.
- ***Positive Coaching***, by Jim Thompson, 400 pages, ©1995, Warde Publishers. This is a MUST book for parents, coaches, teachers and administrators. Available on the USAV Website.
- ***Just Let the Kids Play***, by Bob Bigelow, Tom Moroney and Linda Hill; 340 pages © 2001 Health Communications. A top-five favorite on how to stop other adults from ruining a child's fun and success in youth sports.
- ***From the Bleachers with Love***, and ***Beyond the Bleachers*** by Dave Epperson and George Selleck, 210 pages each, ©1999/2000 by Alliance. Advice about the art of parenting today's athletes.
- ***Will You Still Love Me If I Don't Win?*** by Christopher Anderson and Barbara Anderson, 200 pages, ©2001. Available on the USAV Website.
- *How to Win at Sports Parenting*, by Jim and Janet Sundberg. 200 pages, © 2000 Water Brooks.
- ***The Cheers and the Tears***, by Shane Murphy, 225 pages, ©1999 Jossey-Bass Books. A healthy alternative to the dark side of youth sports today.
- ***Coaching Kids for Dummies***, by Rick Wolff 225 pages, ©2000 by IDG Books Worldwide. Great ideas presented in a well-known format.

NOTES:

Remember, you can also share with your team's parents the following "Code of Behavior for Parents" as well as the "Code of Behavior for Spectators" from Chapter 2 and the RVA examples of a Parent-Spectator Code listed above in the Resources section.

PARENT CODE OF BEHAVIOR

As a parent, I will aspire to:

- Be positive in attitude toward volleyball and emphasize the cooperative nature of the sport
- Encourage hard work and honest effort that will lead to improved performance and participation
- Encourage athletes to participate in volleyball – alcohol- and drug-free
- Encourage and respect referees and officials and their integrity
- Encourage athletes to participate for their own enjoyment
- Applaud fair play and good play during matches
- Be supportive of all attempts to remove verbal and physical abuse from organized volleyball activities, including language
- Meet the required administrative and program rules if in some cases the athletes are not able to do so
- Protect athletes from sanctions and/or suspension by producing accurate documentation
- Attend age-group (5-18) volleyball events alcohol- and drug-free
- Use only designated smoking areas that are clearly posted at youth age-group volleyball events

NOTES:

IMPACT 2016

CHAPTER 10: IMPACT PLUS – THE SKILLS

NOTES:

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This chapter is intended to introduce coaches to the key concepts in teaching the basic skills of attacking, overhead passing, serving, forearm passing, and for more advanced-level teams, the skill of blocking. The core coaching information is what coaches need to know and understand, but not necessarily communicate in its entirety to players. What the players *do* need to hear, know and understand are the three or four “keys” or “cues” presented for each skill. If they *need* more information, give it as necessary on an individual basis.

One note on the “Homework” sections for each skill: While always better to practice over a net, if by themselves, players can utilize a wall and ball to practice at home by drawing or taping a line that is net height and hitting above that line to simulate hitting over a net.

Overhead passing skills – may be used on the court to receive serve, pass free balls, or in a more specialized application, to set to attackers. All players need to be trained and feel comfortable using this skill...not just the setters on the team, and not just from along the net, but from all court areas.

Forearm passing skills – are used on the court to receive serve, pass free or down balls, dig hard-driven spikes or in an emergency used with a floor recovery skill to save the ball from hitting the floor. After players learn basic forearm pass technique, they can go on to explore its myriad of variations used on the court.

Serving skills – the standing floater serve technique should be taught, practiced and encouraged for use by all players strong enough to throw the ball across the net with an overhand motion. Players not yet strong enough for an overhand serve may find they have more success if taught an underhand, sidearm or roundhouse serve. Once a basic standing floater is learned, players can add other serving “tools” such as a topspin, jump serve or short serve.

Attacking skills – should be taught for right- and left-handed hitters, approaching from the right, middle or left sides of the net. Attacks may be made from the back row – from deep in the backcourt, from just behind the attack line, from 3 meters back for younger/shorter/beginning players (to minimize the possibility of jumping, swinging or hitting into the net), as well as from the optimal 1 meter off location for more experienced hitters. Most right-handed hitters will approach on the diagonal – from outside the court to in when on the left side of the court. Left-handers will approach diagonally when hitting from the right side of the court. For right-handed players attacking from the right edge of the court, the approach angle is more parallel to the right sideline, or parallel to the net and moving toward the right edge of the court (the “slide”). For left-handers, it is similar – from the left edge of the court the approach is more parallel to the left sideline, or a “slide” from inside the court parallel to net toward the left sideline.

Blocking skills – are considered more “advanced” in the sense that younger players may not even be physically capable of getting their hands above the net in order to block. Even for older and taller – but less-experienced – players, blocking may not be a point-producing effort because the opponents’ attack style does not merit the effort. Blocking is also difficult for players to receive much feedback on as it is possible for even good blockers never to touch the ball. That being said, coaches may want to spend some time, just not a majority of it, teaching proper blocking technique in practice to expose players to the skills and concepts involved which may be needed during competition in the future.

This chapter is not intended to be the end-all, be-all of skill technique tutorials, but rather just to introduce the main concepts. Coaches are encouraged to seek more information by attending an *IMPACT Plus*, USAV-CAP I or other on-court skills/coaching clinics.

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire—William Butler Yeats

ATTACKING SKILLS

COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...

KIDS need
to hear
THIS...

CORE COACHING MECHANICS:

- ☞ Be Available & Prepared to Attack
- ☞ Approach Steps and 2 Foot Jump
- ☞ Swing Both Arms Forward and Up on Takeoff
- ☞ Contact the Ball at Full Arm Extension

-  **Ready!**
(Get Available!)
-  **Run!**
(Accelerate!)
-  **Jump!**
(Explode!)
-  **Swing Fast!**
(Swing Fast!)

GET AVAILABLE!
Youth... **READY!**



ACCELERATE!
Youth... **RUN!**



EXPLODE!
Youth... **JUMP!**



SWING FAST!
Youth... **HIGH FIVE!**



SOME ERRORS TO LOOK FOR AND CORRECT:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ONE-FOOT TAKE OFF (IF NOT A SLIDE) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ELBOW DROPS INTO “SHOT PUT” ACTION |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTACT WITH FIST INSTEAD OF OPEN HAND | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TOOK OFF TOO SOON OR TOO LATE (TIMING) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DIDN'T GET OFF NET TO START APPROACH | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARM SWING TO EARLY OR TOO LATE (TIMING) |

MORE DETAILS & POWERFUL WORDS!

- 🌀 Use a Quick Approach. (**ACCELERATE!**)
- 🌀 Finish Right-Left with Feet if Right Handed. (**LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT or RIGHT-LEFT-RIGHT!**)
- 🌀 Swing Both Arms from Behind to in Front of You Like a Pendulum. (**EXPLODE UP! SWING HIGH! HIGH FIVE!**)
- 🌀 The Faster You Swing, the Harder You Hit! (**THROW YOUR HAND AT THE BALL! SWING FAST!**)
- 🌀 Swing Through the Ball. (**WHIP! CRUSH!**)
- 🌀 Land on 2 Feet. (**BALANCE!**)

TOP DRILLS/GAMES:

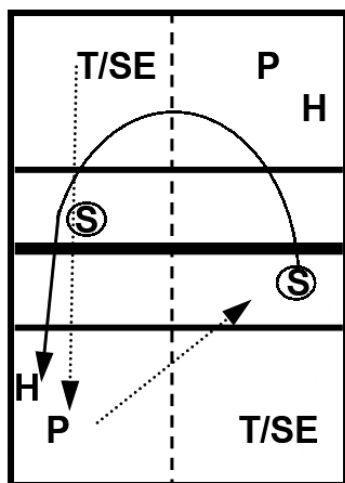
- 1) Hit From 3 Meter Line
- 2) Hit Front & Back Sets
- 3) Hit From 1 Meter
- 4) Call Your Shot Drill

PLAYER HOMEWORK:

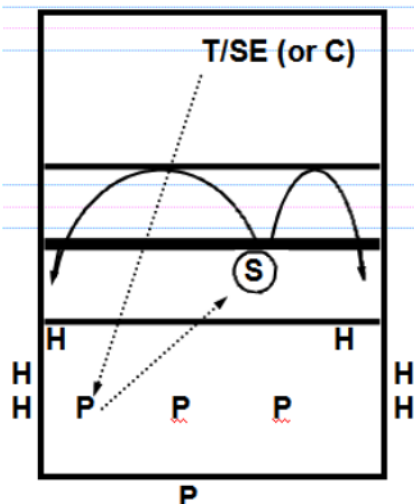
- 1) Players stand and toss ball to selves to hit over net with a spiking action.
- 2) Players stand 9 or more meters from the wall and set to selves; hit the ball with a game-like flight over an imaginary net marked on the wall.

- ☒ Crosscourt Shot
- ☒ Line Shot
- ☒ Cut Shot
- ☒ Roll Shot
- ☒ Open Hand Tip
- ☒ Wipe Off Shot
- ☒ Arm Warm Up Routine
- ☒ Tool/Use the Block
- ☒ Transition Set from the Setter
- ☒ Transition Set from the Blocker
- ☒ Hit a Set from the Back Row
- ☒ 3-Meter or Back Row Attacks
- ☒ High Outside Set
- ☒ Low Sets
- ☒ Footwork/Approaches for Play Sets
- ☒ Bad Sets
- ☒ One Foot Slides
- ☒ Position Sets

**Options
to Learn
Later**


DRILL 1) 3 METER LINE HITTING:

- ☒ Divide the court and into halves, and divide team into 2 groups. Each group consists of 2-3 Tossers/Servers (**T/SE**), 2-3 Passers (**P**), 2-3 Setters (**S**), and 2-3 Hitters (**H**).
- ☒ **T/SE** puts ball into play to **P**, who passes (over or underhand) to the **S**.
- ☒ **S** then sets a high set to the 3 meter line to the **H**, who attacks the back row set.
- ☒ Players rotate within their small groups for set number of repetitions or other goal, and then rotate within their 1/2 court large group to perform a different skill **OR** players may perform a single repetition and follow the path of the ball to rotate to the next small group (circle drill).



☒

DRILL 2) HITTING FRONT & BACK SETS:

- ☒ Tosser/Server (**T/SE**) or Coach (**C**) puts ball into play to a Passer (**P**), who then passes (over or underhand) to the Setter (**S**).
- ☒ **S** sets a front set to **H** in Left Front and on the following pass sets a backset to an **H** in Right Front.
- ☒ Players may rotate within their small group for certain number of repetitions or goal is met, at which time all groups rotate to a new station to perform a different skill **OR** players may perform a single repetition and follow (**P** rotates to **H**, etc.) to rotate to the next small group (circle drill). **S** may stay or be part of the large group rotation.

