



A space designed for Coaches,  
by Coaches



- \* Volleyball Drills
- \* Nutritional Facts
- \* Strength Training

### “Things we all do...But Shouldn't”

- 1) All coaches have a tendency to talk too much! When it comes to explanation, be clear and concise when giving instructions, establish realistic goals and expectations for drills and then get athletes into those drills. It should take no more than 2 minutes to get a drill going! During a two hour practice if coaches have 6 major drills and it takes them 5 minutes to explain these drills, 30 minutes of good contact time is wasted talking! Remember that the number contacts and repetition are what is required to teach.
- 2) When it comes to giving Feedback to athletes, if only one athlete is making a mistake take them aside and discuss this (take them out of a drill) but don't stop the drill. Only stop a drill if the vast majority of your athletes are making the same mistakes and you would like to address this as a whole.
- 3) At the beginning of a practice you should bring the group together and explain the focus of the session. This way, athletes are prepared to participate in a specific theme. Some times you will focus on Defense more so than Offense and athletes can prepare themselves for hitting the floor!
- 4) Incorporate Movement into Pepper! Too often I watch athletes hitting the ball back and forth to one another however, in a game do we ask them to hit the ball directly to someone? The answer is No! We ask them to hit the ball to an open area of the court. By teaching poor habits in pepper, we are reinforcing the bad habits we try to eliminate in a game. Pepper is a great warm-up activity but we as coaches can make it better.
  - a. Have athletes move there partner intentionally left and right, forward and backward, but never put the ball directly to them.
  - b. This will only help teach proper movement skills, and Movement is the key ingredient to the game of volleyball.
- 5) During a match. Never tell an athlete to NOT do something, ie. “Don't miss your serve!” When this athlete goes back to the serving line, the only thing they are focusing on is your last words, Missing their Serve, and 9 chances out of 10 they will miss! Instead encourage them, and relieve there mind by talking about something else. This distraction often helps in pressure situations.



- 6) When completing Attacking Drills in practice, after an athlete attacks the ball, have them walk around the court to go retrieve it, or have them complete another activity once the attack is made, ie. come off the net and touch the attack line. Too often during attack I see athletes landing over the center line and then ducking under the net to go retrieve the ball. This is again only reinforcing a bad habit. During a match, if an athlete goes over the center line, or hits the net, this is a violation and results in a point for the other team. If we stop teaching this we will likely help change that behavior or habit.
- 7) When teaching athletes to Block, Don't Use Shadow Blocking. This will teach the incorrect timing for a block. If we teach athletes to jump up and touch a partners hands, we teach them to jump at the same time, and this is Wrong! During an attack a blocker will need to jump slightly after the attacker leaves the floor.
  - a. It is better to have an athlete complete a solo using the correct technique, and without a partner.
  - b. When completing Blocking drills, don't use an underhand throw to put the ball in blockers hands. In a competitive match, do attackers underhand pass the ball into blockers hands? If we have athletes use a baseball throw or fast two hand push (overhand pass) to get the ball into blockers hand, this more accurately reflects a game scenario, and helps teach proper blocking timing.
  - c. The Block is one of the toughest skills to teach, because Timing is everything. If we as coaches teach improper timing from the beginning, we are fighting a losing battle at the net.
- 8) At times coaches have to be involved in drills, by putting in Down Balls, Free Balls, and Serving! There are other times when coaches don't need to be involved and you can have athletes do these things. This gives you more time to teach and it gives some of your athletes extra contacts. This is a good thing!
- 9) At any level of competition, Successful Volleyball teams will be able to Move! When coaching athletes at any level, teach them to move first. If an athlete can move they will eventually be able to play a competitive game of volleyball.