

COACHING Volleyball

Summer Issue

A Publication of the American Volleyball Coaches Association

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BEYOND BIAS

Gender and
the future of
volleyball

p. 10



Also in this issue: Mastering a Mental Approach • Thirty Under 30 • DI-II Men's VB

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Each year, we scour the coaching ranks to find the next group of up-and-coming individuals all around the nation. We're excited and proud to recognize the 2018 Thirty Under 30 class. Get to know these outstanding young leaders – they're on the path to future success.

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In an announcement worthy of celebration, St. Francis Brooklyn has recently decided to add Men's Volleyball as a varsity sport. According to MotorMVB, the men's game is experiencing a massive surge in interest and participation. This announcement is hopefully the first of many as the sport continues to flourish.



PHOTO BY STEVE WILSON, UTAH ATHLETICS

On the Cover

All around the country, women are experiencing great success in their coaching careers. Thanks to some new research from the Women's Sports Foundation, we are excited to present an analysis of gender and coaching, and hopefully shed some light on the concept of gender bias.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

From the Desk of ...

Mark Rosen, Head Coach – University of Michigan

SUMMER IS THE SEASON for international travel! I hope you were one of the many coaches that took advantage of the opportunity to go on an international volleyball trip this year. Whether you coach a high school team, a club program or a college team at any level, these trips seem to be growing in popularity. What an awesome opportunity to expose your student-athletes to some great international volleyball as well as experience the diverse culture of countries outside the U.S.

At the collegiate level, these trips are allowable every four years, whereas some junior clubs are making it an annual part of their program. I spoke with one of the companies that organizes international trips for volleyball programs, and their organization is taking over 50 programs on tour this summer alone. Additionally, they are bringing foreign teams to the States for similar experiences. This has unquestionably become a popular activity that will continue to grow moving forward. If you assume the numbers are similar from year to year, that would be 200 programs going overseas over the four-year cycle that the NCAA allows; that is a lot of programs.

One of the things that I believe is making these trips even more attractive to collegiate programs is the recent rule change allowing incoming freshman to make the trip with their team. This rule changed prior to last year and seems to be a major “game changer” when it comes to the international tour experience. With the allowable 10 days of team practice prior to the trip, as well as the international trip itself, this allows for almost a month head start for an incoming class. Prior to this rule change, our staff believed the best year to take a trip was a year with a strong group of returning student-athletes. Our philosophy has shifted and we now believe the best time for international travel is when you have a large class of first-year student-athletes joining your program.

Though it is difficult to quantify the value of these trips, the obvious advantages include the addition of more training and competition time for your team as well as the bonding experience that can benefit your team moving into the season. The nature of these trips will push your student-athletes outside of their comfort zones, which tends to enhance and accelerate the bonding experience. Food options, language differences and style of volleyball play will all be different than your team is used to, which increases the level of uncomfortableness. As a coach, you can make the decision of how far you want to push your team outside that comfort zone by the type of trip you choose. I have talked to coaches that have taken their teams to China, lived in dorm-style housing and played top-level professional and national teams. This environment created extreme challenges for their teams and got them way beyond their comfort zone – this might be the perfect experience for your team. Other programs might choose to go on a trip to Canada to

minimize the cultural extremes and the travel expenses, but still gain the benefits of an international trip. Many coaches opt for something between these extremes and head to South America or Europe, where the cultures are not quite so different from the U.S.

As a coach, you can make the decision on what type of international trip your team would benefit from the most. There is no one experience that is perfect for every program, but I believe every team would benefit from some form of an international trip. It will likely take a great deal of planning, fundraising and creative thinking, but in the end I believe you will create an experience your program will greatly benefit from and your student-athletes will be talking about for years to come.

Safe Travels. Ciao!



Baylor University
Congratulates
Samantha Erger

One of AVCA's Thirty Under 30!

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



Our Game

Kathy DeBoer



"WHO IS THAT TEAM IN PURPLE?" This was the question asked by many at the Best of the West Boys' Volleyball Invitational, a tourney for the top California high school teams now in its 12th year.

The team from Monta Vista turned heads for a number of reasons: one, they were first-timers at the Best of the West, having only recently been judged worthy of an invite to the elite field; two, they were from Northern California, not part of the beach-trained, sun-tanned regulars in the event; three, they were almost all Asian kids – thin, lithe, undersized; but, mostly, they were WINNING – finishing second in the loaded 32-team field.

Paul Chiu, their head coach now in his ninth season, was also an unfamiliar face among the volley-elites. A University of Michigan Business School graduate who rose to managing partner at Accenture before retiring in 2009, he had more experience coaching basketball than volleyball when he took over the Monta Vista team in 2010. His son was a freshman and, even though Chiu had acquired the nickname "red-eye" (for his 10 years of weekly overnight flights to be home with his family), the chance to coach him was too important to let a lack of experience with volleyball get in the way.

"I read every volleyball book I could find," said Chiu in an interview, "and bought lots of video tapes ... I'd also take my teams to camps and study everything the court coaches did with them – listening to feedback and writing down drills ..."

Chiu admits learning to coach at Monta Vista was a process: "I started 'old-school,' demanding that the boys attend every practice and match. I realized pretty quickly that, at this school, I wouldn't have enough boys to field a team if I stuck to these rigid rules. Monta Vista is one of the top public high schools in the country and sits right in the middle of Cupertino, CA, the home of Apple. Eighty percent of the students are Asian, many with parents who are first-generation

immigrants from China, Japan, Korea and India. Education comes first; sports participation is not valued for its own sake, but only as it contributes to their child's success in school and in getting into elite colleges."

First Chiu had to get the parents on board: "I talked to them about the life lessons their sons would learn from volleyball – effort, commitment, teamwork, leadership. And I pointed out that applicants at elite colleges need at least two extracurricular activities, so they look balanced to the admissions board."

Next Chiu applied his business problem-solving skills to analyzing where a highly-disciplined, yet undersized team, could gain an edge in volleyball. "Most high school boys' teams do not receive serve very well," said Chiu. "We focus most of our practice time on serving, ball control and defense ... By serving tactically and aggressively we can get a predictable attack from the other team ... Even big hitters get frustrated when they are always against a double block with good diggers on all the angles."

Third, Chiu began the work of building a winning sports culture in a school where athletic success was an anomaly. "I want them to have fun and I believe in positive coaching, but this is not a democracy. I don't allow goofing around or lack of effort. The gym is my classroom, and I want the same respect as they give their other teachers."

His first two teams were mediocre, with Monta Vista finishing in the middle of the conference. He started a junior varsity team and middle school feeder programs. By 2012, Monta Vista was finishing in the top three, and from 2015 to 2017, they won the league, dropping only two conference matches in three seasons.

Chiu's son, Derrick, graduated in 2013 and became the first Monta Vista volleyball player to compete in college, finishing his New York University career as the starting setter for the 2017 team which qualified for the NCAA Championship. While the first to play in

college, Derrick now has company: Ryan Manley plays for UC Santa Cruz, Alex Li followed Derrick to NYU, and Jason Shen will be the first DI Monta Vista product when he enrolls at Harvard in the fall of 2018.

Is the Monta Vista miracle repeatable in other high schools, in other parts of the country, in other demographic settings? Can it happen without a "Paul Chiu"? Certainly not many coaches can work for almost nothing, like Chiu does, and those with full-time jobs have more time constraints. A lack of qualified youth coaches, while not a problem unique to volleyball, is definitely an impediment to growth.

Despite these obstacles, Chiu says, schools in California, his area included, are adding boys' teams at a significant rate; since he started in 2010, the number of boys playing volleyball in California has increased from 15,638 to 19,676, and 173 schools have *added* teams.

The advent of mega-schools, meaning a lot of middle school boys are looking for new sports options when they get to high school, helps boys' volleyball; a spring season where most training and competition takes place after basketball is over, helps boys volleyball; the retreat from contact sports associated with head trauma, helps boys volleyball; and, the growing demand for male college players created by the addition of new varsity teams, helps boys volleyball.

Are there more Paul Chius out there – a parent whose love for his kids prompted him to figure out how to coach volleyball? a teacher whose love of learning prompted him to sell volleyball to skeptical parents? a coach whose love of volleyball prompted him to continue coaching after his kids were gone?

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Leveling Up: Using Your Eyes

By Jim Miret, Front Range Volleyball

“KEEP YOUR EYES on the same level.” “Move at that same level.” “Maintain your posture when you move.” These are instructions that I have heard given to players by coaches my entire career. Let’s explore the premise and rationale behind those instructions.

For many coaches the logic behind these instructions goes something like this: When passing and digging, move in such a way as to keep your eyes on the same level. If your eyes change their level (head moves up and down) it will affect your vision and you won’t be able to see the ball well, and therefore won’t handle the ball as well.