Nothing has a better effect on children than praise — Sir P. Sidney

COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...

OVERHEAD PASSING SKILLS

**KIDS need
to hear
THIS...**

CORE COACHING MECHANICS:

- Right Foot Forward and Knees Bent
- Square the feet, hips, shoulders to target
- Hands and Fingers Ball Shaped in Front and Above Forehead
- Fly Like a Super Hero and Extend Fingertips Through Ball to Target

- 👂 **Stopped & Balanced!**
(Staggered Stance!)
- 👂 **Face the Target!** (Square Up!)
- 👂 **Moose Antlers!**
(Ball Shaped Hands!)
- 👂 **Super Hero!**
(Show 10 at the End!)

STAGGERED STANCE!

Youth... **STOPPED
& BALANCED!**



SQUARE UP!

Youth... **FACETARGET!**



BALL SHAPED HANDS!

Youth... **MOOSE
ANTLERS!**



SHOW 10 AT THE END!

Youth... **SUPERHERO!**



SOME ERRORS TO LOOK FOR AND CORRECT:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PALM OF THE HAND CONTACTS THE BALL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOT FACING TARGET WHEN RECEIVING BALL |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HANDS/FINGERS NOT BALL SHAPED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTACTING BALL TOO LOW—IN FRONT OF FACE INSTEAD OF ABOVE FOREHEAD |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> “SWAN DIVE” OR “SWIMMING” FOLLOW THROUGH | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FEET NOT TO BALL |

MORE DETAILS AND POWERFUL WORDS!

- Ball Played Above the Forehead – See the Whole Court Under the Ball. (**FEET/FOREHEAD TO THE BALL!**)
- Beat the Ball to the Net Target Position and Wait – Be Still on Contact. (**HANDS UP EARLY!**)
- Staggered Foot Position, Knees Bent with Feet, Hips and Shoulders Square to the Target. (**RIGHT FOOT FORWARD! SQUARE UP!**)
- Elbows Bent Comfortably and Wrists Relaxed like a Trampoline for Ball. (**THUMBS BACK! BALL-SHAPED! MOOSE!**)
- Contact Ball Above Forehead With All but Palms. (**FINGER PADS!**)
- Extend Through the Ball to the Target. (**EXTEND! STEP THROUGH THE BALL! FOLLOW! COVER!**)

**Options
to Learn
Later**

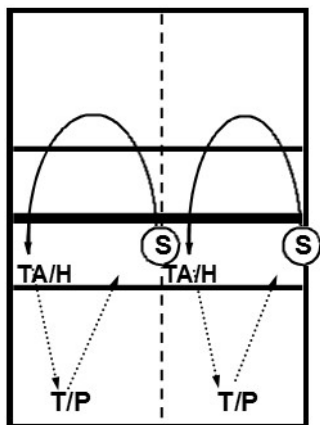
- ☒ Set from on the Net
- ☒ Set Moving Off the Net
- ☒ Non-Setters Set After Blocking
- ☒ Non-Setters from Off the Net
- ☒ Back Sets
- ☒ Bump Sets
- ☒ From the Ground
- ☒ Jump Sets
- ☒ Side Sets
- ☒ Dumps—1 and 2 Handed
- ☒ Run-Throughs
- ☒ Out of the Net Sets
- ☒ Check the Blockers
- ☒ Vocalize
- ☒ Cover
- ☒ Play Sets
- ☒ Set From the Knees
- ☒ One-Hand Saves
- ☒ Position and Quick Sets

TOP DRILLS/GAMES:

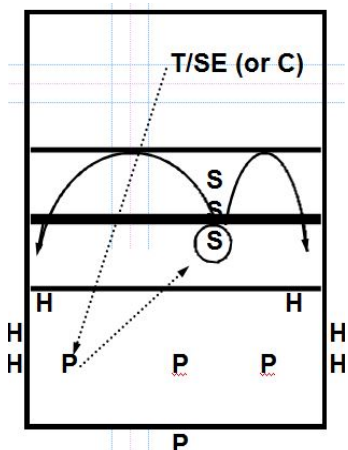
- 1) Triangles
- 2) Front & Back Sets (4's)
- 3) Running Bump Sets
- 4) 3 Meter & 1 Meter Sets

PLAYER HOMEWORK:

- 1) Bounce the ball off a wall with varying directions & heights for different movements and sets.
- 2) Set to self or partner, varying combinations such as front set to self, turn & back set to partner.


DRILL 1) TRIANGLES:

- ✗ Divide the court into halves, and divide team into 4 groups of 3 (or 4 with 1 sub/shagger); use both sides of the net. Each group consists of a Tosser/Passer (T/P), a Setter (S), and a Target/Hitter (TA/H).
- ✗ T/P puts ball into play to S; after the initial toss the player may then pass (over or underhand) to the S or continue to toss each repetition.
- ✗ S then sets a high set to the TA/H, (the Left Front H), who either catches & tosses, over or underhand passes, or hits or tips the ball back to the T/P.
- ✗ Players rotate within their small groups when a set number of repetitions or other specified goal is reached.


DRILL 2) FRONT & BACK SETS:

- ✗ Tosser/Server (T/SE) or Coach (C) puts ball into play to a Passer (P), who passes (over or underhand) to the Setter (S).
- ✗ S sets a front set to H in Left Front and on the following pass sets a back set to H in Right Front.
- ✗ Players may rotate within their small group for a certain number of repetitions or when a goal is met, at which time all groups rotate to a new station to perform a different skill **OR** players may perform a single repetition and follow the path of the ball (P rotates to H, etc.) to rotate to the next small group (circle drill). S may stay or be part of the large group rotation.

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence—Calvin Coolidge

COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...

SERVING SKILLS

KIDS need to hear THIS...

CORE COACHING MECHANICS:

- Opposite Foot Forward, Knees Bent and Weight Back
- Line Ball Up with Front Toe, Hitting Shoulder and Target
- Toss Low, in Front and Consistent
- Elbow High, Swing Quick, Rigid Wrist/Hand

👂 **Ready-
Weight Back!**
(Stable Stance)

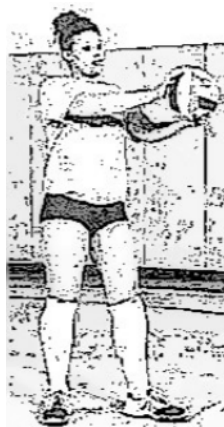
👂 **Line it Up!**
(Square to Target)

👂 **Low Toss!**
(Out in Front)

👂 **Swing Fast!**
(Palm to Target)

**READY & WEIGHT
BACK!**

**Youth... STABLE &
BALANCED!**



SQUARE UP!

**Youth...
LINE IT UP!**



**LIFT LOW IN
FRONT!**

Youth... LOW TOSS!



**PALM TO
TARGET!**

**Youth... SWING
FAST!**



SOME ERRORS TO LOOK FOR AND CORRECT:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> KNUCKLES/ UNEVEN SURFACE CONTACTS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BALL CONTACT WITH FINGERS |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FLOPPY WRIST ON CONTACT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO SHOULDER TORQUE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TOSS IS TOO LOW TO HIT | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLOW ARM SPEED |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SAME FOOT (AS HITTING ARM) IS FORWARD | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TOSS TOO CLOSE/FAR/TO SIDE |

MORE DETAILS & POWERFUL WORDS!

- If Underhand Serving, Stance is the Same, just Contact Ball Below Waist. (**THROW A BOWLING BALL!**)
- Pick a Target. (**SQUARE UP! POINT YOUR TOE!**)
- Transfer your Weight from Rear to Front Foot; can Add a Step into the Transfer. (**STEP! TOSS IN FRONT!**)
- Contact with a Fist, Half-Closed Fist or Open Palm/Heel of Hand. (**STIFF WRIST! PUNCH IT! HIT THE BACK OF THE BALL!**)
- Fast Armswing for Deep/Hard Serves; Slower for Short or Soft Serves. (**ELBOW HIGH! SWING FAST!**)
- Follow Through to the Target. (**PALM TO TARGET! FREEZE!**)
- Serve and Run to Defense. (**FOLLOW!**)

TOP DRILLS/GAMES:

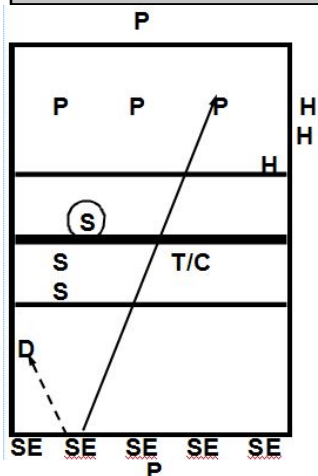
- 1) **Serve and Run to Defense**
- 2) **Placement Serving**
- 3) **Target/Seam Serving**
- 4) **Timed Serving**

PLAYER HOMEWORK:

- 1) **TOSS-TOSS-TOSS!** The toss is the key! Continue to toss the ball for the overhead serve. Perfect the toss & perfect the serve!
- 2) **Serve the ball against a wall** marked at net height.

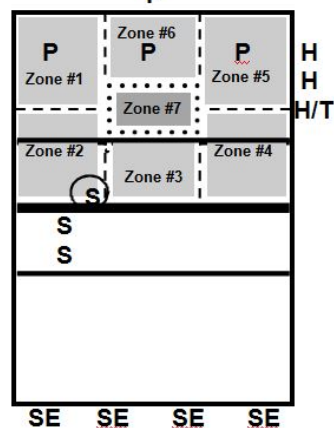
- ☒ **Underhand Serve**
- ☒ **Overhead Serve**
- ☒ **Roundhouse Serve**
- ☒ **Serve from Endline**
- ☒ **Serve from Deep Endline**
- ☒ **Serve Deep and Short Corners**
- ☒ **Short Zones**
- ☒ **Deep Zones**
- ☒ **Topspin Serve**
- ☒ **Floater Serve**
- ☒ **Jump Topspin Serve**
- ☒ **Jump Floater Serve**
- ☒ **High Spin Serve**
- ☒ **Sky/Moon Ball Serve**
- ☒ **High Fade Serve**
- ☒ **Slide Jumper Serve**

**Options
to Learn
Later**



DRILL 1) SERVE & RUN TO DEFENSE

- ✗ Divide the team into 2 groups - Servers (**SE**) & Setters (**S**), and Passers (**P**) & Hitters (**H**). A Coach (**C**) or other player presents a Target (**T**) for the Server/Digger (**D**).
- ✗ **SE** puts ball into play to a **P**, who passes (over or underhand) to **S**. After serving, the **SE** runs into the court to her defensive position to defend against the **H**.
- ✗ **S** then sets to the **H**, who attacks against the **D**.
- ✗ Players rotate within their small groups for set number of reps or other goal, & then rotate to perform a different skill **OR** players may perform a single repetition & follow the path of the ball to rotate to the next small group (circle drill).



