

CREATING A CULTURE FOR SUCCESS IN YOUR PROGRAM

BUILDING A TEAM – DEVELOPING A PROGRAM

STEPS TO DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM

► PHILOSOPHY

What do you believe in? What type of coach are you? What type of team do you have? How do you define success? If you had one word or phrase that you would want used to describe your team, what is it?

No one can answer any of these questions for you. You must first know who **YOU** are before you can build your program.

Determine what type of team you can be, within the game.

- a. Ball control
- b. Offensively terminating – able to side-out easily
- c. Defensive

STRENGTHS OF PLAYERS

- ▶ We are all at the mercy of the skill set and abilities of our players. Each & every year this will change, and we will have to adapt and evolve. Being able to identify and maximize your players abilities will define success for that year.
- ▶ Who are you with your personnel?
 - a. Physical team
 - b. Smaller - fast team
 - c. Smart team
- ▶ *Who you are and what type of team you can be* MUST work together to maximize your opportunity for success!

SYSTEM

- ▶ What are the standards of excellence that must be maintained to be a member of the program?
- ▶ What are the pillars of the program? LSU – Loyalty, Trust, Family, Respect
- ▶ What mindset is acceptable? Growth mindset... LSU – Earn This!
- ▶ Mission Statement? Do you have one?
- ▶ Mentality and investment on and off the court, are almost as important as on-court preparation. Are your players there to make a difference or just be a part of something?
- ▶ What value does each player bring to the team/program?
- ▶ What does your team look like?
 - a. Numbers of players on the roster – by position? By class?
 - b. Number of good athletes who can actually impact play
 - c. Offensively effective?
 - d. Defensively effective?

THE PROCESS

- ▶ **Consistency** is important, especially to these young athletes.
- ▶ **Simplicity** is an important concept. Everyone wants to “change it up” but those who stick to what they truly believe in and value, are typically the ones who enjoy long-term success. Russ Rose, the legendary Penn State Coach, only did 3 team drills in his gym. They were all designed to force the team to meet their performance standards for success. Ex: Side-out at 60% or higher, Point score at 40% or higher.
- ▶ **Ownership** is also a super important concept with these athletes. It seems that they need to feel they are in charge of their situation. Partnering with them to reach their goals, while at the same time clearly defining their roles within the program, will go a long way to keeping everyone focused and driven.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- ▶ Rotational stats: where are you scoring points and where are you losing points?
- ▶ Point scoring > 40%
- ▶ Side Out scoring > 60%
- ▶ Passing efficiency: 2.2 or above
- ▶ Serving efficiency: Ace to error ratio – 1:1.5
- ▶ Serving efficiency: 90 % in the court
- ▶ Offensive efficiency: >.220
- ▶ Side-out offensive efficiency:
- ▶ Transition offense:

CONSIDERATION FOR SKILL STRATEGIES

- ▶ As you build your program, you should set various standards of performance for the younger players up to your older players. There should be a sense of pride felt from the players that they have earned the right to be on the team. Their ability to perform at the correct level has created an opportunity for them.

SERVING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

- ▶ **Middle school and Freshman Team**

- Teach them to serve overhand.

- Emphasize technique and correct throwing motion

- ▶ **Junior Varsity**

- Again, emphasize serving overhand

- Teach them to control their serve, by having them serve the zones of the court.

- ▶ **Varsity**

- Serve the zones of the court with pace and accuracy

- Pace should be 30 – 35 + for deep serves

SERVING STRATEGIES & CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

- ▶ As a general rule, you should stay out of the middle 10 feet of the court
 - Drop it short - in front of or just on the attack line
 - Drive it deep - into the last 7 feet of the court
- ▶ Linear serving – serve line to line, regardless of the passer.
 - This allows your players to master serving in a straight line with pace
- ▶ Serve the least effective passer – do you have stats to verify that?
- ▶ Serve to keep opponents off balance – drive the ball deep and then drop it short
- ▶ Serve the opponent's middle blocker short in order to disrupt her attack route.
- ▶ Serve the opponent's front row attacker in order to disrupt her timing the flow.