The argument for static posture is similar and is as follows: Get in posture and don’t change posture as you move. This is the most efficient way to move to the ball because you can maintain body control with minimal movement. Stay in posture, move better and handle the ball better.

I am sure there are variations to these arguments, but you get my point. Some coaches believe that by adopting a solid movement posture and not breaking from that posture, this will help their players move more efficiently. Others argue that instructing their athletes to keep their eyes level will allow them to see the ball better, and therefore, handle the ball better.

Sounds logical, but does it truly make sense? Is there science that backs these beliefs? Let’s explore:

In women’s international volleyball, a top-level serve will reach the passer as fast as .7 of a second. This is similar to the time it takes a 120-mph professional women’s tennis serve to reach a receiver who is near the end line. In international volleyball, a top-level women’s serve will come at the passers somewhere between 55 and 60 mph, and the same is true for attack hits. In top female tennis, a serve travels 120+ mph. I use tennis as an example for several reasons. The time from server to passer is similar to volleyball, the ball off the server’s hand or racket creates

different movements that the receiver needs to respond to, and tennis, like volleyball, is a rebound sport. In both tennis and volleyball, the speed of the serve requires that players begin to track the ball instantly upon contact, and move quickly and efficiently to respond to the serve. How do the best athletes in tennis go about doing this? Let’s roll the tape!

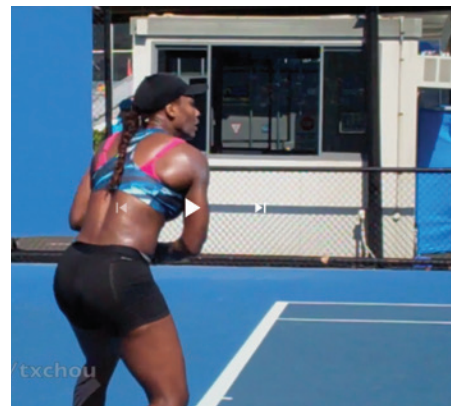
Let’s look at Serena Williams in serve receive:



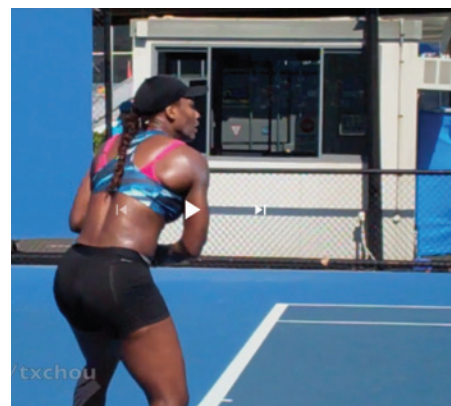
Observe Serena’s ready position, hips loaded, and torso upright with knees slightly flexed. Notice her head level with the window frame in the background.



At the top of her split-step, notice how much higher her head is in this photo compared to the previous image. Hips are still in loaded position.

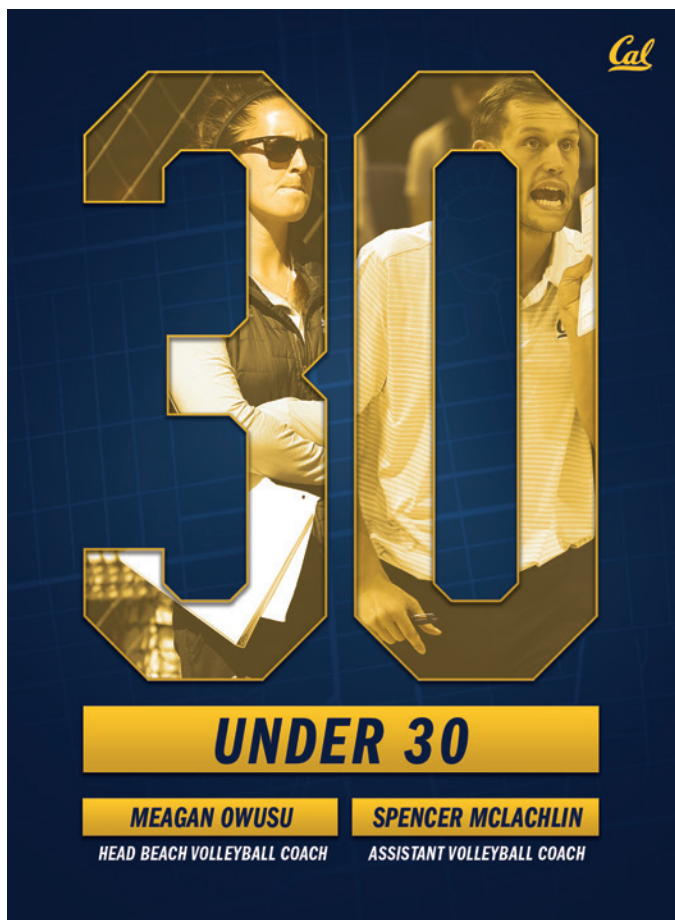


Serena is post split-step and is dropping to move to the ball. Again, notice how much her body and head have moved from the first image.



Preparation move into her backhand shot. As you review the last four images, take note of the motion of her body and head from ready posture thru split-step.

Tennis requires dynamic, quick and explosive movements, particularly in response to a serve. Serena is one of the top female tennis players to ever play the sport because she is able to keep her hips loaded through her body posture changes. Because of those posture changes, her head level moves up and down as she prepares and moves towards the ball, allowing her to accurately track the ball to her racket.



Cal

30

UNDER 30

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Let's connect this theory back to volleyball! Now let's examine the passing form of Sergio Santos from Brazil (one of the world's best passers – #10 in the white jersey):



Hips loaded, ready posture.



Beginning of split-step, notice how much his head has moved from the previous image.



Completion of split-step. Notice postural change from the first image.



Moving to play the ball.



Preparing to pass the ball.



Ball in contact with passing platform.

The essential question we can ask ourselves from observing these pictures is why do top players in these sports move like this? In our last article we examined the split-step, and learned that this type of movement engages the stretch-shortening cycle of muscles, which helps athletes move quicker than if they don't take some kind of pre-move before we move to play the ball. It's clear from the above photos that the eye level of the tennis and volleyball players is changing before, during and after they play the ball. With such drastic postural changes happening when the ball is being contacted and in flight to the receiver how can these players see the ball well?

The answer is in our vestibulo-ocular reflex. (Don't you just love science?)

According to Wikipedia, the vestibulo-ocular reflex (VOR) is a reflex where activation of the vestibular system causes eye movement. This reflex functions to stabilize images on the retinas during head movement by producing eye movements in the direction opposite to head movement, thus preserving the image on the center of the visual field(s). For example, when the head moves to the right, the eyes move to

the left, and vice versa. Because slight head movements are present all the time, the VOR is very important for stabilizing vision in sports and in life.

Examples of this reflex in sports include a wide receiver in a full sprint leaping to dive and catch a pass, a tennis player split-stepping and running to execute a ground stroke, or a baseball player moving from split-step to running to field a ground ball. The same is true for a volleyball attacker taking a spike approach. As athletes move through their approach, their head is dramatically changing levels, yet they are able to see the ball clearly as they approach, leave the ground and intercept the ball near the peak of their jump, and swing to propel the ball into different areas of the opponent's court. That's a lot of variation in head and eyes levels, but the ball stays clear and in focus thanks to the VOR reflex.

Our body has amazing mechanisms already in place to help us move quickly when we need to (stretch-shortening reflex), and to clearly track moving objects when we are moving and our head is changing positions (vestibulo ocular reflex). Therefore, asking our defenders and attackers to establish a posture and not break out of it so that they can see the ball clearly, or to move the most efficiently doesn't hold up under scrutiny. As coaches, I believe it is our responsibility to explore and learn the mechanisms already at work in our body, so that we can focus our attention on the elements that truly need to be coached. Because I understand that the human body will keep any object my athletes are looking at in focus as they move, I can direct my attention and energy on helping them learn what to read, what skill(s) to employ as they attempt to play the ball, and what tactical options to master as they execute the skills of volleyball. We should also work to help them learn how to manage their minds as they train, compete and work toward becoming more consistent performers. Knowledge truly is power, so it is my challenge to you all to seek out information that will enable you to become a more knowledgeable and efficient coach.