DRILL 2) PLACEMENT SERVING:

- ✗ Server (**SE**) puts ball into play to a Passer (**P**) in the specific required zone, who passes (over or underhand) to the Setter (**S**).
- ✗ **S** sets a front (or back) set to **H** in Left (or Right) Front.
- ✗ Waiting **P**'s rotate in for the passer who played the ball. **SE**'s can switch with **P**'s and/or **H**'s after the required number of repetitions or goal is met, **OR** players may perform a single repetition and follow (**S** rotates to **P**, who rotates to **H**, etc.) in a large circle drill.

Encouragement is oxygen to the soul – George Adams

COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...

FOREARM PASSING SKILLS

**KIDS need
to hear
THIS...**

CORE COACHING MECHANICS:

- Ready to Move: Weight Forward,
Knees Bent, Feet Wide, Hands
Open, Arms over Thighs
- Read and Move to Intercept the Ball
- Form Flat Stable Platform and Contact
Ball Above Wrists
- Finish & Freeze, Rebound Ball to Target



Ready!

(Ready- Anticipate!)



Read & Move!

(Beat the Ball!)



Solid Platform

Contact!

(Quick Platform to Ball!)



Platform to Target!

(Push to Target & Freeze!)

**READ &
ANTICIPATE!**

Youth... **READY!**

**INTERCEPT
THE BALL!**

Youth... **READ &
MOVE!**

**QUICK PLATFORM
TO BALL!**

Youth... **SOLID
PLATFORM!**

**PUSH/FREEZE
TO TARGET!**

Youth... **PLATFORM
TO TARGET!**



SOME ERRORS TO LOOK FOR AND CORRECT:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☒ STANDING TOO UPRIGHT | ☒ PLATFORM NOT ANGLED TO TARGET |
| ☒ GETS READY TOO LATE—BALL TOO CLOSE | ☒ TOO MUCH ARM SWING/ PLATFORM MOTION |
| ☒ CONTACTING BALL ON HANDS, WRISTS OR THUMBS | ☒ BENT ELBOWS ON CONTACT |

MORE DETAILS & POWERFUL WORDS!

- Take a Straddle Position with Right Foot Leading. **(FEET APART! RIGHT FOOT FORWARD! GALLOP!)**
- Form Platform with Elbows Extended & Close Together, Thumbs Together & Wrists to Floor. **(HANDS TO THE BALL! ELBOWS LOCKED! THUMBS TOGETHER! WRISTS DOWN! OUT EARLY!)**
- Contacted Ball Low, Near Waist Level, at Midline of Body Whenever Possible. **(REACH OUT! MIDLINE!)**
- Bend the Knees & Bend Slightly at the Waist; Transfer Your Weight From Rear to Front Foot. **(ROCKING HORSE! LEAN! SHOVEL! PUSH THE BALL TO THE TARGET!)**
- Always Try for Two Arms on the Ball, but it is Permissible to Reach Out and Play the Ball with One Arm, Especially on a Dig. **(TWO ARMS! FEET TO THE BALL! TOUCH IT!)**
- Drop the Inside Shoulder of the Platform to Direct the Ball to One Side or the Other. **(TILT! DROP YOUR SHOULDER! ELBOWS TO THE TARGET! TURN THE STEERING WHEEL!)**

- ☒ Forearm Pass and Dig
- ☒ Overhead Pass and Dig
- ☒ Reverse Overhead Pass
- ☒ Forward Run Throughs
- ☒ Lateral Run Throughs
- ☒ "J" Stroke Passes
- ☒ Pass Floater Serves
- ☒ Pass Topspin Serves
- ☒ High Passes
- ☒ Low Passes
- ☒ Pass Free Balls
- ☒ Pass Alone
- ☒ Pass With Others
- ☒ Dig Hard Attacks
- ☒ Dig Tips
- ☒ Dig One Handed

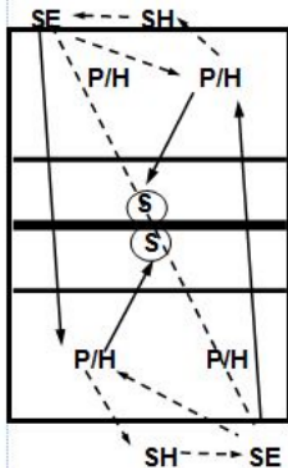
Options to Learn Later

TOP DRILLS/GAMES:

- 1) Triples Passing
- 2) Pass/Dig, Set, Hit
- 3) Passing with Movement

PLAYER HOMEWORK:

- 1) Pass a ball against the wall; pass as many as possible without a bounce; keep knees bent.
- 2) Same, but take the ball off to one side, then the other.
- 3) Same, but pass the ball into corners.

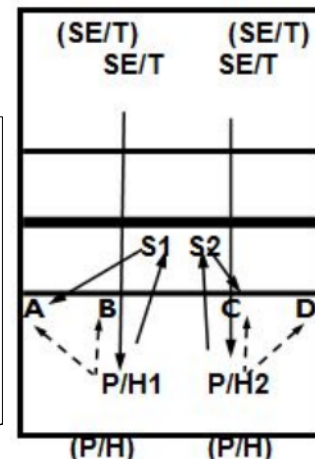


DRILL 1) TRIPLES PASSING

- ✗ Divide the team into 2 groups - with 2 Servers/Shaggers (**SE/SH**), 2 Setters (**S**), & 2 Passer/Hiters (**P/H**) in each group.
- ✗ **SE** puts ball into play to opposite **P/H**'s, who forearm passes to the **S**.
- ✗ **S** then sets to the **P/H**, who approaches, jumps, catches the set and rolls the ball to the **SH**.
- ✗ After serving, the **SE** joins the passing line, the **SH** becomes the **SE** and the **P** becomes the **SH** OR **SE/SH**'s can rotate with the **P**'s after a certain number of repetitions or other goal is met.

DRILL 2) PASS/DIG - SET- HIT:

- ✗ Divide players into groups of 3 to 5 - Passer/Hiters (**P/H**), a Setter (**S**) and Server/Tossers (**SE/T**).
- ✗ **SE/T** puts ball into play to the **P/H** who passes to the **S**.
- ✗ **S1** sets a back row set to the A zone for **P/H1** to attack, & sets the next to the B zone. **S2** first sets a back row set to the C zone & then to the D zone for the **P/H2**.
- ✗ Waiting **P/H**'s & **SE/T**'s may rotate in after certain number of repetitions or goal has been met, and/or **SE/T**'s can switch with **P/H**'s or players may perform a single repetition (2 attacks) and follow the ball to rotate in a large circle drill.



If a child lives with praise, he will learn to appreciate—Dorothy Nolte

COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...

BLOCKING SKILLS

KIDS need
to hear
THIS...

CORE COACHING MECHANICS:

- Ready Position - Knees Bent, Hands Up in Front and Ready to Move.
- Use Proper Footwork to Slide Along Net and Line Up with the Hitter.
- Load Legs and Prepare to Jump, After Hitter Jumps
- Penetrate Plane of Net & Palms Facing Court

Ready!
(Read & Anticipate)

Slide to the Hitter!
(Front the Hitter)

Knees Bent!
(Coiled to Jump)

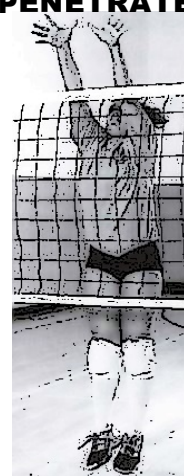
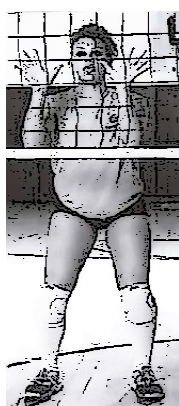
Jump & Penetrate!
(Explode, Press & Seal)

**READ and
ANTICIPATE!**
Youth... **READY!**

**FRONT THE
HITTER ANGLE!**
Youth... **SLIDE TO
HITTER!**

**LEGS COILED TO
JUMP!**
Youth... **KNEES
BENT!**

**EXPLODE, PRESS
and SEAL!**
Youth... **JUMP &
PENETRATE!**



SOME ERRORS TO LOOK FOR AND CORRECT:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EYES CLOSED WHEN BLOCKING | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WATCHING ONLY THE BALL; |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOT SEALING THE NET | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JUMPING EARLY/LATE/WRONG PLACE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> HANDS/BODY FACING OUT OF BOUNDS | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARMS TOO WIDE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> JUMPING FORWARD/OFF BALANCE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SWINGING ARMS TO NET |

MORE DETAILS & POWERFUL WORDS!

- Watch the Hitter, not the Ball; Wait & Jump on the Hitter's Arm Swing. (**BALL-SETTER-BALL-HITTER! WAIT! TIME IT!**)
- Take Away the Hitter's Favorite or Best Shot; Evaluate the Pass Quality & Anticipate the Type of Set that is Likely to be Delivered and to Which Hitter; Read the Hitter's Angle & Speed of Approach. (**READ! ANTICIPATE THE HIT! FIND YOUR HITTER!**)
- Channel or Deflect the Ball into Your Court. (**TAKE AWAY A ZONE! TOUCH IT!**)
- Bend the Knees & Bend Slightly at the Waist; Hips & Toes Parallel to the Net, with Weight on Front of Foot, Ready to Jump Up at Any Moment. (**SQUARE UP! PRESSED & READY! LEGS LOADED! COILED! EXPLODE UP!**)
- Always Try to Block the Ball on the Opponent's Side of the Net with Big, Tight Hands & Arms- from Fingertips Down Through Wrists, Elbows, Shoulders & Stomach Muscles. (**BIG HANDS - BIG EYES! SEAL! SURROUND! PRESS! TOUCH IT!**)
- Keep the Hands in Front of the Ball as Long as Possible; Jump & Land with Hands Above Head. (**CLOSE! LAND HANDS HIGH!**)

Options to Learn Later

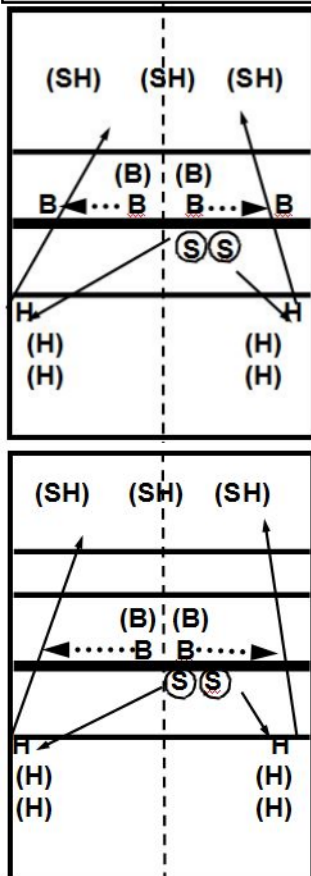
- ☒ One on One
- ☒ Double Block
- ☒ Triple Block
- ☒ Soft Block
- ☒ Zone Block
- ☒ Read Block
- ☒ Commit Block
- ☒ Middle Block
- ☒ Stack Block
- ☒ Block and Transition to Hit
- ☒ Block and Set the Second Ball
- ☒ Block and Play Ball for First Contact
- ☒ Block Back Row Attacks
- ☒ Block Slides
- ☒ Block Crossing Plays
- ☒ Block Quicks
- ☒ Swing Block

TOP DRILLS/GAMES:

- 1) Block with Partner
- 2) Block Solo
- 3) Block Hitters in ANY Drill

PLAYER HOMEWORK:

- 1) Practice your block jump facing a wall; concentrate on hand position & squat.
- 2) Same, but practice blocking footwork along the wall to one side, then to the other.