RECEPTION – PASSING: Standards of Excellence

► Middle School and Freshman Team

Ability to pass with enough accuracy for the setter to set the ball *with her hands*

Target zone should be high into the middle of the court – an area 5 feet off the net and 5 feet behind the attack line in the middle of the court. Tape the zone on your floor for practice.

► Junior Varsity

Ability to pass with accuracy and tempo; Control the height and direction of the pass.

Make the target zone smaller and once again, tape that area on the floor for practice.

► Varsity

Ability to pass with accuracy, tempo and precision. An understanding of how to lead your setter into a play and create offense from the first contact.

Consistency of the pass should be over 60% perfect pass.

PASSING STRATEGIES & CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

- ▶ Pass to the net
 - Allows for an easier connection to middle attackers
 - Allows for the setter to get to the target, and be more directionally able to pursue a ball
 - Requires more precise ball control
- ▶ Pass 5 feet off the net
 - Requires less precision in ball control
 - Allows the angles of the game to change.
 - Creates different connections and shot selection for the setter-hitter combination.
 - Requires your setter to be more precise and to have a wider field of vision

SETTING: Standards of Excellence for your program

► **Middle School and Freshman Team**

Setter must have the ability to get to the ball and set a legal ball *with their hands*. Accuracy is less important at the start. Gaining confidence that they can get to the ball, and use their hands, is the first step.

Ability to set both forward and backwards off of a passed ball.

Minimize where they set. High ball to the outside, middle and right side.

► **Junior Varsity**

Ability to actually set an attacker and create an offense for them.

Ability to set all options within the offense – front row, first tempo and back row

► **Varsity**

Ability to actually run an offense with purpose

Decision making ability of who to set when and why?

Creating match-ups with called play-sets

SETTING CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ KNOW YOUR SETTER!
- ▶ How do I maximize my setter's abilities?
 - Do I have a 5-1 setter, or do I need to run a 6-2?
 - Is my setter able to run an offense or just set a hitter?
- ▶ If I run a 6-2, how can I train my setters to have similar flow for my attackers
- ▶ Can my setter "think" the game?
- ▶ Do I need to call the offense from the bench? Softball – coaches call every pitch from the dugout

ATTACKING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE FOR YOUR PROGRAM

► **Middle School and Freshman Team**

Teach them to jump and swing at as many balls as possible.

Emphasis is getting their feet to the ball

Errors are acceptable if they are aggressive with intent.

► **Junior Varsity**

Jump and swing into the court – error reduction

Emphasis is good hand on the ball control

Purpose with shot selection

Increased efficiency

► **Varsity**

Assertively jump and swing to score.

Court vision – ability to score

Further increase efficiency

OFFENSIVE STRATEGIES AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

- ▶ How fast can you go? Do you have the personnel (players with fast arms) to run a fast offense?
 - Advantage is that you can “out quick” opposing swing blockers with the pace of the set.
 - Setter must be athletic enough to stand under the pass in order to run it fast.
- ▶ Balanced offense – set distribution is equal to all attackers
- ▶ Isolate or Overload – how do we need to attack our opponents
 - Isolate – send 2 attackers (the middle and a pin) to one side of the court and set the other side
 - Overload – send 2 attackers (the middle and a pin) to one side and set one of those attackers
- ▶ Multiple Options
 - Add as many attackers as you can including a back row attack – especially from right back when in a 5-1 and the setter is on the front row.
 - When in passing drills, have the back row attacker “prep” to attack after each pass rather than just standing there watching the pass. This allows the attacker to establish a flow and allows the setter to learn to “feel” the attacker

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR OFFENSIVE SYSTEM

► How do I determine my offensive system?

How good are your passers? Will you be in system or out of system more? If you do not have solid and consistent passers, your offense needs to be VERY SIMPLE!!