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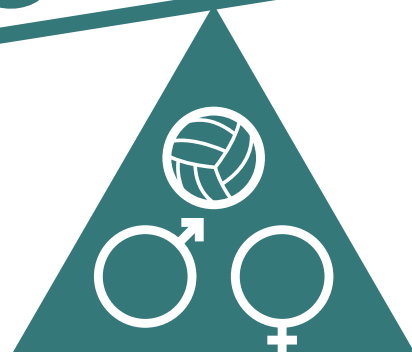


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BEYOND BIAS

Factors Contributing to the Gender Balance in Coaching of College Women's Volleyball

By Kathy DeBoer – Executive Director, AVCA, and
Dr. Philip Veliz, Ph.D. – Research Assistant Professor, University of Michigan



In December of 2017, Florida coach Mary Wise became as talked-about in volleyball circles as Hillary Clinton was in 2016: She coached her team to the NCAA DI Women's National Championship match against Nebraska, marking only the second time in NCAA DI history that a female-coached team had challenged for the championship; the other, in 2003, when her Florida team took on USC.

Her team lost the final, causing hand-wringing and consternation in the volleyball coaching community about whether

women can achieve at the highest levels, and questions from media about whether we were providing appropriate role models for young girls who wanted to pursue volleyball coaching as a career.

Never mind the coaching job done by Wise, or other DI coaches that lead their teams to the championship, like Cathy Olson-George, Beth Launiere, Christy Johnson-Lynch, Heather Olmstead, Jen Petrie, Penny Lucas-White, Melissa Stokes, Linda Hampton-Keith and Lauren Sauer-Steinbrecher, to name a few. Never mind

that the most recent Olympic gold medal in women's volleyball went to a Chinese woman, Lang Ping, who was the first person, male or female, to win gold as both a player and a coach. Never mind that 23 titles in DI women's basketball have been won by female coaches, and 21 championships in DI softball. Female volleyball coaches, who spend each day teaching their teams that success is a process and individual value transcends the scoreboard, descended into a collective funk about the ramification of not "winning the big one."

Lang Ping



Until recently we did not have the data to analyze college volleyball coaching in relation to other women's sports. Anecdotal evidence, while formative of perceptions, is skewed by individual experience. And, lack of information plays into our human propensity to blame our failure on circumstances beyond our control. Hence, the narrative among female coaches, especially with friends, that they did not get a job or promotion due to gender bias; and, the common excuse in the bromance sphere that it's reverse discrimination. We comfort each other with "it's-not-your-fault" comments intended to assuage the hurt of not getting picked.

In 2015 the Women's Sports Foundation conducted research that may rescue us from this counterintuitive blame game. Their comprehensive survey of college women's coaches (see sidebar for methods and data set) identified both demographic information and coaching perceptions about gender bias in the workplace.

Methods and Data Set

The nationwide survey of collegiate coaches of women sports was based on a population of current and former intercollegiate coaches. Some were from data files kept by the Women's Sport Foundation; some were provided by the NCAA Gender Equity Task Force; the majority of the data came from respondents contacted by various coaches' associations (AVCA, NFCA, WBCA, among others) who sent the survey link to their members. Roughly 7,730 coaches were invited to participate in the study. Among the coaches who responded, 2,219 were current coaches, while 326 were former coaches. Accordingly, the response rate for this survey was a robust 33%.

The online survey, administered to coaches between August 25th through September 25th of 2015, included 31 questions on socio-demographic characteristics (e.g., sport, gender, race/ethnicity, income and sexual orientation) and a battery of items designed to measure workplace experiences and perceptions. All respondents were notified via email

and were informed about the purpose of the study and conditions regarding confidentiality and anonymity. The survey took respondents approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Of the respondents, 565 (25%) were women's volleyball coaches, comprising 21% of the female coaches (312 of 1463), and 34% of the male coaches (253 of 752). The Women's Sports Foundation connected the AVCA with their research associate, Dr. Philip Veliz, an Assistant Research Professor at the University of Michigan, for a comparative analysis of volleyball with other sports.

For the current report the responses of 2,219 current intercollegiate coaches of women's sports were used in the statistical analyses. All bivariate analyses used chi-square tests of independence, and significant differences at the $p < .05$, $.01$ and $.001$ are all highlighted in bold in the following tables. It should be noted that analyses are stratified by both coaching type (i.e., volleyball coach versus coaches' other sports) and gender (i.e., female versus male).

S A F E S P O R T

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What made this research unique was the inclusion of male coaches of women's teams in the data, allowing for comparisons between the experiences of the genders in similar coaching situations. Volleyball coaches participated in robust numbers (25% of the total), and the WSF's survey allowed AVCA to examine the volleyball data in contrast to other women's sports. The research results, analyzed by the WSF's research associate, Dr. Philip Veliz, provide insights into unique factors, beyond bias, influencing the women's volleyball coaching marketplace.

Results

Demographics

Table 1 provides several socio-demographics that include current coaching position, income, NCAA athletic division, race and sexual orientation. 85% of the volleyball coaches in the sample were head coaches, earning income between \$40,001 and \$70,000; 87% were white and 88% identified as heterosexual. 33% coached in DI, 23% in DII, 31% in DIII and 14% in Two-Year Colleges or the NAIA.

No statistically significant differences were found between volleyball coaches and coaches of other sports, or between female and male volleyball coaches, with respect



to current coaching position, income, athletic division or race. However, fewer volleyball coaches identified as a sexual minority (8.0%) when compared with coaches of other women's sports (19.1%); this difference was quite pronounced among female coaches with 11.2% of volleyball coaches

identifying as a sexual minority while 26.8% of other female coaches identified as such.

While the WSF survey did not ask about marital status, we know from data gathered by the CDC (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System) that twice as many heterosexual women as sexual minority

Table 1	Stratified by Coaching Type		Stratified by Coaching Type and Gender			
	Volleyball Coach	Coaches Other Sport	Female Volleyball Coach	Male Volleyball Coach	Female (coaches other sport)	Male (coaches other sport)
Current Position						
Head Coach	86.4%	88.7%	84.6%	88.5%	86.4%	91.0%
Assistant Coach	12.6%	10.8%	13.8%	11.1%	11.9%	8.0%
Other' Coach	1.1%	1.5%	1.6%	0.4%	1.7%	1.0%
Income						
\$40,000 or less	32.7%	22.7%	35.9%	28.9%	27.1%	29.3%
\$40,001 to \$70,000	43.7%	46.4%	43.3%	44.3%	46.1%	46.9%
\$70,001 to \$100,000	13.8%	15.6%	13.5%	14.2%	15.8%	15.0%
\$100,001 and higher	9.7%	10.3%	7.4%	12.6%	10.9%	8.8%
Athletic Sectors						
Division I	32.3%	33.8%	30.8%	34.0%	34.1%	33.3%
Division II	22.7%	18.2%	21.2%	24.5%	17.1%	20.8%
Division III	31.2%	42.2%	34.0%	27.7%	44.2%	37.5%
TYC and NAIA	14.0%	5.8%	14.1%	13.8%	4.6%	8.4%
Race						
White	87.3%	88.4%	88.5%	85.80%	90.1%	85.0%
Non-White	12.7%	11.6%	11.5%	14.2%	9.9%	15.0%
Sexual Orientation						
Heterosexual	88.3%	75.8%	86.5%	90.5%	67.3%	95.8%
Sexual minority	8.0%	19.1%	11.2%	4.0%	26.8%	1.2%
Prefer not to answer	3.7%	5.1%	2.2%	5.5%	5.8%	3.0%

women are married (51.5% to 25.7%). This statistic, along with the higher number of heterosexual volleyball coaches, means there are more women with children currently in the volleyball coaching demographic and at various stages in the professional pipeline.

A higher percentage of women with children explains the lower representation of female volleyball coaches when compared with other broadly-sponsored women's team sports, notably basketball and softball. Per the most recent Acosta/Carpenter report, Women in Intercollegiate Sport, 51.5% of women's volleyball coaches are female, with 45.8% in DI. The numbers for women's basketball are 62.9% female, with 65.2% in DI, and softball at 70.7% female, with 60% in DI.

Parents will attest that children, while enriching their lives, add significant emotional and time commitments; and, most will verify that these obligations fall more heavily on mothers than fathers, especially when the children are young. Mary Wise is the poster child for female success in volleyball, not only due to her two national championship appearances, but also because she achieved these milestones while raising two sons. And, she is but one of numerous examples of successful moms in high-profile volleyball jobs.

Affirming that it can be done, however, does not address the central issue. Twenty years ago, Mary shared this story: Her youngest son was struggling in pre-school and his teacher asked Mary to come see her. "He needs your attention," she said as gently as one mom can say it to another. "I know your job is demanding, and his dad is great, but he needs more of his mother's time."

To ignore children as a factor in women's decision-making about their coaching career dismisses the emotional attachments that make moms, moms. Evening and weekend work, irregular travel and the expectation of 24-7 availability are all part of the coaching life, especially at the highest levels. A demographic that is higher than others in women with children will be lower than others with female representation in the most time-intensive jobs.