DRILL 1) BLOCK WITH PARTNER

- ✗ Divide the team into 2 groups with 2-3 Blockers (**B**), 2-3 Hitters (**H**) & a Setter (**S**). Each group may also include 2-3 Shaggers (**SH**).
- ✗ **H** tosses ball to **S**, who hits back at **H** to pass/dig back to **S**. **S** then sets to **H**, and **H** attacks against the 2 **B**'s forming a double block.
- ✗ As variation to initiate play, **SH** may put ball into play with a serve or toss across net to **H** to pass to the **S**.
- ✗ Players rotate within their small groups for set number of repetitions or other goal, & then rotate to perform a different skill **OR** players may perform a single repetition & follow path of the ball to rotate to the next small group (circle drill).

DRILL 2) BLOCK SOLO:

- ✗ Same groups and set up as above, except the **B** performs a Solo Block against the **H**.
- ✗ As variation to initiate the play, **SH** may put ball into play with serve or toss across net to the **H** to pass to the **S**.
- ✗ Players may rotate as above.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources](#) page of the USA Volleyball website – click on the **Education** heading, then on the **Coaching-Education-Programs** tab, then on **Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources**.

- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 - Teaching and Communication](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #6 - Sport Skills and Tactics](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #7 - Organization and Administration](#)
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #8 - Evaluation](#)
- [Coaching Volleyball - NFHS Online Course](#)
- [Volleyball Jargon & Acronyms](#), by John Kessel
- [The Power of Quotes](#), by John Kessel
- [STOP Teaching Hitting](#), by John Kessel
- [How Can I Spike Harder](#), by John Kessel
- [USAV Skill Videos](#)

NOTES:

CHAPTER 11: IMPACT PLUS – THE SYSTEMS

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This chapter is intended to introduce coaches to the key concepts regarding the implementation of “systems” for their teams. Coaches will need to have a fundamental understanding of the basic methods of organizing and designing both an offense and a defense. The offensive organizational system must include a serve reception and transition offense system for play. In addition, the defensive organizational system must include a blocking system and a hitter coverage system.

Coaches need to design systems of play appropriate for their own team’s level of understanding and level of play, as well as for the level of the competition they will play. One key concept is that a team should not attempt tactically what they cannot execute technically. For example, if a team does not have accurate passers who can nail passes fast, low and tight to the net, or a setter who can handle them, then they might not be able (and should not attempt) to run that fast, complex offense that their coach learned at a summer coaching clinic.

▼ Offensive System Organization

- **Basic Front Row Setting Systems** – may include the 6-6, the 6-3, and the 4-2 (International and Standard). In each case the first number indicates how many players have hitting duties and the second number indicates how many players have setting responsibilities.
- **Basic Back Row Setting Systems** – may also include the 6-6 and the 6-3 systems, but the difference is that the players responsible for setting are in the back row rather than the front.
- **Advanced Setting Systems** – may include the back row, three-hitter offenses such as the 6-2 and the 5-1, and other variations.

▼ Defensive System Organization

- **Front Row** – takes into consideration how you deploy blockers
 - Zero Blockers – no player is capable or the coach chooses not to assign a blocker
 - Single or One Blocker – not all players are able to or are assigned to block
 - Double or Two Blockers – all or select players can or are assigned to block
- **Back Row** – takes into consideration how you position and coordinate your back row defenders behind your blockers
 - Player Up – this refers to the position of the player usually in the #6 position, which is near the attack line
 - Player Back – this is the opposite, where the #6 player usually plays defense nearer the endline than the attack line
- **Hitter Coverage** – this refers to how the other players will position themselves in case their hitter gets blocked

As with the information in Chapter 10, the information here is not meant to represent all the possible options available to coaches when seeking to learn and implement appropriate offensive and defensive systems for their teams. Rather, it is meant to provide a broad overview of some of the more fundamental beginning-to-intermediate level organizational systems. USAV-CAP Level I covers these systems in more detail.

NOTES:

There are two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One of these is roots, the other, wings—Hodding Carter

IMPLEMENTING A SYSTEM

**COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...**

**Application
of
Offensive
Systems**

IMPLEMENTING A SYSTEM

By Stephanie Schleuder for USAV-CAP

No matter what system you choose for your personnel, the following list provides the most important aspects of an offensive system which need to be taught in the gym.

🔑 Serve Receive Formations

- Use your Best Passers to Pass Most Balls from Zones Most Served
- What the Setter's Path is to Be
- What are the Hitters' Paths and Playset Options

🔑 Play Out the Serve Received Ball — Pass, Set, Attack

🔑 Cover the Hitter, then "Switch" to Assigned Specialty Positions

🔑 Base Defensive Positions

🔑 Visual Keys for Transition to Defense

🔑 Play Defense

- From Dig to Transition
- From Down Block to Offense
- From Freeball to Offense
- Run the Offense from Cover the Hitter to Base Positions
- From Serving into Switches and Base Positions

COACHING HINTS:

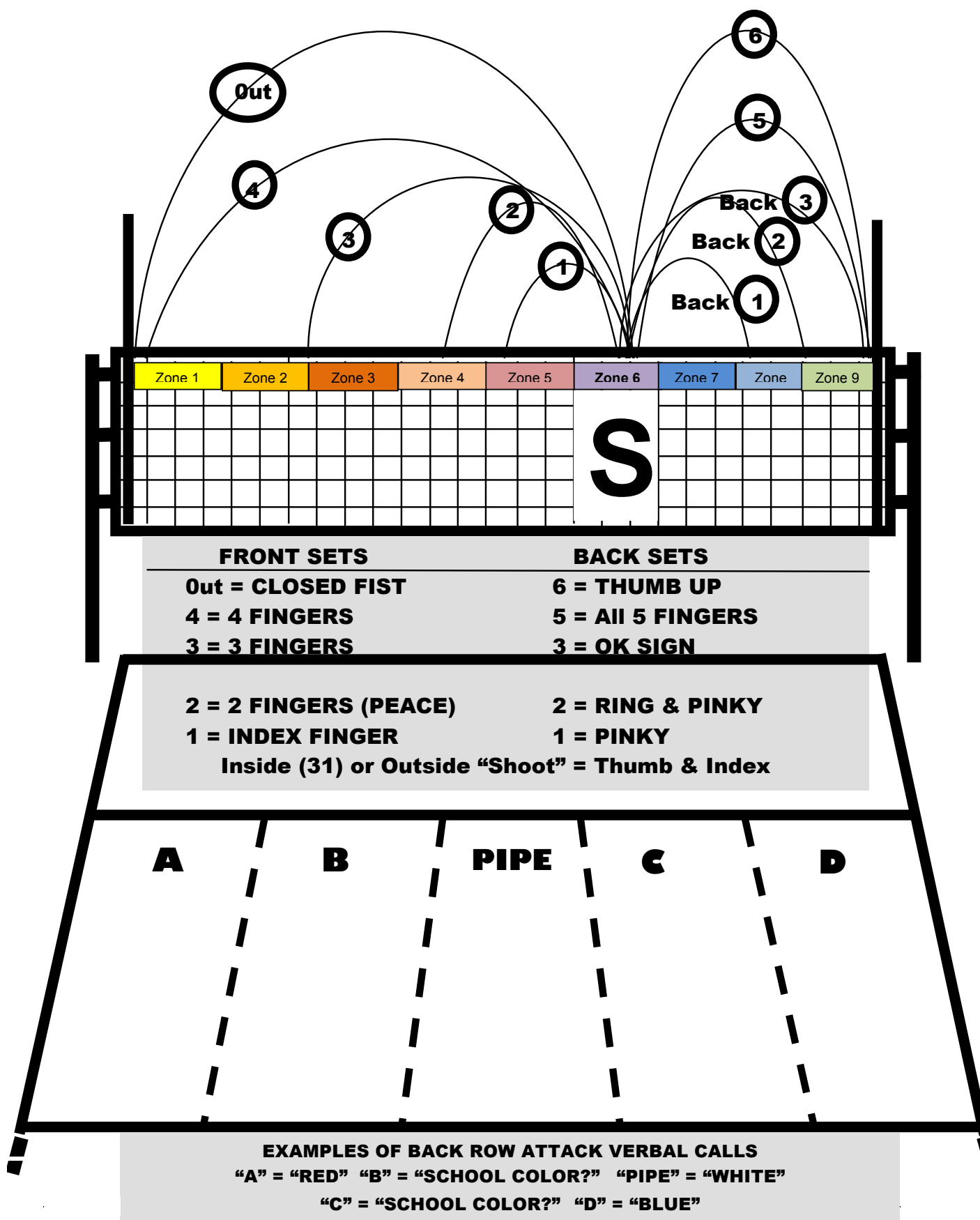
- Establish good communication systems.
- Begin with walk-through on court.
- Make sure all players understand responsibilities for movement and coverage
- Introduce ball into coach controlled situations-coach tosses serves and freeballs.
- Gradually add opponents (blockers and defenders).
- Work toward series of contacts in game-like situations (serve receive and play out; hit from opponents, transition to offense and play out).
- Speed of the drill is important - as players gain more skill, play faster!
- Discuss and drill on height of pass desired for freeballs, dig transition, downballs, and serve receive offense.