How good is your setter? If your setter can set the middle and “feel” it, then running the middle is the most efficient way to score in our game.

How good is your right side? Setting the right side is the most underused, but most efficient way to score in our game.

How complicated do I need to be? Do I really need to have hitters move zones?

DEFENSIVE STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE FOR YOUR PROGRAM

▶ **Middle School and Freshman**

Work on proper positioning

Work on vision and what to look for

See the play even if they cannot make the play

▶ **Junior Varsity**

Proper positioning and posture emphasis

Be under the play

Give a target of up into the middle of the court

▶ **Varsity**

Proper positioning, posture and accuracy

Learn to create offense from defense – transition

BLOCKING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE FOR YOUR PROGRAM

► **Middle School and Freshman**

- Lining up on attackers – how to actually get in front of the attacker
- Basic footwork
- Teach Eye sequence – what to watch and when?

► **Junior Varsity**

- Lining up on hitters
- Footwork and flow with all 3 blockers together
- Penetrating the net – help them understand it's not how high they are it is how far they penetrate
- Introduce taking line or cross court
- Begin reading the setter – patience to not guess

► **Varsity**

- Team blocking and flow
- Execution of taking line or cross court
- Hand positioning
- Reading the setter

DEFENSIVE STRATEGIES & CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

► Know your personnel

What are your blockers able to accomplish?

The block is the first line of defense so you should start with them.

How effective can they be and what is my blocking philosophy?

Teach your outside blockers how to get in front of their hitter. Too many coaches yell at their middles to close the block when it's really the outside blocker's fault that the middle did not close.

Are my players mobile and solid defenders?

Players can typically only defend their height for hard driven balls

Can my setter dig a ball? If not, that will determine your blocking philosophy and your system

Do I have a libero who can defend or just pass?

Do I have solid defensive specialists?

► Understand your system and make sure your players do as well

► Define responsibilities – there are balls that are just going to score. Help your team understand that they need to make an effort after every ball. Relentless pursuit attitude.

THOUGHTS TO DETERMINE WHO PLAYS WHERE

► Priorities in determining your libero/primary passer

Libero is a pass first position. Defensive specialist are the best defenders.

Must be able to track a ball.

Softball shortstops often make the best liberos.

Must have a solid platform.

Must be assertive, but not out of control. Help them understand their limits by defining their responsibilities in your serve receive patterns.

Please do not just take your smallest player and make her the libero.

If you can stat practices this is will give you great competition and analysis for that position. Your best passer should be your libero.

THOUGHTS TO DETERMINE WHO PLAYS WHERE CONTINUED

► Priorities in determining your setter

Ability to run down a ball.

Ability to set a legal ball.

Ability to set a fairly consistent ball to both pins

Ability to “think” the game and make decisions

If you are going to run a 6-2, it is best if you find 2 setters with similar styles and tempos.

Ability to set middle - most good setters just ‘have’ this. It is difficult to teach

Good vision to make great decisions in play

Leader on the court.

Ability to follow directions.

High volleyball IQ

THOUGHTS TO DETERMINE WHO PLAYS WHERE CONTINUED

► Priorities in determining your outside hitters

You need at least one who can pass, defend and hit – O2

Consistency is the first priority. They must keep the ball in play more than they make errors.

Ability to score – seeing the court and having a feel for how to score are huge positives. O1

Ability to keep an out of system ball in play

Ability to terminate when you need the big swing.

Blocking on the left side is just not a priority

THOUGHTS TO DETERMINE WHO PLAYS WHERE CONTINUED

► Priorities in determining your middles

Long or agile. A smaller faster middle is just as effective and sometimes more effective than a long slow middle.

Solid lateral speed.

This is not necessarily the best position to put your best athlete

Ability to stay with the flow of the game and set the rhythm of your offense and defensive systems.

Have a pretty decent Volleyball IQ

Ability to put their hands over the top of the net and penetrate

HOW DO YOU WIN?