Gender-based Workplace Discrimination

Table 2 provides the results for several

questions directed at gender-based workplace discrimination. Notably, female volleyball coaches reported a lower incidence of gender-based bias (36.7%) than female coaches of other sports (43.6%), while male volleyball coaches reported a higher incidence (33.9%) than male coaches of other women's sports (25.6%).

The good news is volleyball coaches and coaches of other sports had similarly low experiences with being denied promotion based on gender (i.e., q2: only 8.4% said

yes). On the flip side, female coaches across the sports spectrum were twice as likely as male coaches to report that their coaching performance is evaluated differently based on their gender (roughly 14% for women and 6% for men).

The major difference between volleyball coaches and other sports, however, is in the reporting by male coaches of reverse discrimination: Male volleyball coaches were significantly more likely (47.1%) than male coaches of other sports (36.5%) to indicate

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Table 2	q1) Have you ever been discriminated against because of your gender in your work as a college coach?		q2) My gender has prevented me from receiving a promotion.			q3) I did not get a coaching job due to my gender.			q4.) My coaching performance is evaluated differently because of my gender.		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
Total	37.8%	62.2%	8.4%	68.8%	22.8%	21.1%	58.2%	20.7%	11.9%	67.4%	20.7%
Volleyball Coach	35.5%	64.5%	9.5%	70.0%	20.5%	27.5%	54.5%	18.0%	11.2%	69.4%	19.4%
Coaches other sport	38.5%	61.5%	8.2%	68.2%	23.6%	18.9%	59.5%	21.7%	12.1%	66.7%	21.2%
Female Volleyball Coach	36.7%	63.3%	9.7%	68.0%	22.3%	12.7%	64.3%	23.0%	14.0%	64.7%	21.3%
Male Volleyball Coach	33.9%	66.1%	9.3%	72.7%	18.1%	47.1%	41.4%	11.5%	7.5%	75.8%	16.7%
Female (coaches other sport)	43.6%	56.4%	7.7%	65.6%	26.7%	11.7%	64.8%	23.5%	14.6%	62.6%	22.8%
Male (coaches other sport)	25.6%	74.4%	9.1%	74.9%	16.0%	36.5%	46.3%	17.2%	5.6%	77.0%	17.4%

not getting a women's coaching job due to their gender (i.e., q3).

To explain this, we must recognize that volleyball is the only broadly-sponsored college sport in which there are almost 10 coaching jobs on the women's side for every one job on the men's side. Per the NCAA Participation Statistics, there are 1,069 women's volleyball teams and 128 men's volleyball teams, so 1,197 total. By comparison, basketball has 1,103 women's teams and 1,089 men's teams, meaning 2,192 universities are looking for basketball coaching staffs; baseball/softball have a

combined 1,950 programs between them.

Citing Acosta and Carpenter again, only 3% of men's teams are coached by women, and less than 1% in DI. The pragmatic effect is men's coaching jobs, which there are many more of in other sports, are open only to males, whereas women's jobs are open to both genders.

Combining these factors means that male volleyball coaches compete for work in a much different marketplace than their male counterparts in other sports. Over 90% of the time, male volleyball coaches are contending with women for jobs, whereas in

other sports, they vie against women only 50% of the time, i.e. only for jobs in the women's sector of the sport.

Another factor that makes the volleyball marketplace unique is that resources like scholarships, salaries, travel and marketing support are also skewed heavily towards women's volleyball, especially in DI and DII. Consequently, males interested in college volleyball coaching, as a career, are compelled to compete in the women's sports marketplace, dramatically increasing the number who experience reverse discrimination.



Melissa Stokes

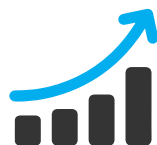
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Table 3	q5) I would apply to coach a men's team if I thought I had a realistic chance of being hired.	q6) I am reluctant to ask for help with a gender bias situation because I fear possible retaliation.	q7) Men coaches at my institution receive more support for professional development than women coaches.	q8) I have considered leaving coaching because of gender discrimination.
	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Total	37.8%	28.3%	16.0%	16.5%
Volleyball Coach	50.6%	25.9%	15.0%	17.5%
Coaches other sport	49.4%	29.1%	16.4%	16.2%
Female Volleyball Coach	44.7%	31.6%	20.3%	21.4%
Male Volleyball Coach	58.4%	18.3%	7.9%	12.4%
Female (coaches other sport)	43.6%	32.8%	19.2%	19.4%
Male (coaches other sport)	64.8%	19.4%	9.1%	7.8%

The impact of better funded women's programs shows up again in the answer to q5 in Table 3: significantly fewer male volleyball coaches, 58.4%, say they would apply for a men's coaching job if they thought they could get it as opposed to 64.8% among male coaches of other women's sports.

Table 3 reports the answers to several additional questions regarding gender-based workplace discrimination. In all sports, female coaches believe that male coaches receive more institutional support to develop their skills (i.e., q5), and females were more likely than males to consider leaving coaching due to gender discrimination. Here again, however, male volleyball coaches differed from their brethren in that they were almost twice as likely (12.4% to 7.8%) to consider leaving coaching because of gender discrimination.

Sexual Orientation-based Workplace Discrimination

Table 4 provides the results for sexual orientation based workplace discrimination. The

research makes clear that significant progress has been made in this area, as over 85% of coaches reported that they could speak openly about homophobia and only 13.3% identified a noticeable level of homophobia among their colleagues. While any discrimination warrants attention, under 5% (q11) have considered leaving coaching due to sexual orientation discrimination.

Interestingly, both female and male volleyball coaches, when compared to their colleagues, appeared to be less convinced that their departments are open to discussions about sexual orientation bias, i.e., q9: 19.2% versus 15.3% for women and 11.4% versus 8.3% for men.

Conclusions

This data, while enlightening, leaves us, in the volleyball community, with some interesting conundrums:

1. Knowing that we have more women with children in our coaching ranks explains some of our gender demographics, but does not provide us

with easy solutions. Coaching will always be weekends, evenings, travel and nonstop recruiting, and moms will always be moms first, distressed about missing bedtime, playtime, after-school time and dinner time. The two activities require our best selves during the same hours.

2. Knowing that the males in volleyball who love coaching are compelled to compete for jobs mostly in the women's marketplace, unlike their brethren in other sports, does not mitigate their feelings of discrimination, even as they succeed in winning 50% of the jobs. A flippant dismissal of their perception of reverse discrimination undermines the credibility of any other conclusions we take from this perception-based study, and makes us look blind to a unique stressor in their lives.

This research revealed that both female and male volleyball coaches feel as if the deck is stacked against them; opinions that, while contradictory, cannot be ignored.

Certainly, the easy response is to continue to claim gender bias and reverse discrimination from our tribal perspectives, but these comfortable conventions only serve to divide us and prevent progress.

Our tasks, while achievable, require more active engagement: How will we structure the volleyball coaching profession to accommodate more primary caregivers? How will we increase well-paying coaching opportunities in men's volleyball so there are more options? How will we teach men with a passion for coaching to value producing what Hugh McCutcheon calls "female warriors," i.e., strong, confident, accountable women? And, how will we surround aspiring female coaches with mentors and a community that gives them the support and encouragement to become the next Mary Wise?

These are our challenges! ☺

If you have further questions about the data referenced in this article, please direct them to Dr. Philip Veliz: ptveliz@umich.edu.