A COMPARISON OF OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS

By Stephanie Schleuder former USAV CAP Cadre Member & Diana L. Cole, USAV Dir. of Education

PERSONNEL NEEDS				
TYPE OF OFFENSE	#RSH/#OPP	#OH	#MH	#S
6-3	1-2	1-2	1-2	3
4-2	0-2	2-4	0	2
6-2	2	2	2	2
5-1	1	2	2	1

CHARACTERISTICS		
OFFENSE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
6-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excellent lead up to remaining 3 offenses below ▪ Great training system for developing 3+ setters/young setters ▪ Passing is not critical ▪ Setter movement paths are extremely easy – from right and middle of court ▪ Less complexity of sets/plays ▪ Setters can easily see hitters ▪ Allows for power game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited backset options ▪ Transition plays limited ▪ Hitters must get used to 3 different setting styles ▪ Allows for only some adjustments & flexibility in system ▪ Setters do not learn movement patterns from left side of court
4-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Passing not critical ▪ Frontcourt setter movement is easy ▪ Less complexity of sets & plays ▪ Setters can easily see the hitters ▪ Allows for power game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Limited offensive options ▪ Limited ability to adjust ▪ Transition offense is limited ▪ Hitters must get used to 2 setting styles
6-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greater offensive options with 3 front row attackers, plus backrow ▪ Attackers can specialize ▪ Players more enthusiastic/creative ▪ Increased tactical options ▪ 2 good players can share S/H duties ▪ If S injured, could continue as 5-1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need accurate passing to execute ▪ Quick attack is critical ▪ Greater setter movement necessary ▪ Takes much practice to connect ▪ Hitters' patterns are complex ▪ Hitters must get used to 2 setters ▪ May run out of subs for setters
5-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One setter for consistency ▪ Best athlete could be the setter ▪ Players' roles more specialized ▪ Tactical matchups are flexible ▪ Greater offensive options - 3 front row attackers, plus backrow ▪ Players more enthusiastic/creative ▪ Increased tactical options for power game 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pressure on single setter to perform ▪ Difficult to sub a non-performing or injured setter ▪ If setter injured, must have backup ▪ Takes much practice to connect ▪ Players can become too specialized ▪ Setter must be able to block



BASIC OFFENSIVE SYSTEMS

COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...

**Match the
System to
the
Players**

CORE COACHING CONCEPTS:

- Get your best athletes setting; teach at least half of your team to set.
- The most basic Back-Row-Setter Systems are the 6-6 (each player takes their turn at setting when in RB), & the 6-3 (every other player is a setter & sets when in RB & in CB).
- The most basic Front-Row-Setter systems are the 5-6 (also called a 6-6) in which every player takes their turn setting when they rotate to the CF (or the RF) position, & the 3-3 (every other player is a setter & sets when in CF & in RF).
- The next most basic systems are the American/Standard 4-2 (setter will switch into & set from CF), & the International 4-2 (setter switches into & sets from RF).
- The most advanced 3-hitter, Back-Row-Setter Systems are the 6-2 (2 setters on the court opposite each other, setting from back row, typically switching into RB), & the 5-1 (1 setter on the court sets in all rotations, switching into RB/RF).

CATEGORIES of OFFENSE:

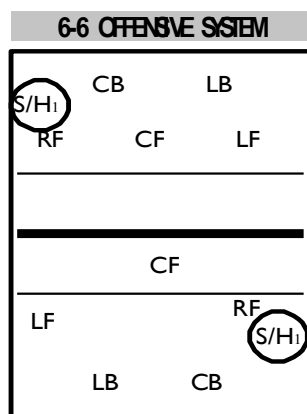
- Within the last few years the Rally Scoring System was implemented to make matches shorter so youth tournaments would end at a reasonable hour. This is the simplest scoring system to use — win the rally... and win the point (and the right to serve).
- **SIDEOUT OFFENSE**—this is when the opponents are serving to you. If the Serve Receive Offense does not execute then the opponents score a point.
- **TRANSITION OFFENSE**—when your team serves, a successful execution of dig-set-attack yields a point for your team. A failure to execute gives a point, and the serve, to your opponent

GENERAL OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Remember, the 4 key methods to gain a lead in Rally Scoring (or score a point in Side Out games) are:
 - an Ace Serve
 - a Transition Attack (dig-set-kill)
 - a Stuff Block and Opponent Error (out of your control)
- The lower the skill level, the more points will be scored by service aces and unforced errors (technical aspects).
- The higher the skill and experience level, the more points will be scored on blocking and transition (tactical aspects).

SPECIFIC OFFENSIVE CONSIDERATIONS:

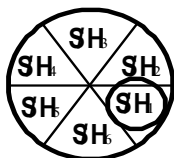
- Never attempt tactically what you cannot execute technically!
- Players' skill and experience?
- Setter(s) ability?
- Hitter(s) ability?
- Passing consistency?
- Balance "*what do we have to do to win*" at this level while building for the next level.
- How much practice time do we have?



5 PERSON "W" SERVE RECEIVE

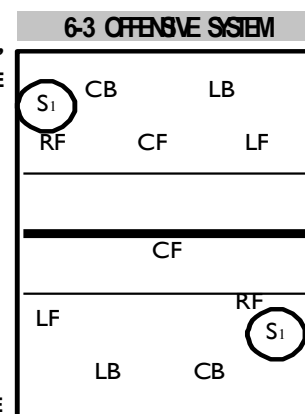
S = Setter
H = Hitter
S = Active Setter

4 PERSON "U" SERVE RECEIVE



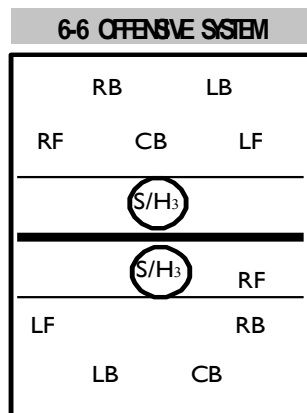
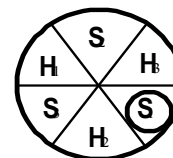
EXPLANATION:

Both the 6-6 and 6-3 systems can use a back row setter, typically setting from the RB (in the 6-6) and the CB and RB (in the 6-3) positions. In the 6-6, each player that rotates into RB will be the setter for that rotation, coming up to set to 3 front row hitters-giving each a chance to play both setter and hitter positions. In the 6-3 system, since every other player is a setter, each of them can set 2 rotations — when rotated into the CB and RB positions (switching to RB "homebase" during the rally to play defense). Both systems can be adapted to use a front row setter as well (see below).



5 PERSON "W" SERVE RECEIVE

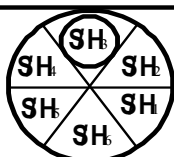
4 PERSON "U" SERVE RECEIVE



5 PERSON "W" SERVE RECEIVE

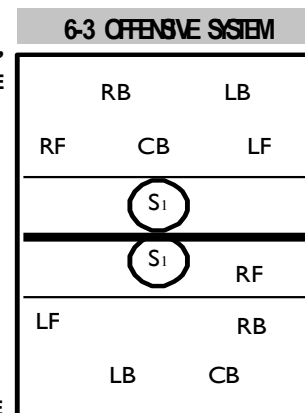
S = Setter
H = Hitter
S = Active Setter

4 PERSON "U" SERVE RECEIVE



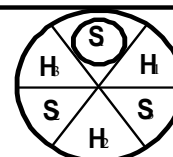
EXPLANATION:

Both the 6-6 and 6-3 systems can also use a front row setter, typically setting from the center front and/or the right front position. In the 6-6, the player that rotates into CF will be the setter for that rotation, allowing all players a chance to play both setter and hitter positions. In the 6-3 system, since every other player is a setter, each of them can set 2 rotations — when rotated into the CF and Right Front positions - and switching to set from either the CF or RF.



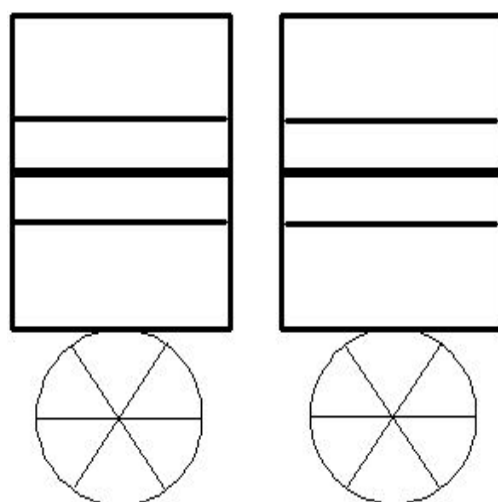
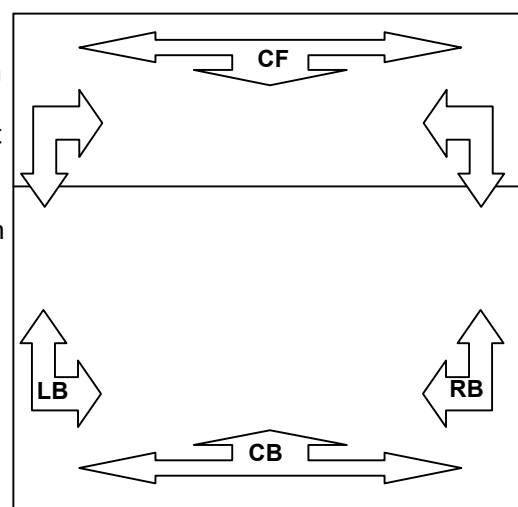
5 PERSON "W" SERVE RECEIVE

4 PERSON "U" SERVE RECEIVE

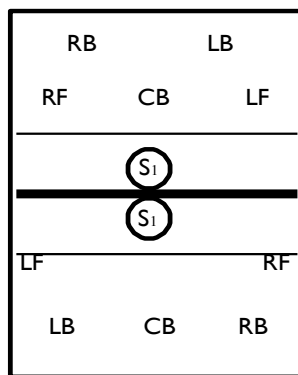


Notes on the "Overlap" Rule:

- Adjacent players (on both teams) must be in proper serving/rotational order at the time of serve contact.
- AFTER contact of the serve, players may switch to any position, but must obey rules pertaining to the front/back row.
- Draw out serve reception patterns to see if you can gain an advantage by manipulating the line up without violating the overlap rule.