- ▶ The number one factor for winning and losing on every level, is the number of errors teams make. Many teams “error themselves out” and never have a chance. This is the most frustrating thing about our sport, but honestly this holds true in every sport that is played. The errors in our sport are just more significant because they actually give the other team a point. The team that makes the fewest errors will win 90% of the matches any of us will coach in.
- ▶ There are a few exceptions, but those exceptions are in matches on a much higher level than what you or I coach on. Internationally, if a team makes more than 2 unforced errors in a 25-point set, that team loses 80% of the time. All of us would celebrate if our teams only made 2 unforced errors in a set.

HOW DO YOU WIN?

► Keys to reducing errors

Serve in

Give your players targets or a serving game plan.

Serve to a specific spot on the floor – Aim small, miss small

Serve to a specific player to affect their play

Serve according to the game situation ; Tough to add pressure, In at key times

Passing is imperative

If your team cannot pass, do not run a complicated offense: keep it simple

If your team cannot pass, practice out of system offense more than in-system offense.

Identify your primary passers and get them reps EVERY DAY – even if it is before or after practice.

HOW DO YOU WIN?

- ▶ Setters are the key to your sanity and success!

Setters need out of system reps more than in system reps both in practice and in warm-up for matches, especially in an opponent's gym.

Communication with your setter and being on the same page with her/them will lead to better decisions and better opportunities for your team.

Establish a game plan that everyone understands. Who are your first, second and third choices in each rotation. This will allow her to put your best hitters in the best situation and therefor reduce errors.

HOW DO YOU WIN?

- ▶ Attackers need to be process driven
- ▶ Attackers need a list of priorities:

Keep the ball in play

Score using the finesse game and shot selection; scoring to the side-lines and within the last 3 feet of the endline are always good shots and should be practiced daily.

Hit the ball hard –this should be the last option not the first and only option. There is definitely a time that this is necessary, but being smart and creative far outweigh just hitting the ball hard.

HOW DO YOU WIN?

- ▶ Defensive system needs to be balanced to cover all areas of the court. You must be willing and insightful enough to adjust to what an opponent is doing to you. Not making adjustments is an error, and allowing the opponent to score repeatedly on the same thing is an error - just like serving out of bounds.
- ▶ Be willing to adjust what rotation you start in and where you start throughout matches. You need to practice this in practice. Starting in rotation 1 with your best outside hitter in right front just does not make a lot of sense unless you are trying to gain a match-up against your opponent.

In the 5th set, be willing to either start your best server serving or your best attacker in left front, if the matchup with the opponent is not the key to the match.

Know who your go to player is so you can make that adjustment.
- ▶ Match-ups: Be willing to change the match-up and get your best blocker on their best attacker or simply to create a better match-up

KNOW THE NUMBERS

- ▶ Side-out %: To succeed, a team needs to side-out at over 60%. Practice this in practice and set that standard for your team. To calculate it, take the number of serves that you receive and divide it by the number of points that you win while receiving. You can get this straight off the score sheet. Understanding your rotations and which are more or perhaps less efficient will lead to higher efficiency. If you are able to identify your problem rotations, you will be able to adjust what you do in those rotations or you may even have to change your line-up to help with the deficiency.

KNOW THE NUMBERS

- ▶ Point Scoring %: This is the same as side-out % but you are actually serving and not receiving. If you score points over 40% of the time you will win more matches than you lose. Again, you can get this information right off of the score sheet. This will also help you determine your most efficient and least efficient servers and rotations. Additionally, you will be able to identify that you have the right servers serving in relation to the group you have on the front row. This is super valuable in determining adjustments in your line-up throughout the season.

QUESTIONS & ADDITIONAL THOUGHT

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Feel free to contact me at any time. I am happy to help in any way.

GOOD LUCK!!!

IMPACT OF COACHES

“I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the field/gym. 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 an athlete's life miserable or joyous. I can be the tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. 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 an athlete humanized or dehumanized.”

An adaptation of Haim Ginnett