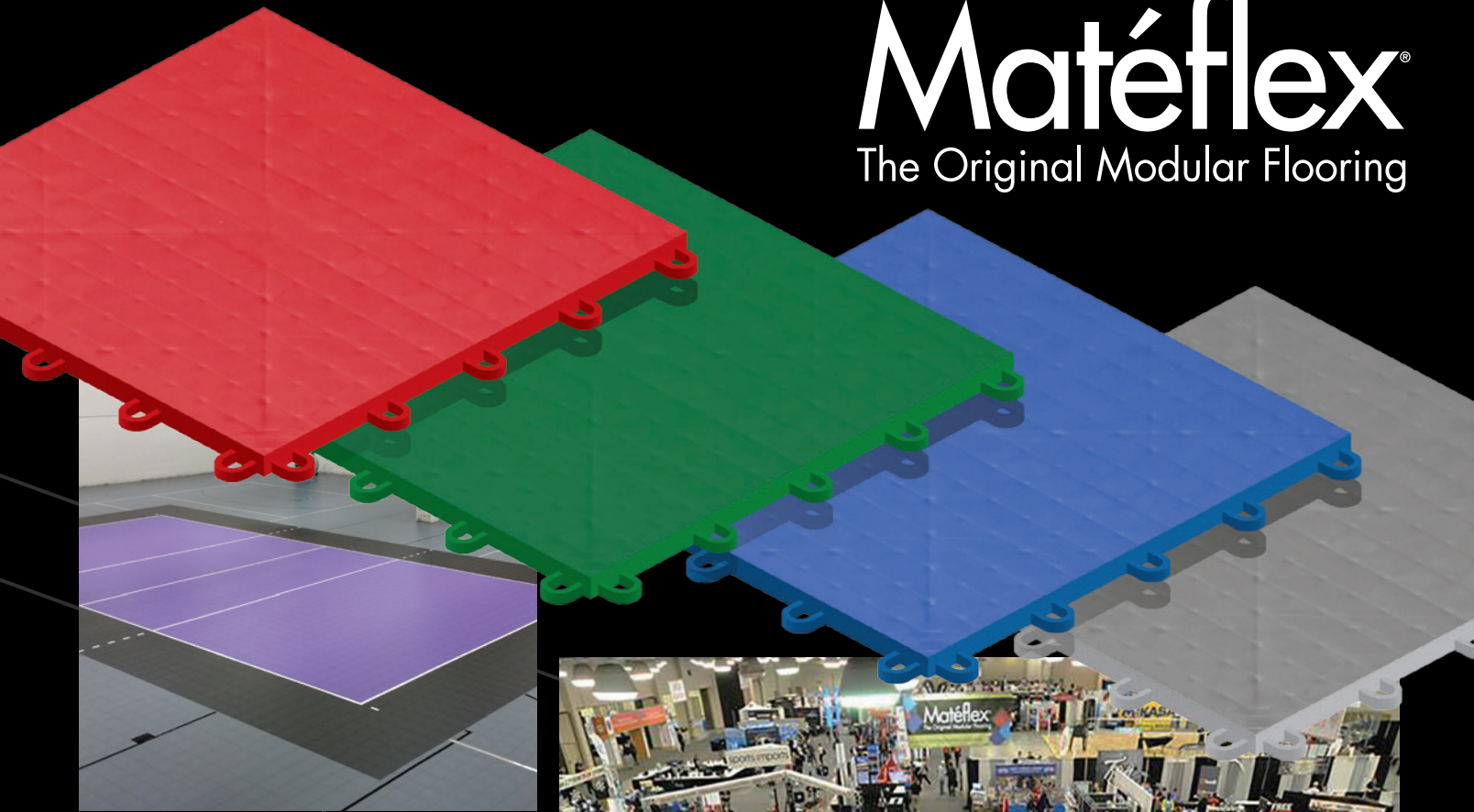
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- WSF Research: Beyond X's & O's: Gender Bias and Coaches of Women's College Sports
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- NCAA
- Acosta/Carpenter

Table 4	q9) My Department of Athletics hampers coaches from speaking up about homophobia.	q10) There is a noticeable level of homophobia among some of my department colleagues.	q11) I have considered leaving coaching because of sexual orientation discrimination.	q12) I feel comfortable going to administrators on my campus outside the athletic department.
	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree
Total	14.0%	13.3%	4.5%	67.9%
Volleyball Coach	15.8%	12.4%	3.2%	71.4%
Coaches other sport	13.4%	13.6%	4.9%	66.7%
Female Volleyball Coach	19.2%	14.7%	4.1%	67.3%
Male Volleyball Coach	11.4%	9.4%	2.0%	76.7%
Female (coaches other sport)	15.3%	15.4%	5.6%	63.1%
Male (coaches other sport)	8.3%	8.9%	3.3%	76.2%

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Advanced Mental Strategies

Methods Employed by Great Athletes During Competition

Dorothy Webb, Head Volleyball Coach,
PERA Professor of the Practice – Wellesley College

In college, my teammates and I had our own sports psychologist. We were the #1 ranked volleyball team in the country for most of my four years, and we won two DI National Championships. Our very own team psychologist was apparently one of the perks of so much success. However, most of my teammates and I didn't think we needed any psychological help, at least not in the areas of competitive drive and optimal performance level. Our record over four years was 133-18. We routinely beat UCLA, Stanford and Nebraska. We played on ESPN and in front of huge crowds. Mostly though, we won. What else did our coach want us to do and what were we supposed to be getting out of sports psychology training? Did he think we weren't winning by enough points? Was he fulfilling some kind of "mental training" mandate by our athletic department? We really didn't know, but we didn't agree that we needed weekly sessions with a team therapist (as we affectionately referred to him).

Our sports psychologist lectured us in beginning visualization, asking us to "taste" and "smell" an imaginary orange with our eyes closed. He passed out questionnaires asking about our "internal critic" and our "optimal arousal state" (which resulted in a lot of giggling from the back of the room). He talked about "blocking out" all outside noise and "external stimuli." I listened patiently to most of this and filled out his questionnaires honestly, for the most part. But on my best days I was bored and on my worst days I was annoyed. Our team continued to win, performing especially well in big matches against USC and Texas, and I was quite certain

that none of our success was due to our sports psychology training. Even on the rare occasion when we lost a match, we knew it wasn't because we had forgotten how to breathe "diaphragmatically," or hadn't been able to visualize winning a particular point, or had failed to reach our "optimal arousal state."

Although my college teammates and I weren't stupid, for the most part, we were extremely one-dimensional in our focus; we just wanted to be pointed in the direction of the court and the ball. Along with our dismissal of traditional sports psychology training, we were impatient with long speeches, any mention of pre-game relaxation, or extended information in time-outs; all we wanted to do was play – and win – and all this extra stuff caused annoying delays. In fact, we were so serious and competitive at the Final Four at the University of Michigan my sophomore year in our semifinal match against UCLA, that our coach, John Dunning, began the tradition of telling us jokes at the end of timeouts. He had learned from our sports psychologist that smiling and laughing have the physiological effects of lowering the heart rate and slowing the breathing, and he apparently decided to give it a try. We teased him later that if only his jokes had actually been funny, the strategy might have worked. But, it turned out, we won a national championship that year.

Ironically, my own intense playing experience, including a professional career after college, left me ill-equipped to coach and teach mental toughness to others. My inability in this area was especially inconvenient as I accepted the head coaching job at Brown

University while in graduate school, and moved on several years later to coach at Wellesley College, a small, elite, all-women's college with a Division III athletic program. Everyone, including my athletic directors, my players, their parents and my incoming recruits, assumed that I could teach and coach all aspects of the game, especially mental toughness. I assumed this was true too. I was wrong.

In my early coaching years, only a few of my more skilled, experienced players were truly excited and confident for the "big" conference matches, post-season play-offs and NCAA tournament games. Many of my athletes were extremely tense – and sometimes miserable – and I even had a few who hyperventilated and/or ran off the court (and out of the gym, I assume) during a match!

I suppose I had believed that my own ability to compete under pressure would, by some sort of magical osmosis, transfer onto my student-athletes on the court. When that didn't happen, I attempted to fall back on my own college sports psychology training and regretted all the time I'd spent in the back of the room playing tabletop paper football games. Classic sports psychology training had taught me that mindfulness, total relaxation, quieting the "critical voice" and "blankness" create the ultimate, quintessential competitive mindset. Some of my athletes really loved my sports psych "curriculum," especially the relaxation and breathing component, and they soaked it up and begged for more. But my best competitors rolled their eyes at me and took naps in the back of the room during "visualization."

For some athletes in some sports, the calm, blank mind really is the ultimate goal. The sports known as "training sports" (swimming, rowing and running, for example) require simple repetitive motor skills and relatively basic competitive strategies. Yet they also require intensive conditioning, training and endurance. A calm, "blank" mind is ideal for this type of competition. Not surprisingly, the coaches and former athletes from the training sports produce a disproportionate amount of material on "mindfulness," "visualization" and "relaxation." Many of us in other sports appropriate this stuff voraciously because a) it sounds like it might actually work to relax our nervous athletes; and b) we have no idea what else to try.

As a college coach, I have an unlimited appreciation for nearly any technique that can possibly help curtail the devastating effects of stress and panic in my athletes. However, as a competitive athlete myself in a complex motor skill sport, I knew that there really is a lot happening in the minds of great competitors beyond a relaxed, "blank," quiet mind. From my many years of coaching – while constantly referring back to my own playing experience – I've discovered that the greatest competitors in complex motor skill sports, such as volleyball, hockey and tennis, share a common set of intricate mental skills and behaviors during competition that are the opposite of a "blank" mindset. Great competitors possess extraordinary vision, perceptual awareness and advanced strategic knowledge of the game that separate them from other athletes. These internalized skills and strategies result in advanced reading and anticipation, or "expert perception." Many of these complex traits can be understood and potentially trained.