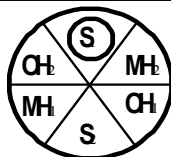
AMERICAN 4-2 OFFENSIVE SYSTEM



5 PERSON "W" SERVE RECEIVE

S = Setter
S1 = Active Setter
OH = Outside Hitter
MH = Middle Hitter

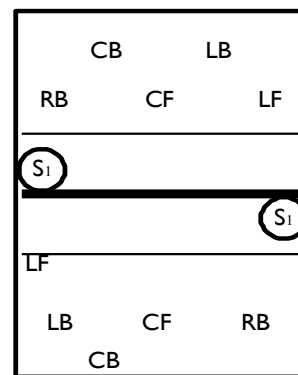
3 PERSON SERVE RECEIVE



EXPLANATION:

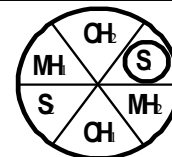
In the American 4-2, the front row setter usually sets out of the CF position to 2 split hitters. In the International 4-2, the setter typically switches into the RF position to set to 2 hitters in front, which limits the use of the backset. However, this also allows the MH to swing in front or behind the setter on a backset play. In both the 5 and 3 Person Serve Receive patterns for any offensive system, you can simply assign the 3 back row players to passing duties and relieve the front row players to concentrate on attack preparation, or if more proficient, you can shift front row passers into the passing lanes, while non-proficient passers step out of primary passing duties (as at the bottom half of the court at right).

INTERNATIONAL 4-2 OFFENSIVE SYSTEM

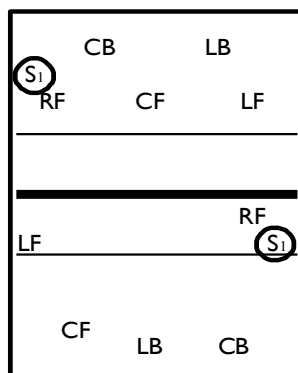


5 PERSON "W" SERVE

3 PERSON SERVE RE-



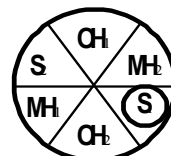
6-2 OFFENSIVE SYSTEM



5 PERSON SERVE RE-

S = Setter
S1 = Active Setter
OH = Outside Hitter
MH = Middle Hitter

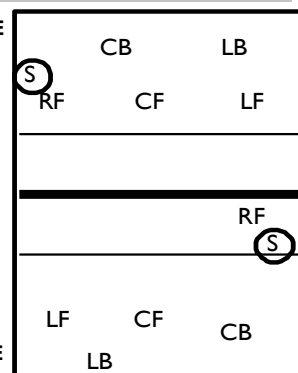
3 PERSON SERVE RE-



EXPLANATION:

In the 5 Person or "W" serve receive patterns for the 6-2 and 5-1 back row setter offenses, when in the back row, the Setter typically has further to run to get to the setter's target at the net. This can be alleviated by using a 3 Person (or 4 Person) Serve Reception pattern, and having the setter "push" the player in front of her close to the net. The Setter may then also move closer to her target as long as she does not create an overlap with her other back row players. As above, you can relieve the front row players to concentrate on attack preparation, or if more proficient, you can shift front row passers into the passing lanes. You can also take into consideration what attack patterns you want your hitters to run from their passing positions, and place them as close to their hitting assignment as possible, as long as no overlap is created. This can also be very deceptive for the opponent.

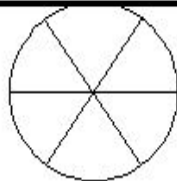
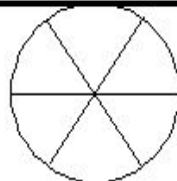
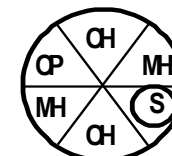
5-1 OFFENSIVE SYSTEM



5 PERSON SERVE RECEIVE

OP = Opposite Hitter

3 PERSON SERVE RECEIVE



Should the Setter LEAD or FOLLOW either the MH or the OH?!

Either option could be to your advantage based on...

- Serve receive patterns
- Use of primary passers
- Hitter or setter or blocker match-ups
- Stronger or weaker rotations created

Coaches should spend some time drawing out all rotations using each possible scenario to see if one creates a greater advantage for your team. Then PRACTICE it! A great online resource for planning in this manner is at www.rotate123.com/usav.

We also suggest that you have a Plan B, and maybe even a Plan C, to go to in EACH rotation if things are not working well. Again, PRACTICE them.

*The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates.
The great teacher inspires—William Arthur Ward*

BASIC DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS

COACHES
Need to Know
THIS Stuff...

**Match the
System to
the
Players**

CORE COACHING CONCEPTS:

- Get your best blockers blocking and your best diggers digging. Put your best blockers where the opponents attack from most often, even if it means moving along the net from their favorite attack position. Put your best diggers in the areas of the court most often attacked into.
- The most basic defensive systems are the Zero or One Blocker systems with one or two players assigned to cover short shots and tips.
- The 2 Blocker Systems (also traditionally called—by colors – Red, White or Blue, or by names such as 6-Up/Back, Player-Up/Back, or Perimeter/Rotation systems) with One or Zero players assigned to cover tips, are a bit more advanced.
- The Player Up Defenses are good against teams that do not hit hard/deep but do tip often or hit many soft mid-court shots. The Player Back Systems are good against teams that hit hard and deep, but don't tip much.

ZERO BLOCKER Systems

Include:

0 - 2 - 4

0 - 1 - 5

(See next page for diagrams)

These systems assume that no one on your team can get their hands above the net to block OR that you choose to not have anyone block at all, even if capable (such as on a down ball situation where the hitter is standing on the ground or is so deep in the court that an effective attack is not possible).

ONE BLOCKER Systems

Include:

1 - 2 - 3

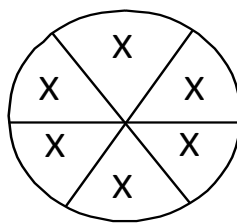
1 - 1 - 4

(See next page for diagrams)

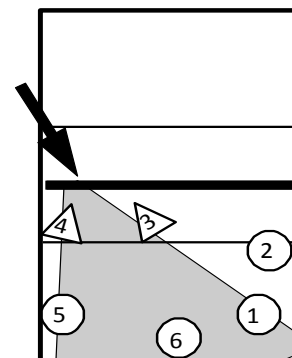
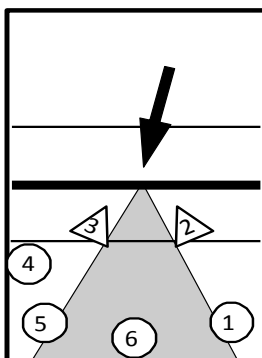
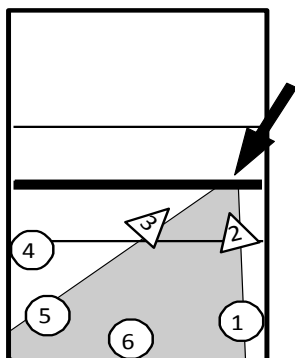
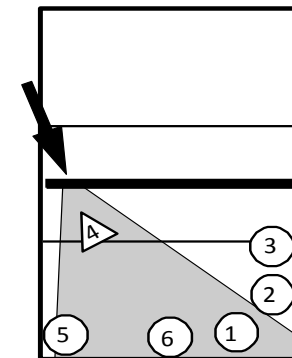
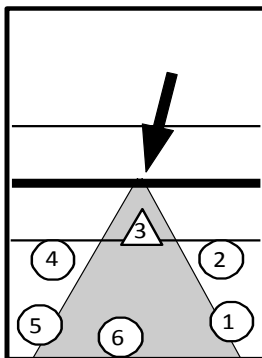
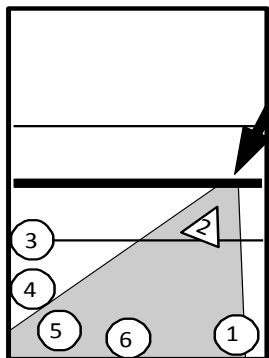
These systems assume that you have at least one blocker in the front row at all times who can legitimately block balls. If you have two, put the blockers opposite each other in the lineup, so when in the front row, each blocker blocks the whole net by her/himself. Or you can only assign one of two or three capable blockers simply to block all attacks in her/his zone of the net as a single blocker.

ZERO BLOCKER DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS
0 — 2 — 4 System

- = Blocker
 △ = Tip Cover
 ○ = Digger



= No one who can block
 OR
 = Choice is to have no one block


0 — 1 — 5 System

ADVANTAGES OF THE ZERO BLOCKER/PLAYER UP DEFENSES:

- ☑ The primary advantage is that no one on the team can truly block, yet there is a system in place for defense and transition to offense.
- ☑ One or two players are up behind the block (typically one is a setter) for tips or “garbage” shots falling into the middle of the court.
- ☑ There are more diggers to fill up the court and the block will not have a chance to be “used” by the hitter.
- ☑ It is also a good down ball defensive position.
- ☑ Since the player playing up behind the block is often the setter in a back row offensive system, it allows the setter to be closer to the setter’s target at the net to run the transition offense.
- ☑ The weakest back row defender can often be “hidden” in a player-up spot behind the block.
- ☑ It’s simple to learn.

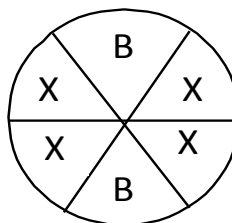
DISADVANTAGES:

- ☑ The disadvantage is that if an opponent can hit, the first line of defense at the net is not there. As a result, the diggers must possess good reading and anticipation skills.

ONE BLOCKER DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS

1 — 2 — 3 System

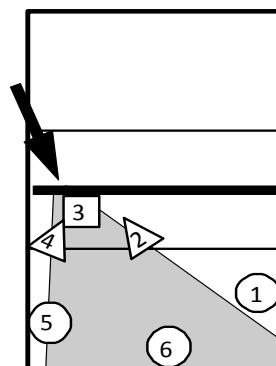
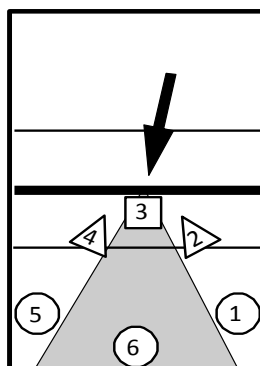
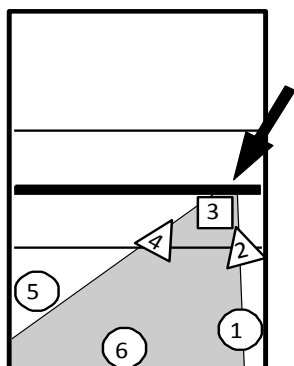
- = Blocker
 △ = Tip Cover
 ○ = Digger



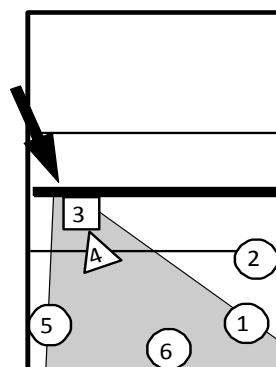
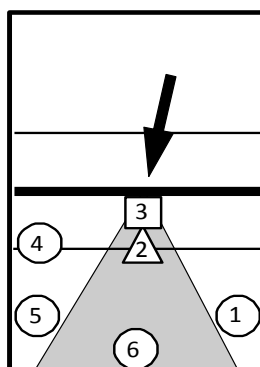
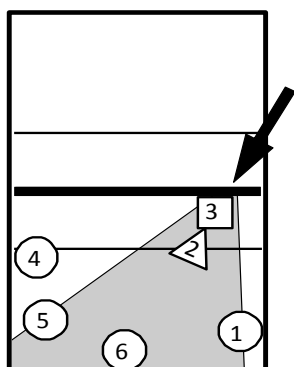
= Only one player who can block or whom you CHOOSE to have block all zones across the net

OR

= Single blockers who will only block in their zone of the net



1 — 1 — 4 System



ADVANTAGES OF THE ONE BLOCKER/PLAYER UP DEFENSES:

- ☑ The primary advantage is that since not all players can block effectively, only those that can are assigned to.
- ☑ One or two players are up behind the block (typically one is a setter) for tips or “garbage” shots falling into the middle of the court.
- ☑ There are more diggers to fill up the court.
- ☑ Since the player playing up behind the block is often the setter in a back row offensive system, it allows the setter to be closer to the setter’s target at the net to run the transition offense.
- ☑ The weakest back row defender can often be “hidden” in a player-up spot. It’s simple to learn—the one blocker knows all attacks in all zones are his/hers OR the single blocker in that zone knows he/she is responsible for attacks only into that zone.

DISADVANTAGES:

- ☒ The disadvantage is that one blocker must block all zones across the net for all attacks, which may lead to fatigue.

TWO BLOCKER DEFENSIVE SYSTEMS

TWO BLOCKER Systems include the 2 - 1 - 3 and the 2 - 0 - 4.

These systems assume that you have 3 players or more on your team who are capable of blocking and at least 2 of them are in the front row together with the goal of putting up a double block on each attacker. This might mean that all 3 front row players share double blocking duties in their zones or if only 2 blockers are in the front row, they travel across the net into any zone as a tandem. Any combination of the one and two blocker systems may be used for different rotations.



= Both block all zones of the net together when in the front row, single block all zones when by self, and play a no-block defense when both blockers are in the back row at the same time.



= Each blocker blocks all zones of the net, double blocking when the second blocker is in front row and single blocking all zones when by self.



= Two Blockers will block all zones across the net in tandem in all rotations.



= Each blocker blocks zones in their area of the net when 3 blockers are in the front row, forming a double block against all attacks. When only two blockers are up, they block all zones across the net in tandem.



= Each blocker blocks zones in their area of the net when in the front row, forming a double block against all attacks.

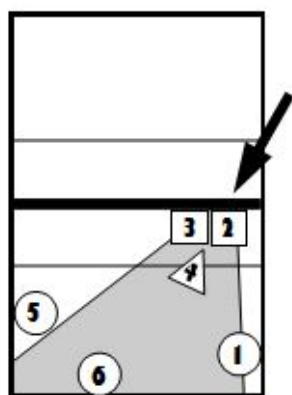
Get the "offensive rebound!"

2 - 1 - 3 System

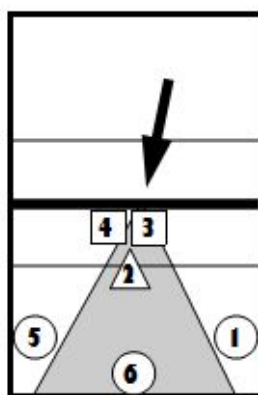
□ = Blocker

△ = Tip Cover

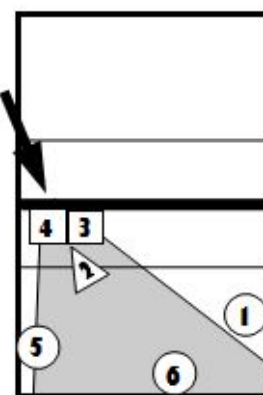
○ = Digger



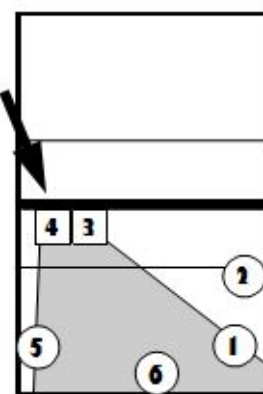
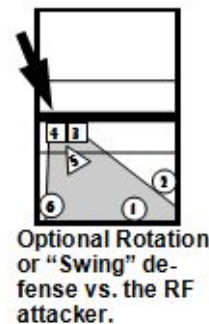
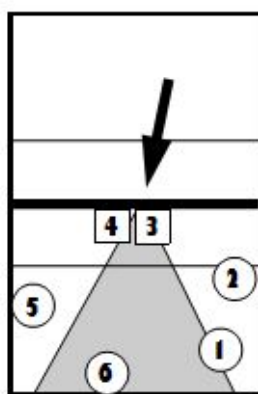
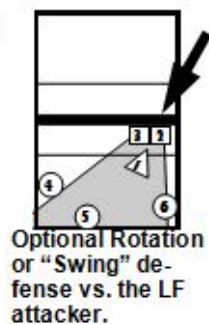
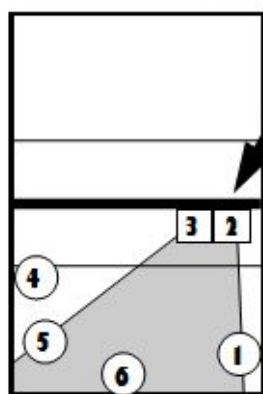
Player up behind the block could also be 1 or 6.



Player up behind the block could also be 5 or 6.



2 - 0 - 4 System



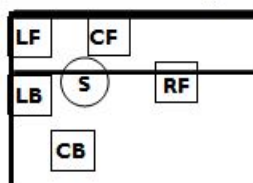
ADVANTAGES OF THE 2 BLOCKER DEFENSES:

- ✓ The primary advantage of the 2 Blocker systems is that there is a greater chance of stopping the attack at the net.
- ✓ Perimeter defenses ensure that the lines and corners are well covered against hard/deep hits. Since the CB player stays deep on the endline corridor, he/she can line up in the seam of the block, reading and facing the hitter's angle. Thus, the CB in this defense must be your quickest, most agile, best reading player.
- ✓ If using a back row setter offensive system, the setter can be switched always to play the RB defensive spot, to be closer to the setter's target for transition offense. Most young players do not hit line shots from Left Front well or often, which may save the setter in RB from having to play many first balls.
- ✓ In 2 Blocker Player Up defenses ("Red," "Blue" or "Rotation") the middle of the court is covered, but you usually "give up" the sharper cross court angle shots.
- ✓ If the "Off Blocker" is assigned tip coverage, this can put them into good position to run a "Swing Offense" out of the middle of the court.

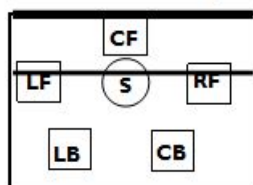
DISADVANTAGES:

- ✗ The main disadvantage is that the middle of the court is open for short/soft shots in most Perimeter defenses, and no one is assigned automatic tip responsibilities.
- ✗ When using a "Rotation" defense vs. the Right Side attacker, the RB, who is often the Setter in a back row offense, will have to rotate deep to the CB position or deep cross court corner, often having to take the first contact and, if not digging the first ball, creating a much more difficult transition to the net to set.

3-2 Hitter Coverage



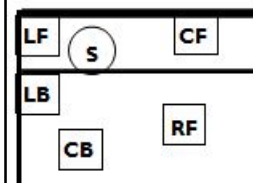
1-4 Hitter Coverage



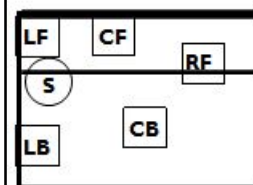
HITTER COVERAGE SYSTEMS

There are three basic Hitter Coverage Systems you can adapt for your team, rotation by rotation if necessary. The 3-2 Cup is the most common, with the 2-3 Cup close behind. You can even have a 1-4 Cup to cover your middle hitters. In the 3-2 Coverage, the 3 closest players to the hitter form the Inner Cup, while the 2 players furthest from the Hitter form the second or Outer Cup. In the 2-3 Coverage, the two closest players form the first Cup. It is common for the setter always to be one of the players covering in the inner cup formation—since he/she should know before anyone else where the ball is going, the setter should always be the first player in Coverage formation. In the 1-4 Coverage, the closest player to the MH will cover behind the hitter—usually this is the Setter.

2-3 Hitter Coverage



OR



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website – click on the **Education** heading, then on the **Coaching-Education-Programs** tab, then on **Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources**.
- [NCACE and NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #5 - Teaching and Communication](#)
 - [NCACE and NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #6 - Sports Skills and Tactics](#)
 - [NCACE and NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #7 - Organization and Administration](#)
 - [NCACE and NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #8 - Evaluation](#)
 - [Coaching Volleyball - NFHS Online Course](#)
 - [IMPACT PLUS Basic Stats And Charting](#), by Diana Cole
 - Visit www.volleyballreftraining.com for officials education information and training materials
 - Visit www.volleyballreftraining.com for USAV Rules and Interpretations
 - Visit www.rotate123.com/usav to plan your serve reception, offensive and defensive formations

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CHAPTER 12: ADDITIONAL VOLLEYBALL RESOURCES

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

The following suppliers deal in specialty volleyball equipment. Generally they stock everything that might be needed for the sport, including the latest and best products. They are fast, accepting phone orders and shipping promptly. The catalogs and websites of full equipment suppliers – just do an Internet search for the category – belong in every coach's and player's library, as they are a great reference for all sorts of gear.