The most important of these primary "mental" traits is vision. Carlos Parrea, the Brazilian National Team Soccer Coach, was once asked what separates the phenomenal soccer athletes from

the merely great. He replied with two words: "the eyes." Elite coaches and athletes in complex motor skill sports have known for decades that the best competitors "see" and "look at" different things at different times than their teammates or opponents.

Elite athletes' "spatial attention" helps them prioritize specific cues and data within the field of vision. Elite blockers and liberos in volleyball, for example, "read" dozens of specific cues that tell them what will happen next: the setter's hand position, contact point and body position; the speed and trajectory of the set; the hitter's angle of approach, speed to the ball, relationship of the ball to the hitting shoulder, contact point, etc.

To read these numerous offensive and defensive cues, athletes rely heavily on their direct (or foveal) vision, but also on their peripheral vision. An elite middle blocker can "see" an entire offensive play develop from start to finish, across a 30-foot sector. She can watch the setter and four different attacking options as they set up and execute their attack. The best middle blockers read the most essential cues at the critical transitional moments, or "transitions of power," such as the moment the setter or hitter makes contact with the ball in a volleyball match, or the shift from offense to defense in a soccer game.

Great defenders move quickly between foveal and peripheral vision to "read" and shift their focus between specific cues that ultimately give them significant, split-second advantages in anticipation. For example, an adept libero looks directly at specific actions by the



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setter while she makes her offensive selection, but never loses sight peripherally of all of the hitters. The quarterback in football, dropping back to pass, must choose which seven–eight cues to focus on – one directly and six–seven peripherally – out of dozens of possible offensive and defensive objects and actions across a wide visual space.

Just as important is what great competitors do not watch; they do not watch superfluous movement that could draw them away from the central visual cues that accurately predict what will occur next. For example, elite competitors in most sports almost never watch the ball. Many athletes experience a strong, natural drive to focus attention directly on the ball and the action surrounding it. With a few exceptions in several sports, great competitors know they cannot afford any precious parts of seconds to follow an object. They know that the ball will tell them very little about what is about to happen and they understand there are too many other much more significant cues to observe. Malcolm Gladwell, in his best-selling book “Blink,” calls this “thin-slicing”: the ability “to filter the few factors that really matter from an overwhelming number of variables.”

Great competitors also demonstrate superior mental skills analytically and strategically while they compete. They approach their sport’s complex patterns of play and specific strategies much as a chess master approaches a chess game. For example, great competitors understand the typical patterns of play in their respective sports and therefore have an ability to “play the odds” for high percentages with respect to what is – and what is not – most likely to happen next. In tennis and several other sports, “pattern mining” has become popular. Computer programs track the various “typical patterns” of hundreds of different types of points and how they tend to play out based on the last contact and location, angles of the ball, etc. Elite competitors already have much of this knowledge stored away mentally (or some say “instinctively”) and they utilize it on the court to gain critical advantages in anticipation.

Elite athletes also compete with “internalized statistics” readily accessible mentally. A great example of this type of knowledge is in the book *Moneyball* by Michael Lewis. The author tells the real life story of a Major League Baseball team full of underpaid,

undervalued, aging athletes beating teams loaded with hard-hitting, overpaid super stars by excelling at the skills that matter most with regards to winning games.

The same concepts exist in other sports, including volleyball. Some of the most important game statistics for winning points and matches are not even required on our NCAA stats sheet. For example, the accuracy of the pass is irrelevant in our statistics (unless a player shanks the ball completely). Yet the location of the pass is often times the most powerful indicator of who will win the point. Great competitors understand which skills and stats matter most in their respective sport and they train in practice and compete in games with a constant emphasis on what matters most.

Great competitors understand the strategic complexities of their sports and they know that each contact is interdependent on every other contact within a point. Most importantly, they can place their own contributions within the total framework of a larger sequence, so they “see” the whole game unraveling before them. For example, a great defender clearly understands that her ability to dig a very hard driven ball is an important contribution for her team. But a great competitor understands that where she digs the hardest-driven balls will directly affect whether her team wins or loses the point, even if the rally continues on well after her dig.

Obviously, an athlete could never consciously focus on all of these cues, patterns and strategies without being frozen into total paralysis by the sheer magnitude of the cognitive information. An elite athlete’s choices regarding what to focus on and watch – and what to disregard and ignore – are informed by a variety of innate and learned strategies, many of which are performed in a somewhat subconscious state.

Many elite athletes compete in a “state of mind” called “flow” as defined by the Hungarian professor Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. For an athlete, “flow” is the ability to become engrossed in the complex mental “puzzle” of her sport throughout a competition without interruption, and to process and react to the information in a subconscious, steady state of mind. An elite competitor experiences “flow” as complete psychological absorption in the “chess

game” within a sport, while acting on a deep, innate understanding of the complexities of the game. And this is where traditional sports psychology can be reinserted into the equation, offering valuable relaxation and focusing tools that encourage athletes to move into these deep psychological “zones.”

I can clearly remember experiencing “flow” in my playing days, although I’d never heard of the term or anything like it. On one such occasion, my college team was playing UCLA at Pauley Pavilion in a five-game match. The games were extremely competitive and intense, and my team finally pulled out a victory at the end of the fifth game. As the final point ended, I can distinctly remember “waking up” from some deep psychological state (and realizing that an enormous blister on my left heel hurt like hell). For a few seconds I did not know which gym or city I was in, or which competition this had been (a tournament, conference match, etc.). My confusion lasted only a few seconds, but I’ve always known that it was directly related to my very deep psychological absorption in the match.

Many coaches ask how/if we can train these mental skills. Although I do believe that some people possess many of these skills innately, I also believe that we can create opportunities in our gym for teaching and learning them. For example, I frequently give my athletes “visual cues” to practice. In an offense on defense drill, I sometimes ask the hitters to hit only two certain types of contrasting attacks and I ask my defenders to watch two or three specific cues necessary to “read” these specific hits. Or I set up and slow down drills that allow blockers or defenders to methodically follow a visual eye training sequence. Random, purposely unpredictable defensive scenarios also can be created to force athletes to take their eyes off the ball and focus only on the athletes making contact with the ball. And “chaos drills” that create purposeful distractions around athletes as they otherwise play normally, can help train athletes to ignore all the inconsequential motion that tends to draw inexperienced players away from the most critical visual cues. Damian Farrow, a sports science researcher in Melbourne, who has worked with our men’s national team, suggests that “backyard, unstructured play experiences” result in advanced “acute spatial attention” and “flexible thinking,” and are the best ways to develop these mental skills. Coaches of any motor skill sport would do well to heed this advice, especially in youth development programs.

Over the years, my athletes have taught me what makes great competitors mentally, although when I first started coaching I thought it was going to be the other way around. The very best natural competitors have demonstrated for me the vision, specific mental strategies and decision-making that lead to deep psychological engagement at the elite levels of complex motor skill sports. They have imitated what my own college teammates and I were doing so well ... but so obviously. And those athletes I’ve coached who have struggled with these very advanced mental skills have forced me to delve deeper for insights to help me understand and teach them to my athletes.

For some athletes these skills come naturally and for others they do not, the way any talent can be innate to some and so foreign to others. But if we can understand this essential, specialized skill set specific to each sport, we can begin to overtly teach them to those athletes for whom they do not come naturally, as well as perfect them in those already proficient. ☺



Congratulations Coach Annie McShea
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2018 WINNERS

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“Each year these selections get tougher and tougher as our sport is blessed with so many remarkable young coaches,” said AVCA Executive Director Kathy DeBoer. “They know they are the future of the sport and of the AVCA, and I’m impressed with their willingness to give of themselves and their desire to lead.”

Of the 30 recipients, 11 are NCAA Division I women’s coaches, five in high school/club and NCAA Division III, three in NCAA Division II, two from the NAIA and NCAA Division I-II men, and one from NCAA Division I Beach and Two-Year College Beach programs.

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High School/Club



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Mississippi State
University
NCAA Division I



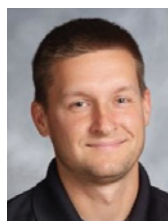
Jennifer Lopez

Head Coach
North Dakota State
University
NCAA Division I



Meagan Owusu

Head Coach
University of California,
Berkeley
NCAA Division I Beach



Jordan Vidovic

Head Coach
Marist High School/
Michio Chicago VBA
High School/Club



Patrick Maloney

Assistant Coach
VCU
NCAA Division I



Jordana Price

Assistant Coach
Florida State University
NCAA Division I



Matthew Werle

Head Coach
Grand Canyon
University
NCAA Division I-II
(Men)



Matthew McDevitt

Assistant Coach
MiraCosta Community
College
Two-Year College
Beach



Jaylen Reyes

Assistant Coach
BYU
NCAA Division I-II
(Men)



Alison Williams

Head Coach
Martin Methodist
College
NAIA

St. Francis Brooklyn Adds Men's VB

First Division I program in nearly 20 years

By Maggie Martini

THE ST. FRANCIS College Athletic Department announces the addition of men's volleyball to the stable of NCAA Division I teams sponsored by the college for intercollegiate athletic competition. Director of Athletics Irma Garcia made the official announcement alongside the program's first-ever head coach, Andy Mueller, and CEO of MotorMVB Foundation, Inc., Wade Garard, at a press conference held on the campus of St. Francis College on Wednesday, June 20.

In addition, the MotorMVB Foundation is providing a \$100,000 grant to help establish the St. Francis program. The MotorMVB Foundation is a non-profit organization with a mission to stimulate the growth of boys' and men's volleyball at all levels in the United States. While there are presently 218 announced collegiate programs nationwide, the organization's goal is to accelerate the pace of growth and, through philanthropic giving, increase that number to 380 programs by the start of the 2026–27 academic year. The MotorMVB Foundation's \$100,000 grant will be dispersed over a four-year period.

Director of Athletics Irma Garcia is excited to bring a competitive men's volleyball program to Brooklyn Heights. "Providing an opportunity for competitive NCAA Division I Volleyball right here in New York City is something we are very excited about. The support from the St. Francis College administration to add this program shows our commitment to our student-athletes and the growth of collegiate men's volleyball."

"Thanks to the generosity of passionate volleyball donors, we are pleased to provide support to St. Francis College. The leadership at SFC has really impressed us and we are convinced that Irma and Coach Mueller will guide a thriving men's volleyball program



for many years to come," said Garard. "Our foundation board chairman, John Speraw, always says there is nothing more important than providing opportunities for young people. We are pleased to be able to help do this for boys who will now be able to come to Brooklyn for college and enjoy a meaningful volleyball student-athlete experience."

"We have a fantastic leader in Andy Mueller. His connections within the national volleyball community, as well as right here in the tri-state area will bring a sustainable foundation for the growth of our program," stated Garcia.

"I want to thank Irma Garcia, Dr. Miguel Martinez-Saenz, Wade Garard, the Motor MVB Foundation and the entire St. Francis College community," stated Andy Mueller. "It is a very exciting time to be starting a collegiate men's volleyball program! I have been lucky enough to work with Head Coach Abra Rummel for the past two seasons on the women's side, and am eager to continue that while building up our men's program at SFC. To be able to start this program and lead this team will be the highlight of my career. The sport has

continued to grow in the last decade and we are thrilled to bring collegiate men's volleyball to Brooklyn. We will work tirelessly to provide fantastic experiences for our student-athletes and put New York City volleyball on the map!"

"We are experiencing an incredible growth period for boys' and men's volleyball in America and in the sport of volleyball in general," said MotorMVB chairman John Speraw who also serves as head coach of USA Men's National Volleyball team and head coach of UCLA Men's Volleyball. "Adding another DI program to the ranks of NCAA Division I is a significant achievement and I am proud it has happened in the first 18 months of the MotorMVB campaign. We expect the momentum to continue as more and more schools look at men's volleyball. It's rapidly growing at the youth level, a dynamic spectator sport and has a buy-in of only 4.5 scholarships. As such, men's volleyball can be viewed in an enrollment model and not just through a revenue model. St. Francis adding is a great moment for our sport!"

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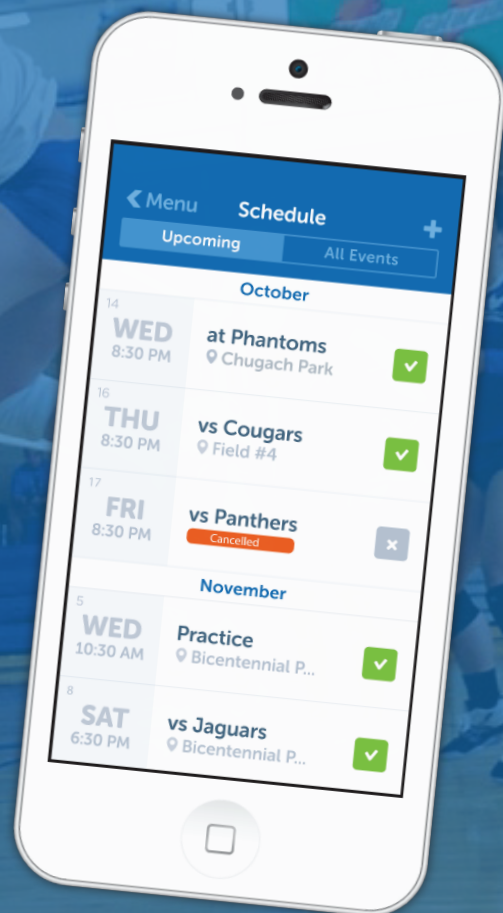
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Movie Magic: Volleyball in the Spotlight

David Portney

ONE OF OUR BIGGEST challenges in volleyball is to penetrate the media landscape outside of our growing community. Television and digital networks have significantly helped us over the last several years, but last month we added a new tool to our media toolbox ... Hollywood!

Maybe you've seen *The Miracle Season* starring Helen Hunt that came out earlier this year across the country, or at least you might have heard about it. It's based on the true story of the Iowa City West High School volleyball team after the sudden and tragic death of player Caroline Found in 2011. It's truly an inspirational story, so I strongly recommend checking it out in theaters or streaming if you can.

There have been volleyball moments and smaller films featuring the beach game, but they have: a) not been based on a true story, b) not had the distribution, and c) not been the best representation of our sport.

This film is different. The impact of this could have an effect never seen in our community.

Sheer math will tell us that many non-volleyball people will watch it, and this might cause them to inquire on a local level about who we are and what we're about. After watching it, a family might go home and punch into Google what kind of local leagues are available for their child in the community. Or perhaps they'll simply make the effort to watch more volleyball at the higher collegiate level. It could be a six-year-old, a teenager or their parents, but shouldn't we make sure to welcome them all with open arms? Or better yet, how can we be proactive in turning prospective volleyball fans and players into actual fans and players?

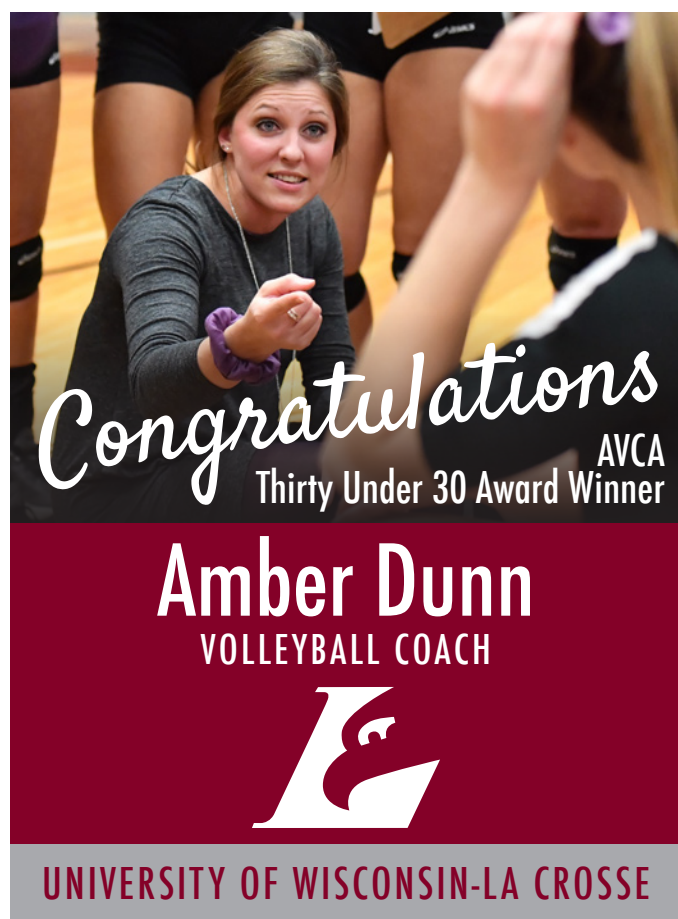
This is where a grassroots campaign can really shine. By the time you're reading this, the movie's been out in theaters for about three months, which makes now the perfect time to begin outreach. You can use targeted Facebook ads from your volleyball accounts to promote your organization and generate fan and/or player interest. If you're a college that sells season tickets, now might be a convenient time to remind your community they're for sale. Or if you're a high school looking forward to tryouts coming up sooner than later, that six-footer with limited experience might now be willing to walk into your gym after watching the film. The added exposure this will bring to people outside of our local volleyball bubbles makes these scenarios very real possibilities.

What does the fact the movie was made at all tell us about volleyball's status in this country? Obviously, it's an amazing true story, but would it have been made if it involved a sport inside the media mainstream (football, basketball, baseball, etc.)? We see those types of films on a regular basis. Remember, volleyball is not a niche sport when looking at overall participation numbers. We are only niche when it comes to national media exposure, and even at a local/regional level we get more coverage than most sports.

Hollywood studios do a lot of market research and must have concluded that:

1. There's enough interest and/or knowledge of girls' volleyball that it can help bring in viewers.
2. The fact that the movie was about overcoming adversity will carry it, and being that it was about a volleyball team specifically would not be a detriment.

I'll say it again because it's important ... This true story and memory of the player that passed away (Caroline Found) makes it worthy of the book and film deal it received. Her memory and impact should never be forgotten. Looking at it from strictly a media analysis perspective, it's very telling that enough people were willing to invest a lot of money to see this story be told on the silver screen. If this proves financially successful, it might open the door for more incredible stories within our sport to be told in mainstream outlets.





GETTING FIT

Volleyball Club Conditioning: Guidelines in Working with a Strength and Conditioning Resource

Ken Kontor

STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING at the club level is accomplished in many different ways – in-house, staff member, private gym, consultant or even not at all. With these various situations, it's difficult to create a solid relationship that will benefit your club volleyball athlete. The following article is designed to help you manage your strength and conditioning program.

Working Principle: The strength and conditioning outcome (on-court performance) is the ultimate responsibility of the Volleyball Coach (VC). The strength and conditioning process is the ultimate responsibility of the designated Strength and Conditioning Coach (SCC). This process is contingent upon the practice/match work load imposed by the VC. These guidelines provide a mutual understanding of the VC-SCC working relationship to create an environment of trust for the optimal development of the volleyball athlete.

Another way of looking at it is:

SCC is responsible for **Readiness**—physical preparation-proper recovery for competition

VC is responsible for **Preparedness** – the technical/tactical preparation for competition

What the Volleyball Coach Should Know

1. An understanding of the basic principles of conditioning of the volleyball athlete in order to work and communicate with the conditioning professional
2. How to present your style of play, practice/competition workloads, age consideration, etc., to the conditioning professional in order to establish a comprehensive program through effective communication
3. Principles of the Annual Plan and how to establish it
4. Working with and monitoring peripherals – parents, other sport coaches, private lessons/gym work

5. What to look for in a conditioning professional

What the Strength and Conditioning Professional Should Know

1. What the volleyball coach knows about conditioning in order to effectively communicate conditioning planning
2. Basics of volleyball play and the volleyball demands placed on the volleyball athlete
3. How to coordinate the Annual Plan with conditioning opportunities
4. How to support the volleyball coach in working with peripherals

Discussion Topics

1. Coming to Terms – establishing and accepting a common language (Volleyball Conditioning Defined: Planned, Measured, Progressive Overload based on the Rules of the Sport of Volleyball)
2. The 7-Ts of volleyball conditioning program design
 - 1) Training Age (Based on training experience and level of maturity)
 - 2) Time (Annual/Monthly/Weekly/Daily Planning)
 - 3) Tools (What you have to work with)
 - 4) Teaching (Progressing from Movement to Strength Training)
 - 5) Testing (Cornerstone of the conditioning process)
 - 6) Total Workload (Energy systems, Volume, Intensity, Recovery, Data Management considerations)
 - 7) Team Position (physical qualities)
3. Presenting your volleyball coaching philosophy/principles as they relate to conditioning expectations
4. Establishing and integrating physical goals with technical/tactical goals
5. Establishing a club culture of total player physical development as a priority.

6. 7-T Annual Planner and Year Calendar – how it works

Planning Issues

1. Working with the multi-sport athlete/private lessons/outside gym time – and how to manage it

Monitoring Total Workload: It is important for the VC to establish themselves as the go-to authority. The best way of gaining this “authority” is to establish the annual plan presented earlier with all activity in the plan. This way, other sports can be integrated into one document to share with other coaches, personal instructors etc. and parents.

2. Getting Parents Involved as Recovery Coaches

The parent is the person that best knows their child's activity, rest, stress and answer to the overall “how do you feel?” question that should be asked daily. This Recovery Coach job can put the parent to work for the benefit of their child's development. If possible, it would be great for the VC to compare their child's peaks and valley with their annual total workload plan.

Getting Started

A great place to start is to educate yourself on the 7-Ts of program design and to share this information with your strength and conditioning professional. **Performance Conditioning Volleyball** is offering our starter library, 7-Ts of Program Design, which contains 20 of our very best articles from experts like John Kessel, John Speraw, Robert Brown, Ali Wood-Lamberson, Danalee Corso, Anna Collier, Bill Neville, Julie Kaiser, Art Garcia, John Cook and more! It's free – all you do is email me at condpress@aol.com with the words *Free VB Library* in the subject line.

That's it! Hope to hear from you.

Apps and Technology

Programs that Aid Communication, Collaboration and Fitness

By Assistant Coaches Publications Subcommittee

WHETHER IN YOUR COMPETITION, training or recruiting phase of the year, as coaches, we are always on the hunt for programs and apps that assist with organization and health. Obviously, there are a ton of options when looking around for apps to aid in these areas. Here are some tools that we've found useful in terms of streamlining team management, optimizing communication and working fitness into daily routines.

There are many methods to organizing team schedules, communication, files and other items. The following programs aim to compile all of this information into one portal for ease of access.



TeamSynced

TeamSynced combines scheduling, group messaging and file-sharing into one system.

The program also assists coaches with identifying the availability of student-athletes.



Teamworks

Teamworks serves as a secure platform to coordinate all team information, including class schedules, team meetings and travel itineraries. Additionally, the program streamlines messaging amongst teams and provides the option to share files and video.



TeamSnap

TeamSnap is a great resource for managing recreational and youth sports programs. This is a nice, streamlined app that meets the essential needs of efficient team communication.



Airtable

Airtable is a tool that serves as an all-in-one collaboration database that presents as a spreadsheet. This service can help with aspects of recruiting planning, travel logistics, budgets, coaching duties, academics, equipment, etc.



Crystal

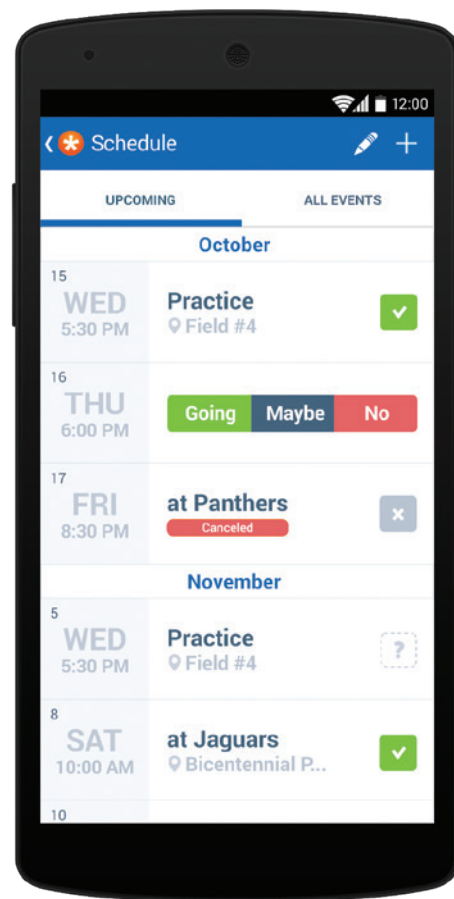
Crystal takes communication to a new and advanced level. This service combines social science, technology and communication to influence the way we interact with others. If you are an individual who is open to providing personal information, Crystal offers detailed information on how you and others within your professional circle may best communicate through personality insights.

Finding time to exercise on the road during competitive and recruiting seasons can be a challenge, as time is limited and fatigue sets in. Here are a couple apps to consider for in-room workouts that require little or no equipment and can fit into any schedule.



Down Dog

The Down Dog yoga app is a free program that offers a studio-like yoga experience from a portable device. Whether you are a beginner or an expert, this app offers a variety of yoga routines to keep you limber and refreshed on the road.



SworKit

SworKit is an app that offers individualized fitness plans and workouts that require limited or no equipment and are easy to complete on the road. Routines range from 5 to 15 minutes and vary in intensity and difficulty.

Overall, there are many services that are available for improving our success in many areas. We hope that one of these applications can help you as you attack whichever phase of the year you are embarking on.



Nick MacRae
Long Beach State



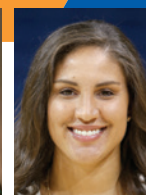
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