OFFICIAL USA VOLLEYBALL SPONSORS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MIZUNO USA
 Official Footwear and Apparel, Ankle Braces, Coaching Education Programs, Men's and Women's National Teams, A2 Teams and World University Games Teams.
 Norcross, GA 30071 PH: 800-966-1211
 WEB: www.mizunousa.com/volleyball SPORTCOURT
 Official Athletic Flooring of USA Volleyball, National Teams and Indoor Junior National Championship Events.
 PH: 800-421-8112 EMAIL: info@sportcourt.com
 WEB: www.sportcourt.com | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPORTS IMPORTS
 Official Indoor and Outdoor Volleyball Net Support Systems of USA Volleyball
 Columbus, OH 43221
 PH: 800-556-3198 WEB: www.sportsimports.com
 EMAIL: info@sportsimports.com |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EM2
 The USAV Official Event Merchandiser and Online Store; a wide variety of volleyball apparel, books and videos, accessories, and novelties.
 Austin, Texas 78704 PH: 512-433-5130
 EMAIL: em2sports@yahoo.com
 WEB: www.em2sports.com Park & Sun Sports
 Outdoor volleyball net systems.
 Englewood, CO 80110 PH: 800-776-7275
 Email: __
 WEB: www.parksun.com Powr-Grip Company Inc.
 6-inch TL6-FH – power grips with red line vacuum indicator and a tough plastic pad protector.
 Laurel, MT 59044
 PH: 888-POWRGRIP (888-769-7474)
 WEB: www.powrgrip.com | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ref Shop
 The Ref Shop carries officials' apparel and accessories.
 Seminole, FL 33775 PH: 727-392-7294
 WEB: www.therefshop.com Tandem Sport
 USA Volleyball licensee; resource for varied sports medicine equipment.
 PH: 800-766-1098
 WEB: www.tandemsport.com VolleyHut!
 Wide variety of apparel, novelties and equipment for indoor and outdoor volleyball players and teams.
 Poway, CA 92064 PH: 858-486-3307
 EMAIL: Sales@VolleyHut.com
 WEB: www.volleyhut.com |

UNIFORMS AND KNEEPADS

For National events players are required to be dressed uniformly during competition. The color and design for the team jerseys and shorts must be uniform (same color, style and trim) except for sleeve length and Libero players. Regions may allow uniform exceptions for regional play only (i.e. lower level or developmental teams may be permitted to wear similar but not identical shorts). Jerseys must have numbers not less than 4" tall (6" is recommended) on the front and numbers not less than 6" tall on the back (8" is recommended). Numbers may range between 1 and 99, must be easily visible, centered and permanently attached. Each jersey must use same colors and number heights for all players except Liberos. Color combinations such as purple/black, dark green/black, navy/black, white/light yellow, or navy/maroon are not distinctive enough to comply with the rules. Starting in the **2014-15** USAV season, the following will be used in regards to Libero jerseys contrasting with regular team jerseys. This language has been adopted by the NCAA and NFHS:

"As of SEPTEMBER 1, 2014, it is required that either the Libero or his/her teammates wear solid color jerseys. The solid color jersey must clearly contrast from the predominant color(s) of the teammates' jerseys. Predominant colors are those that appear on approximately half of the body of the uniform jersey."

Every USAV Junior Volleyball player should compete in good quality kneepads that are designed for volleyball if he or she is to develop a friendship with the floor. While you may see top athletes playing without them, for young, beginning and developing players like your USAV Junior Volleyball athletes, kneepads are a must for learning and safety.

VOLLEYBALL AND SPORTS PUBLICATIONS AND COURSES

While this list of suppliers is not exhaustive, there are a wide selection of volleyball and sports publications and coaching tools available for sale.

USAV-CAP SPONSORS and AFFILIATES:

- **Rotate 123 Volleyball Planning Software**
WEB: www.rotate123.com info@rotate123.com
- **Dartfish**
The Official Video Analysis Coaching Education Volleyball Software Provider of USA Volleyball. Subscribe to the USAV coaching performance series of instructional video collections from USAV and Dartfish.TV PHONE: 404-685-9505
EMAIL: usa@dartfish.com WEB: www.dartfish.tv
- **Performance Conditioning for Volleyball**
Volleyball conditioning newsletters and books. Lincoln, NE 68506 PHONE: 402-489-9984
EMAIL: performance@performancecondition.com
WEB: www.performancecondition.com/volleyball
- **American Volleyball Coaches Association**
PHONE: 859-226-4315 or TOLL FREE: 866-544-2822
WEB: www.avca.org
- **Championship Books and Video**
PHONE: 515-232-3687 EMAIL: info@champonline.com
WEB: www.champonline.com
- **Human Kinetics**
PHONE: 800-747-4457 WEB: www.humankinetics.com
- **Volleyball Ref Training**
For referee and scorekeeper training information, materials and courses
WEB: www.VolleyballRefTraining.com

COACHING COURSES (USAV-CAP MODULE CREDITS)

- To purchase any of the below courses visit www.usavolleyball.org and click on the Education heading, then on Coaching Education Programs, then the Indoor Courses link, finally on the CAP Approved Modules link
- **American Sports Education Program**
The **Coaching Principles** online course satisfies USAV's Coaching Accreditation Program's (CAP) **Foundations of Coaching** course requirement for **USAV-CAP Level I**. USAV-CAP also accepts ASEP's **Coaching Youth Volleyball** and **Sport First Aid** online courses for USAV-CAP recertification Module equivalents. PHONE: 1-800-747-5698,
EMAIL: asep@hkusa.com; WEB: www.asep.com
- **National Federation of High Schools**
When combined with the **Fundamentals of Coaching Volleyball** online course form, the purchase of the current year **IMPACT Manual** and successful exam completion satisfies USAV's Coaching Accreditation Program's **Foundations of Coaching** course requirement for **USAV-CAP Level I**, as well as for entry level **IMPACT certification**. The **Fundamentals of Coaching Volleyball** course is worth two USAV-CAP recertification credits. PHONE: 317-972-6900 WEB: www.nfhslearn.com
- **USADA TrueSport**
USAV-CAP accepts TrueSport courses **Developing Your Coaching Philosophy & Ethics, Understanding Supplements & Energy Drinks** and **Navigating Performance-Enhancing Substances** as USAV-CAP recertification Modules with purchase of a Credit from USAV. EMAIL: truesport@truesport.org

LOGO USE POLICY

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The United States Olympic Committee also has all rights to the use of the Olympic five-ring logo. No interlocking rings of any color may be used that resemble the five-ring Olympic logo. Four and six rings in the same Olympic styles are also prohibited by law. You should come up with your own special club/program logo. Use it on your staff shirts, jerseys, sweats and buy some stationery, as well. Some programs have also found business cards to be helpful. Remember though, that individual USAV-CAP certified coaches may not use the USAV Logos on their personal website or personal business cards. Coaches may, however, list their USAV-CAP or other USAV Education certifications in a text format.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ⇒ If you want to read more about the volleyball topics below, or others related to this chapter, download and print the articles found on the [IMPACT Resources page](#) of the USA Volleyball website – click on the **Education** heading, then on the **Coaching-Education-Programs** tab, then on **Resources/IMPACT-Student-Resources**.
- [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #7 - Organization and Administration](#)
 - [NCACE/NASPE Coaching Standards Domain #8 - Evaluation](#)
 - [USAV Beach Education Programs](#)
 - [USAV Beach Volleyball Rules and Resources](#) (www.volleyballreftraining.com/resources_beach.php)
 - [NCAA-USAV-NFHS Rules Comparison](#)
 - [2015-2017 USAV Indoor Rules](#)
 - [2015-2017 Season Libero Jersey Rules](#) [2012-2013 USAV Rules Interpretation Bulletin #1—August 17, 2012 and Libero Jersey Contrast Beginning 2014 Season]
 - [National Office Staff - Colorado Springs, Colo.](#) (www.usavolleyball.org)
 - [National U.S. Olympic Training Centers](#) (www.teamusa.org)
 - [USOC and USA Volleyball Internships and Job Openings](#)
 - [USOC Sport Performance Division](#) – coaching education information and other topics of interest
 - Liberty Mutual Insurance [PlayPositive.com](#)
 - [List of Recommended Movies](#), by John Kessel
 - [Suggested Youth Volleyball Readings](#), by John Kessel
 - [American Volleyball Coaches Association](#) has many books and videos available (www.AVCA.org)
 - [Creating and Growing Great Volleyball Programs](#), by John Kessel
 - [How to Start a Junior Volleyball Program](#)
 - [Gifts for a Volleyball Player](#), by John Kessel
 - [Articles and Resources for Players](#), USAV Grassroots
 - [Kids Coloring Book](#), by Cody Kessel
 - [Best Practices Articles and Resources](#), USAV Grassroots
 - [Articles and Information for Club Directors](#), USAV Grassroots
 - [Articles and Resources for Coaches](#), USAV Grassroots
 - [Articles and Resources for Officials](#), USAV Grassroots
 - [Articles and Resources for Parents](#), USAV Grassroots
 - [Guide to Disabled Volleyball](#), by John Kessel
 - [USA Volleyball Foundation](#)
 - **Volleyball Coaches and Trainers** – Facebook Closed Group Discussion – Click “Join” for permission. This group was founded to help coaches who want to become better teachers of and to grow the game together to collaborate.

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HEADS UP

CONCUSSION IN VOLLEYBALL

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Athletes who experience any of the signs and symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body may have a concussion.

Signs Observed by Coaching Staff	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache or "pressure" in head
Is confused about assignment or position	Nausea or vomiting
Forgets an instruction	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or blurry vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light
Answers questions slowly	Sensitivity to noise
Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall	Confusion
Can't recall events after hit or fall	Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

For more information and safety resources, visit:
www.cdc.gov/Concussion.

ACTION PLAN

If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, you should take the following four steps:

1. Remove the athlete from play.
2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
3. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion.
4. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says they are symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Emergency Medical Services
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____

Health Care Professional
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____

School Staff Available During Practices
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____

School Staff Available During Games
 Name: _____
 Phone: _____

IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.

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- ✓ Teaching & Coaching Tips
- ✓ Sample Drills
- ✓ Printable Handouts
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 Rotate 123 comes with a complete library of popular offensive and defensive formations. Just enter your roster and Rotate 123 will generate all of the formations instantly.

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 Customize your rotations and save them as templates. Try a variety of lineups and formations. There is no limit to the number of permutations you can create.

SOPHISTICATION
 Build your own library of formations which are stored on our servers so you can reuse them or share them with your staff.

The fastest way to generate all the rotations for your volleyball team.



Whether you're a veteran coach or new to the game, Rotate 123 can save you hours of time preparing your team's lineup and formations. The process is simple:

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3. Select your starting lineup & subs

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- Comes complete with the most commonly used offensive and defensive formations.
- Compare a variety of options instantly, then print out the results to share with your team and coaching staff.
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Once you have your initial formations, make as many adjustments as you like to customize your setup. Create a variety of game plans with different formations and different starting lineups. The options are limitless and you can generate new options almost as fast as you can think of them.

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NOTES: