

COACHING Volleyball

Winter Issue 2017

A Publication of the American Volleyball Coaches Association

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On the Attack

**Men's Volleyball
takes the spotlight
p. 8**

Also in this issue: Managing Coach-Parent Relationships • What's Next for Graduates? • Social Media Insights

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18 More than Teamwork

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STANFORD VOLLEYBALL

On the Cover

Stanford is just one of the many talented teams that will duke it out for a shot at the NCAA Men's Volleyball National Championship, to be held in Columbus, OH. If you are able, do yourself a favor and check out a men's match. The athleticism, power and speed will stick with you. Visit www.avca.org/groups/college-men-volleyball for updated weekly awards and score results.

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

From the Desk of ...

Christy Johnson-Lynch, Iowa State University Head Coach

OVER THE PAST YEAR the NCAA has been surveying student athletes, coaches and administrators regarding time demands of our collegiate athletes. One of the NCAA's current priorities is to bring more balance to a student athlete's college experience. The legislation being discussed centers around giving athletes more time off during the school year and requiring each team to develop an annual time management plan. Right now there are many more questions than answers. As legislation is voted on and clarified next spring we will know more how coaches need to respond. Regardless, we can't keep our head in the sand on this one. All college coaches need to be thoughtful of potential effects of these rule changes.

Some of the highlights of proposed legislation:

More time off. Coaches will be required to give seven days off after the last match of the season. In addition, we will need to schedule 14 additional days off throughout the year. We will continue to be required to give one day off during the championship season, and now also required to give two days off per week during the non-championship segment. The piece of this legislation that could, if passed, have a big impact is that travel days may no longer count as a day off. This will force all of us to carefully construct a playing and training schedule that makes the most of our time. No question this would impact universities that bus or fly commercial and need a day to travel home. There will be a great advantage for those schools that have the budget and support to charter fly home immediately after a match.

Advance notice of at least a week for schedule changes. I would guess most coaches have their season well planned out. But if you are a coach that likes flexibility, this piece of legislation may be tough for you. Adding a practice or workout session

when none was planned or last-minute changes in practice times or departure times may no longer be so easily accepted.

Expanding what are considered countable hours. This area seems the most uncertain. There may be no change, or the NCAA may require time spent on things like press interviews, promotions or community service as part of an athlete's weekly limit. If passed, this will be a major change in how we operate. Coordinating with academic advisors, life skills staff, media staff, trainers and anyone else that works with our athletes would be a huge challenge to say the least. Whatever is voted on, the message is that student-athletes want more transparency on what is actually required of them. Coaches will need to be more thoughtful of what we ask of our athletes and how they spend their time off the volleyball court.

A yearly time management plan. This plan will need to include both countable and other required athletically related activities,

developed by each team in collaboration with administrators and student-athletes. That's a long way of saying coaches will need to have the year planned out in detail and be open and realistic about everything that will be required of our athletes.

Collegiate student-athletes have a more powerful voice than ever before. The NCAA is relying heavily on the Student Athlete Advisory Committees (SAAC) for direction, and they have spoken. They want more time off and they want more transparency in what is required of them. I would encourage all college coaches to discuss this legislation with their administrators in the coming weeks and months. We will be held more accountable for how our athletes spend their time. Whether these rule changes will affect your program a little or a lot is unknown, but we do know change is coming.





EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Our Game

Kathy DeBoer

WE ARE IN A TIME of change, disruptive change, dislocating change, uncomfortable change. If the growth mindset mantra is that we must become comfortable being uncomfortable, then we are getting a lot of practice. If dislocation and disruption are paths to creativity, new solutions and progress, then our sport and our coaches association will look a lot different in the future.

Part of the disruption this time of year is changes in the women's coaching carousel; and, while the number of volleyball coaches who get fired for losing is never high, the fact that it happens to a few each year creates fearfulness throughout the community. Adding to the uncertainty is social media and activist parents combining to make unhappiness and friction a more public matter.

The AVCA lost two past presidents this fall; one was "fired without cause" by a skittish administrator who reacted abruptly and without warning to the complaint of a parent; the other found herself facing a rebuilding job due to graduations and transfers at a point in her life when her young family needed as much of her attention as her program.

I get to know AVCA presidents personally as our lives are intertwined for a period of years. In answering the call to lead they agree to be interrupted at inconvenient times, to participate in strategic discussions regardless of the short-term benefit to their own programs, and to make times for calls and meetings in their already too-busy lives. To see these consummate givers wounded and struggling hurts my heart.

The end of a season is also the time when there is reshuffling of the player pool. Coaches find out, sometimes with relief, sometimes with shock, that players are opting for a different setting. While transfers are most commonly based on lack of playing time and, therefore, often of mutual benefit, the ones we remember are those where players are seeking "a better team" or

a "more high-profile program." Loss of top talent inevitably sets a program back several years, raises alerts with administrators and causes bitterness between colleagues.

I spend much of the last two months of each year careening between the two poles of championship teams and displaced colleagues. It reminds me of Leo Tolstoy's famous *Anna Karenina* opening: "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

So too, all championship teams are alike: the players praise the family atmosphere, the mutual commitment, they mock the idiosyncrasies of the coaching staff, laugh at themselves and tearfully bemoan the fleeting nature of their Camelot moment.

"All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

—Leo Tolstoy

Each losing team, though, loses in its own way: sometimes it's injuries to key players; sometimes it's lack of leadership; sometimes it's poor chemistry; sometimes it's bad coaching; sometimes it's talent that didn't develop; frequently it's a combination of these; always, it's misery magnified.

I spoke to a coaching colleague in November who is nearing the end of a 40-year career. The idea of retirement is terrifying, not due to financial concerns, but because of the adrenaline junkies we become as coaches. We discussed options from working on a disaster relief crew to moving to a state where marijuana is legal. Certainly the mild depression most coaches feel at the end of a season is real, as the quest for the next high and the flight from the next low are twin addictions we alternately crave and fear.

While it is easy to be consumed by the season just ended, a third of AVCA members,

those coaching men and boys, girls' club, and beach, are full of anticipation with a new season ahead of them. The energy and enthusiasm generated by these growth engines is invigorating for me and the AVCA.

Just think about it, ten years ago we did not have an NCAA Men's DIII Championship, this spring will mark our fifth; we did not have an NCAA Beach Championship, May 5-7, 2017 will mark our second; we did not have a JVA World Challenge, April in Louisville will mark our 10th. One of my goals when I came to the AVCA was to make the spring as productive and exciting and compelling as the fall. We are not there yet, but we're certainly moving in the right direction.

I spent the time around Thanksgiving caring for my 93-year-old mother and wrote this column during my stay with her. Spending four days holding, dressing and feeding the person who held, dressed and fed you when you were a child provides firsthand experience with uncomfortable, dislocating and disruptive change.

I admire those who can embrace it. I must admit to simply surviving it; falling asleep when I needed to be awake, feeling cranky when I wanted to feel kind, pretending to care about job searches, tourney selections and awards decisions when all I felt was fatigue and emptiness. You have all been there at one time or another during your coaching career. You know the drill: fake it and keep moving, knowing your spirit will return, just not exactly when.

As we close the chapter on one season and open ourselves to the adventures of another, as we welcome new coaches who will replace some of our trusted friends, and as I transition to life as a motherless child, know how much I appreciate the opportunity to go on this journey with you.

DIVISION I PROPOSED RECRUITING LEGISLATION

By Kyrsten Becker, Associate Head Coach – Morehead State University

ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2016, the NCAA released their Publication of Proposed Legislation. While the perception may be that the NCAA makes up the rules, all 105 proposals come from one of 32 Division I multi-sport conferences. Once the proposals are reviewed, they are sent out for member institutions to examine, and opened up for comment. Finally, they are voted on in April to see if they should go into effect. Of all 105 proposals, here are a few that may be of interest to volleyball coaches.

PROPOSAL 2016-30: TELEPHONE AND UNOFFICIAL VISITS

- No contacts, telephone calls (place OR RECEIVED), and no official or unofficial visits until September 1 of a prospect's junior year.
- This is part of a package put forward to slow down recruiting.
- This is to "close loopholes in recruiting legislation that are making it possible for institutional staff members/coaches to develop relationships with PSAs (and their families) for the purpose of recruitment prior to the first permissible date to initiate communication with them."
- In volleyball alone, there are 60 players from the 2019 class and seven 2020 listed as committed on Rich Kern.

PROPOSAL 2016-48: PERMITS ON-CAMPUS EVALUATIONS

- Allows institutions to conduct on-campus tryouts beginning June 1 immediately preceding the PSA's junior year in high school.
- This is currently allowed in basketball, however prohibited in any other sport.
- Justification is that a tryout may provide the school and PSA valuable information to make a better informed decision.
- Has potential to help programs with a limited recruiting budget.

PROPOSAL 2016-45: EXPAND BOUNDARIES FOR UNOFFICIAL VISITS

- To permit in-person, off-campus contact during an unofficial visit within one mile of campus boundaries.
- Justification is that areas within a mile of campus are often part of the campus community, even if they are not technically on campus.
- May allow a clearer picture of the campus and student life at the university.
- The current rules are hard to enforce, and the mile radius may provide a greater probability that it is followed.

PROPOSAL 2016-32: PERMITTING CORRESPONDENCE WITH AN UNOFFICIAL VISIT

- Coaches may make a phone call, text or send an email in conjunction with an unofficial visit.
- This would be permissible beginning the day immediately preceding the PSA's visit, and end at the conclusion of their visit.
- Would allow open communication with the PSA and accompanying group leading up to and during the visit.
- That rationale is to address issues with families getting lost or having travel problems.

While all proposals may have an impact at your university, these four in particular can change the way coaches recruit. If there are questions or concerns, make sure to discuss them with your compliance department and your AVCA conference representative.

The ‘Monarch’ of All Tournaments

By Greg Shell, Assistant Coach – Central Connecticut State

WHILE I WAS WORKING at the Boston College Camp this past summer, head coach Chris Campbell used a really interesting tournament format to close out the individual session for the week. He called it the “Tournament to End All Tournaments.” It was such a great idea that we used it to change the pace of practice this past fall. I loved the emphasis on playing the complete game, and it really ramped up the level of individual competition within a practice. The format combines elements of familiar formats and ideas: a “Queen (or King if you coach guys) of the Court” style rotation, doubles and triples play, 6 v. 6 play, and some aspects of a blind scoring cauldron. Your middles will need to pass, your DSs and setters will have to hit, and everyone serves, so all the skills matter. Below is the version we used.

(Note: You will want a spreadsheet of some kind to work off of—points are cumulative for the overall tournament. Another option is to use a white board to track points. We went with a spreadsheet to keep the scoring blind.)

This is a multiple-round tournament, and is played in a timed format. The version we used was two rounds of 2 v. 2 (played on two courts), two rounds of 3 v. 3 (played on two courts), and one game of 6 v. 6. If your roster doesn’t divide evenly for the teams, just make larger teams—if your 3 v. 3 will have a team of four, then three of the four play each point, and they rotate through between points so that everyone contributes. Your biggest challenge is making your initial pairings as even as possible.

Set up your full team in 2 v. 2 pairings, and play out Round 1 for time in a “Queen of the Court” format. At the end of the round, teams come and report their scores and head off to a break. You re-pair the teams (high score with low score), and play Round 2. Scores reset for each round – you will be carrying over individual player scores on your spreadsheet – but the players are only recording their team’s score in each individual round. To get the individual player scores, add each player’s team score in each round. If Player A had seven in the first 2 v. 2, and four in the second, her carryover score is 11—the subsequent rounds are built on carry-over scores only (the blue columns in the example sheet), but as far as the players are concerned, they reset to 0 for each round.

Rounds 3 and 4 are 3 v.3 “Queen” and Round 5 is 6 v. 6**. At the conclusion of the 6 v. 6 game, your overall winner is the Queen/King of the gym. Have fun, and thanks, Chris!

** (Note: When setting up the 6 v. 6 pairings, you have a few options. You can break the players by points only, but you may have three middles and no setters on one side if you do—we chose to use the points as a guideline, and break players by points relative to their positions so we would have a very competitive 6 v. 6 game to end the tournament. We also chose to do the 6 v. 6 as a non-rotating game, and just rotate the servers, as our roster works better that way in a practice format. The only really important thing is that your overall #1 and #2 going into the final round be on opposite teams.)

Sample Spreadsheet:

NAME	PAIR	SCORE	PAIR	SCORE	TOTAL	PAIR	SCORE	TOTAL	PAIR	SCORE	TOTAL	PAIR	SCORE
Player 1	A	7	A	4	11								
Player 2	A	7	B	8	15								
Player 3	B	3	C	3	6								
Player 4	B	3	D	2	5								
Player 5	C	5	C	3	8								
Player 6	C	5	D	2	7								
Player 7	D	1	B	8	9								
Player 8	D	1	A	4	5								

Servers vs. Passers Baseball

By Chris Hertel, Assistant Coach – Radford University

AT ONE POINT LATE this NCAA season we needed to have a fairly short practice with no attacking or blocking. We were trying to give our bodies some recovery time without giving them a complete day off. I was tasked with coming up with a competitive “servers vs. passers” game (or games) that would last 45-75 minutes. We had one court and 16 players, one of whom is a setter.

We made five teams of three people. Each team had a passing outside hitter, a defensive specialist and a middle or non-passing outside hitter. We used a scoring system based on the sport of baseball. Games were four innings long, and the point was to score as many points while serving (the batters) as you can. For the receiving side (the fielders) the point was to get three “outs” so they could go serve. Each inning had a predetermined pattern for the passers. For example: in the first inning the outside hitter passed in Zone 5 and the defensive specialist passed in Zone 6. The middle could choose anywhere she wanted to stand to help with short serves. The OH and DS always passed some combination of Zones 5 and 6 or Zones 6 and 1. In four innings all the combinations were covered.

Serving order was similar to a batting order. The first server would serve until she made an “out” then the next player on her team would do the same. Serves that were in the proper zones and that were not “outs” were points. Each team accumulated their points through the entire game. The serving order picked up where it left off from one inning to the next. The servers could get themselves “out” with a service error.

The passers made “outs” by passing the ball into one of two targets. A “decent” pass was worth one “out” and a perfect pass was a double play and worth two “outs.” I used tape on the floor to clearly define a one-“out” pass and a double-play perfect pass. Any pass that wasn’t good enough to get an “out” was a point for the servers. When a team got to three “outs” the teams switched roles.

It got competitive fast, and lots of good behaviors are reinforced. Servers have to hit a tough serve into a reduced size court to have a chance to score (servers had to serve into the zones where the passers were). Passers had to pass well in order to get the chance to serve, and perfect passes (double plays) got you there quicker. Our games took 10-15 minutes each, and after a few games the players started to remember which zones they were supposed to be passing in for each inning. A coach had the plan and could call it out to them if they needed a reminder where to go.

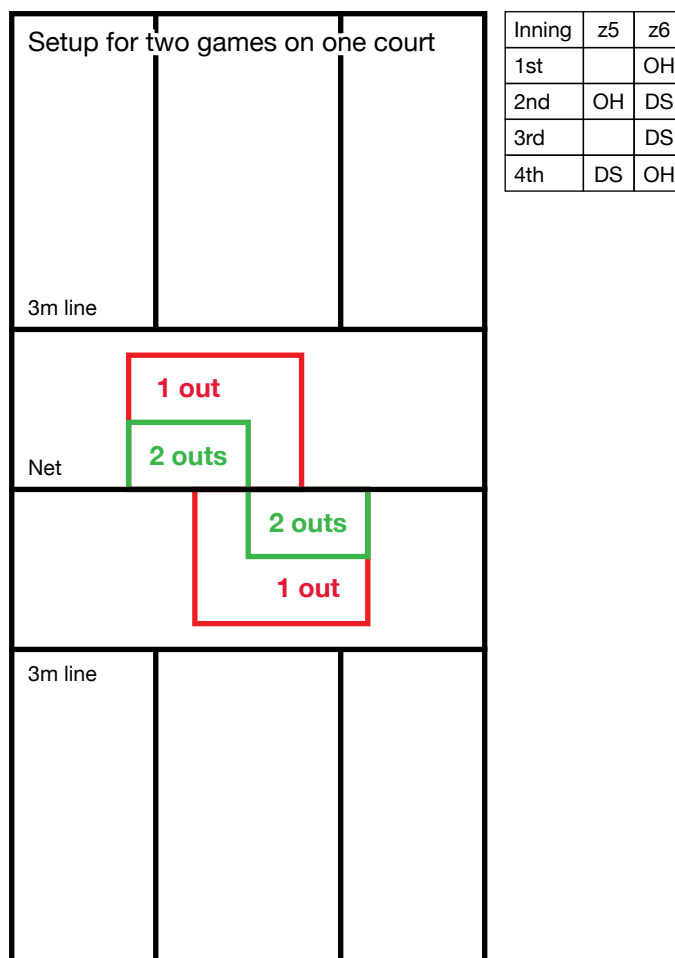
We were able to make two games happen on one volleyball court without any trouble, but it would be better to play each game on its own volleyball court. We had five teams and could play two games at the same time, so I Googled “pool sheet five teams on two courts” and the first link gave me the pool sheet I needed. The team

that was not playing was the referees and had the final say on how many outs a particular pass was worth.

The game can be manipulated in any number of ways. The number of teams and their composition can be made to fit any team. The serve receive patterns can be manipulated to work for whatever your team does. The number of innings can be changed. If you have more than one setter you can require the pass and the set be good in order to get a “double play.” If you are playing one game at a time on the volleyball court you could even add an attack to the game.

I taped the court off before practice started, and I just extended the basketball key to define the passing zones. This made Zone 6 a little wide, but we wanted it that way.

Here is a diagram of the court we used and a list of zones we used in each inning.



2017 Men's Volleyball Outlook



THE COLLEGIAN

With the 2017 men's season finally under way, let's take a quick look at some of the teams that have taken the court in pursuit of a hard-earned championship. For Division I-II, the road ends in Columbus, OH, and you can bet highly touted Ohio State will be gunning for an appearance. In Division III, teams will be hoping to raise a trophy in Springfield, MA, at the end of the season. At the NAIA level, Missouri Baptist will be seeking a third straight title, hoping to seal the deal in St. Louis, MO.

What follows is just a glimpse at some of the many talented rosters that have been assembled around the country. For poll information throughout the season, visit www.avca.org/polls. Additionally, keep up with various weekly awards and honors at www.avca.org/awards.

Division I-II



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

2016 Overall Record: 31-2
2016 Conference (MIVA) Record: 15-1
2016 Final National Ranking: 1st
2016 Postseason Finish: NCAA Champions

2016 Conference Finish: 1st in regular season, MIVA Tournament Champions

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 11/5

Key Returners/Newcomers: Nicolas Szerszem (Jr., OH, 6-4) – 2016 AVCA National Player of the year, 2016 AVCA All-American first team, 2016 MIVA Player of the Year, 2016 All-MIVA first team, 2015 MIVA Tournament MVP, 2016 All-NCAA Tournament team; Miles Johnson (Sr., OPP, 6-6) – 2016 AVCA All-American first team, 2016 NCAA Tournament MVP, 2016 All-MIVA first team, 2016 All-MIVA Tournament team; Christy Blough (Sr., S, 6-5) – 2016 AVCA All-American second team, 2016 All-MIVA first team, 2016 All-MIVA Tournament team; Gabriel Domecus (Sr., L, 6-3) – 2016 AVCA All-American honorable mention, 2016 All-MIVA second team; Blake Leeson (r-So., MB, 6-7) – 2016 All-MIVA honorable mention, 2016 All-NCAA Tournament team; Driss Guessous (r-Sr., MB, 6-8) – 2014 AVCA All-American second team

Key Losses: Christian Franceschi (OH, 6-3) – 2016 All-MIVA second team



BYU

2016 Overall Record: 27-4
2016 Conference Record: 19-3
2016 Final National Ranking: 2nd
2016 Postseason Finish: NCAA Runners-Up

2016 Conference Finish: Outright MPSF regular-season champions, MPSF Tournament Champions

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 10/6

Key Returners/Newcomers: Ben Patch (Jr., RS, 6-9, 2016 AVCA First-Team All-American, 2016 All-MPSF First Team, 2016 Bryan Ivie Award recipient from Off the Block), Brenden Sander (Jr., OH, 6-4, 2016 AVCA First-Team All-American, 2016 All-MPSF First Team, 2016 NCAA All-Tournament Team), Jake Langlois (Sr., OH, 6-10, 2016 AVCA Second-Team All-American, 2016 All-MPSF First Team, 2016 NCAA All-Tournament Team), Leo Durkin (Jr., S, 6-4, 2016 AVCA All-America Honorable Mention, 2016 All-MPSF Second Team)

Key Losses: Michael Hatch (MB, All-MPSF Honorable Mention)



HAWAII

2016 Overall Record: 16-12
2016 Conference Record: 11-11
2016 Final National Ranking: 8th
2016 Postseason Finish: MPSF Quarterfinals

2016 Conference Finish: 7th

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 11/3

Key Returners/Newcomers: Stijn van Tilburg (So., OPP, 6-8, 2016 All-MPSF Honorable Mention, 2016 MPSF All-Freshman team; Kupono Fey (Sr., OH, 6-5); Joe Worsley (So., S, 6-0); Hendrik Mol (Sr., MB, 6-6)

Key Losses: Sinisa Zarkovic (OH, 2016 AVCA All-America second team, 2016 All-MPSF first team); Kolby Kanetake (L, 2016 AVCA All-America second team, 2016 All-MPSF second team)



LONG BEACH STATE

2016 Overall Record: 25-8
2016 Conference Record: 17-5
2016 Final National Ranking: 4th
2016 Postseason Finish: NCAA Final Four, Lost in semifinals to BYU

2016 Conference Finish: T-2nd, MPSF Tournament Semifinals

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 9/5 (10 sets min.)

Key Returners/Newcomers: T.J. DeFalco (So., OH, 6-4) 1st Team All-American, AVCA Newcomer of the Year, MPSF Freshman of the Year, 1st Team All-MPSF, MPSF All-Freshman Team, NCAA All-Tournament Team, Off The Block Freshman All-American; Josh Tuaniga (So., S, 6-3) 2nd Team All-American, Off The Block Freshman All-American, 2nd Team All-MPSF, MPSF All-Freshman Team; Kyle Ensing (So., OPP, 6-7) 2nd Team All-MPSF, MPSF All-Freshman Team, Off The Block Freshman All-American, MPSF All-Tournament Team.; Andrew Sato (Sr., L, 5-10) HM All-American, HM All-MPSF

Key Losses: Taylor Gregory (Sr., MB, 6-7) 2nd Team All-American, 1st Team All-MPSF



UCLA

2016 Overall Record: 25-7
2016 Conference (MPSF) Record: 17-5
2016 Final National Ranking: 3rd
2016 Postseason Finish: Lost NCAA Semifinals

2016 Conference Finish: T-2nd in regular season, lost in tournament championship match

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 15/2

Key Returners/Newcomers: Mitch Stahl (Sr., MB, 6-7) – 2016 second-team AVCA All-America, 2016 second-team All-MPSF, Finalist for Ryan Millar Award presented

to nation's best middle attacker; Jake Arnitz (Jr., OH, 6-7) – 2016 second-team AVCA All-America, 2016 All-NCAA Tournament selection, 2016 First-team All-MPSF, 2016 first-team All-MPSF Tournament; Micah Ma'a (So., S/H, 6-3) – 2016 first-team AVCA All-America, 2016 Off the Block Server of the Year, 2016 first-team All-MPSF, 2016 Off the Block Freshman All-America, 2016 MPSF All-Tournament team
Key Losses: No significant contributors lost.



UC SANTA BARBARA

2016 Overall Record: 20-10
2016 Conference Record: 14-8
2016 Final National Ranking: 5th
2016 Postseason Finish: MPSF Semis, lost in 5 @ BYU

2016 Conference Finish: 5th, MPSF
Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 10/5t

Key Returners/Newcomers: Parker Boehle (RS Sr., L, 5-10, 2.07 D/S); Hayden Boehle (Jr., OH, 6-1); Jacob Delson (RS Sr, OH, 6-5, 3.17 K/S) ; Henri Cherry (RS So., MB, 6-6, 2016 All-MPSF HM, Freshman Team); Connor Drake (RS So, MB, 6-8, 1.13 B/S); Randy DeWeese (Fr, S); Casey McGarry (Fr., S); Spencer Fredrick (Fr., RS); Keenan Sanders (Fr., RS/MB); Roy McFarland (Fr., OH)

Key Losses: Jonah Seif (S, 3X All-American); Matt Marsh (RS, All-MPSF 2nd Team); Ryan Hardy (MB, All-MPSF HM); Austin Kingi (OH, 2.47 K/S)

Division III



BARUCH COLLEGE

2016 Overall Record: 18-13
2016 Conference Record: 15-1
2016 Final National Ranking: N/A
2016 Postseason Finish: N/A

2016 Conference Finish: CUNYAC Runner Up

Key Returners/Newcomers: Nicholas Godino (So., OH, 6-3), Jacob Mareschal Rudin (Jr., MB, 6-4), Samuel Rabidoux (Jr, MB, 6-6), Brendan Murphy (Sr., S, 6-2), Kyriakos Semertzidis (So., L, 5-11)

Newcomers: Steven Lopez (Fr., OH, 6-0), Ryan Pape (Jr, MB, 6-4)

Key Losses: Brady Ambro (OH, 6-2) CUNYAC 1st Team All-Star; Taylor Higgs (L, 6-0); Scott Standing (S, 6-1) 2nd Team All-Star, #1 NCAA D3 with 0.81 aces per set



DOMINICAN UNIVERSITY

2016 Overall Record: 17-9
2016 Conference Record: 9-4 MCVL
2016 Final National Ranking: NR
2016 Postseason Finish: MCVL Semifinalist

2016 Conference Finish: 4th

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 14/1

Key Returners/Newcomers: Alex Coyne (Sr., S, 6-3, AVCA All-America 2nd Team), Mason Solbrig (Sr., MH, 6-6, AVCA All-America 1st Team), Luke Spicer (Jr., OPP, 6-2, All-MCVL 2nd Team), Jeremy Royko (Sr., OH, 6-3, All-MCVL 2nd Team), Brooks Nevry (Sr., L, 5-9), Zachery Sinn (Sr., OH, 6-3)/Newcomers: Michal Kawa (Sr., OH, 6-5), Evan Ruffner (Fr., S, 6-4), Ethan Klosak (Fr., OH, 6-0), Brandon Pederson (Fr., OH, 6-1)

Key Losses: N/A



ELMIRA COLLEGE

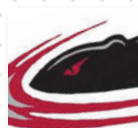
2016 Overall Record: 21-11
2016 Conference Record: 2-6
2016 Final National Ranking: 12th
2016 Postseason Finish: N/A

2016 Conference Finish: 7th in UVC

Top Returners: Mark Kawecki (OPP, Sr., 6-2), Ryan McDonough (OH, Jr., 6-0), Matthew Buffum (MH, Jr., 6-7), Adam Dake (S, So, 6-0)

Top Newcomers: Garrett Coleman (Fr., OH, 6-6)

Top Players Lost: Erik Griffin (OH, 6-4)



MIT

2016 Overall Record: 21-9
2016 Conference Record: 4-4
2016 Final National Ranking: N/A
2016 Postseason Finish: N/A; **2016 Conference Finish:** 5th

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 12/3

Key Returners/Newcomers: Martin Krasuski (Sr., OH, 6-4), Yize Dong (So., S, 6-2), Skyler Kaufman (So., MH, 6-9), Tavish Smith (Jr., MH, 6-5) / Cameron Burnett (Fr., OH), Michael Kulinski (Fr., S), Thomas Nelson (Fr., OH), Colton Stearns (Fr., OH)

Key Losses: Brendan Chang (L, 2-time All-American), Matt Reilly (OH)



MOUNT ST. JOSEPH UNIVERSITY

2016 Overall Record: 18-8
2016 Conference Record: 9-4 MCVL
2016 Final National Ranking: 15th
2016 Postseason Finish: N/A; **2016 Conference Finish:** T-4th

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 13/1

Key Returners: Alex Vohland (Sr., OH, 6-4, AVCA Honorable Mention All-American, 1st team MCVL), Brett Cooper (Sr., MB, 6-4), Nathan Herdeman (Jr., S, 5-11) Kevin Siemer (So., Opp, 6-3)

Key Newcomers: Joey Piazza (Fr., 6-2, L)

Key Losses: Jake Neiheisel (6-5, MB, Finished 2nd in blocks per set and 4th in hitting percentage for the MCVL)



NAZARETH COLLEGE

2016 Overall Record: 26-9
2016 Conference Record: 5-3 in UVC
2016 Final National Ranking: 9th
2016 Postseason Finish: UVC Semis, lost to New Paltz

2016 Conference Finish: 4th

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 11/8

Key Returners: Tom Keisling (Sr., L, 6-3, AVCA All-America 2nd team); Jake Kemp (Jr., S, 6-2, UVC, Honorable Mention); Zachary Gillard (So. OH, 6-5); Kane Wittorff (Sr., MB, 6-5); Sam Bittker (Jr., OH, 6-4)

Top Newcomers: Sean Dillon (Fr. MB, 6-7); Luis Vazquez (Fr., OH, 5-10)

Key Losses: Tim Zyburt (OH, AVCA 3-time All-America); Chris Mahan (MB, AVCA All-America in 2015)



RIVIER UNIVERSITY

2016 Overall Record: 22-11
2016 Conference Record: 10-4
2016 Final National Ranking: N/A
2016 Postseason Finish: GNAC Finalist

2016 Conference Finish: 2nd

Letter Winners Returning/Lost: 10/3

Key Returners: Tyler Blank (Sr., S, 6-1, All GNAC 1st Team); Grant Andler (Jr., OPP, 6-6, All GNAC 1st Team); Ian Wolski (Sr., OH, 6-3 All GNAC 3rd Team); Matt Heckler (Jr., MH, 6-4, All GNAC 3rd Team); Khaynen Yocca (So., MH, 6-6); Garrett Bucklin (Jr., L, 5-9)

Key Newcomers: Cam Roth (Fr., OH, 6-3); Francis Kokoros (Fr., OPP/MH, 6-6); David Smith (Fr., OH, 6-1); Danny Sciolaro (Fr., S, 6-4); John Equitani (Fr., MH, 6-4)

Key Losses: Nick Ochoa (L); Mike Hovnanian (DS); Mike Hadder (OH)



RUTGERS UNIVERSITY-NEWARK

2016 Overall Record: 24-4
2016 Conference Record: 10-2 CVC
2016 Final AVCA Ranking: 6th
2016 Postseason Finish: National Quarterfinalist, CVC Finalist

Letterwinners Returning/Lost: 7/8

Key Returners: Corey Pieper (Jr., OH, 6-5), Justin Sandy (Jr., OH, 6-3), Dom Gutowski (Jr., MB, 6-6), Brendon Frank (So., S, 6-2)

Key Newcomers: Jake Connors (Fr., L, 5-10), Jalen Sorrell (So., MH, 6-6)

Key Losses: Cody Chidsey (MH, AVCA All-American), Kevin McCandless (S, AVCA All-American), Jack Fredericks (OH, AVCA All-American), Quocmy Nguyen (L, All-CVC), Travis Mintzer (Opp, All-CVC), Nick Kuti (MH, All-CVC)

Moving On

Supporting Student-athletes in Transition

By Penny Semaia,
Career and Life Skills Coordinator -
University of Pittsburgh



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NCAA VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

NCAA VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

NCAA VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

It's been 10 years since I last strapped on a helmet and played the game that has done so much for me. Yet, I still have this bond with football that seems to never go away. It's almost like a sixth sense that pops up when someone mentions the game. When I'm watching a Pitt game at Heinz Field, it's as if each play is in slow motion. I see every block. I can predict certain movements. Sometimes, I catch myself lifting my arm up as if I was the one shedding a block. I laugh when I think about it. I laugh even harder when I see my old teammates do the same thing. It's a reflection of our past and what we were – student-athletes.

Today, I work in student-athlete development at the University of Pittsburgh, where I earned my degree and played football. Although it's been a long time since I played, I've transitioned out of my sport in my own way, yet am still connected to it through work and play.

However, not everyone is as fortunate as I am, in the sense that I'm still connected to my sport and alma mater on a daily basis. For much of the 10 years that I've been out of uniform, I've witnessed many of my student-athletes go through their own transition of taking off their jersey for the last time. For some, it was seamless; they were able to move on to the next phase of their life and not look back. For others, it was the day they wanted to avoid the most – the day they realized they are no longer athletes. Their commitment to their sport had been their identity for as long as they remembered. Now, their identity is a question mark.

As professionals working in student-athlete development, it is our duty to help our student-athletes gain the knowledge and skills to prepare for life after sport. In the area of identity and life transitions, this is one of the most difficult and time-sensitive topics. There is a fine balance to helping student-athletes understand the importance of focusing on their current situation while also preparing them for the next stage. I believe that one of the most important steps in helping student-athletes successfully navigate this transition starts with establishing a strong baseline relationship with them. Programs and resources are important, but in my experience, they are most effective when delivered with what I like to call a human touch.

For example, a student-athlete walked into my office, sat down and stared at me. She said, "Penny, I can't believe this is it. It's over. I'm done with track."

Knowing this student-athlete, I knew she had a great job lined up and was prepared. Yet, she was so caught up in her athletics career ending. My immediate response was, "How do you feel?" She answered, "Well, I don't know. I'm just ... I don't know."

I'm sure this sounds familiar. It's the end of the academic year. We get the trickling-in of seniors who just want to chat, and the conversation somehow always flows into the end of their athletics career. I always anticipate going into this topic with seniors. We've been talking about it since day one.



... It is our duty to help our student-athletes gain the knowledge and skills to prepare for life after sport.

This is where the human touch is most important. The key is taking all of the programs and services that we deliver and narrowing them down to the individual level. It's also about understanding our student-athletes as individuals and knowing that they are all unique.

For example, just because two student-athletes may compete in the same sport and are from the same region, or even the same family, we cannot assume that we will serve them in a similar way as individuals. The groundwork to all of our programs and services relies on the human touch approach.

The initial phase of this happens by developing:

POSITIVE AND TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS. When student-athletes trust us, they will approach us for anything – especially when they need help facing the end of their athletics careers. One thing that has helped me gain trust is taking the time to really listen – that has allowed me to get to know student-athletes as individuals. The information gained through listening, no matter the topic, is often vital for future conversations. I always take notes after my meetings with student-athletes, no matter how insignificant it seems at the time (such as noting a pet's name). I know that this information can be useful when I need to communicate with them in the future. The more our student-athletes know that we are

interested in them, the more they will begin to trust us.

Once this is established, we can have real conversations about their future long before the end of their athletics career is imminent. To quote Theodore Roosevelt, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." It's when our student-athletes know that we care enough about them that they will open up.

Instances in which our student-athletes will need support are career-ending injuries, end of eligibility and stressors in play (not playing at the same level or up to their or their coaches' expectations). The relationships we build when our student-athletes are under the



WISCONSIN VOLLEYBALL

least amount of stress can help us identify the times when their behaviors are out of character. This is where our gauge of our student-athletes is both a benefit and vital to helping provide the necessary care for them.

EXERCISE PATIENCE. We need to know and understand that athletics is a big deal for our student-athletes. They wouldn't be participating if it wasn't! This came up for me early in my career while I was trying to help a young football player.

This young man did not play at all before his senior year. Following his senior season, during which he got in a few times, he still wanted to focus on working out and postpone finding a career. I was trying to help him focus on moving on. In my mind, he was a long shot and he didn't even see that. I wanted him to know and understand this, so I took the "keeping it real" approach of

providing statistics of student-athletes who play professionally, horror stories and anything else that revealed the odds that this was not a viable path for him. The more I tried to talk to him, the more he didn't want to hear me. This was very frustrating for me.

Everything led to a standstill in our progression. It wasn't until I heard someone say, "Who are we to shatter a kid's dream?" that I reevaluated my train of thought. They were right. Who was I to tell this young man he shouldn't pursue his dreams? That really stuck with me.

Since that experience, I've shifted my approach and have focused on the idea of Life Beyond Sport. Instead of saying, "move on," my approach is "prepare for when the day comes." Helping our student-athletes learn how to balance their preparation is tough, especially when they've been told to focus on their athletics for so long. We have to help them realign their objectives and dig deeper into understanding what they want most out of life and how they will get there.

MAINTAIN THE EDUCATOR ROLE.

One last bit of advice I'd have for anyone working in our field is to maintain the educator role. Being in a position where we are on the front lines, working directly with student-athletes daily, I've learned that I can't be the answer for everything. Instead, when student-athletes approach me, I want to engage them in the learning process as much as possible instead of just spoon-feeding them the answers. Our focus should be on helping them learn how to figure things out, helping them identify the necessary resources or just simply pointing them in the right direction.

Far too often we are looked at as the "go-to office" that solves all of the issues. As nice as that is, it can stir up misinterpretations of what

our mission is and what we do. For example, if a sophomore gymnast enters our office and is looking for a summer job and then we provide the individual with a person's name and phone number to call for a job, are we truly helping that gymnast? By the time their senior year comes around, they will have the same expectations of our services and think that we will just hand them a career. For that office staff, the pressure is often to help serve this student-athlete as quickly as possible.

Instead, our approach should be focused on the process. We should help point them to the resources (such as career services) that can help them develop skills to search for a job and learn about the types of careers that they may want to pursue after graduation. We can support them in this process, but they must be active participants for it to be effective. We cannot be the answer to everything, but we can be a great resource to help point our student-athletes in the right direction. For some student-athletes, this will include referral to a mental health professional.

FOSTER TRUST. For us to effectively help our student-athletes transition to life beyond sports, a foundation of trust must be laid. We cannot simply rely on programs and lectures to have the type of impact necessary. The stronger the relationship, the more likely our student-athletes will understand and accept the services we are providing and the recommendations we are making.

This is where our role becomes a key factor for our athletics departments. I understand that not everyone has one role. Many of us share coaching, academic or athletic training responsibilities – some have all three roles. No matter what hat we wear, when it comes to the health and well-being of our student-athletes, this should always be the top priority.

By implementing services with a human touch and keeping a focus on life beyond sport – no matter what the student-athlete's athletics goals – our student-athletes will have the right type of support in their journey. ☺

Penny Semaia is the senior associate athletics director of student life at the University of Pittsburgh. He oversees the Cathy and John Pelusi Family Life Skills Program, which prepares student-athletes for success for life after college by using academic, athletics and community resources.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Take the time to really listen to student-athletes and get to know them as individuals.
- It is not your role to tell student-athletes which dreams they should or should not pursue.
- Talk about life beyond sport before a student-athlete gets to be a senior, no matter what his/her post-college goals are.
- Don't be an enabler. Support and educate student-athletes about exploring career options and searching for a job. Focusing on the process and helping them learn new skills is more useful in the long term than handing them a solution, even though that may be easier in the short term.



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Handling Your Team's Social Media Accounts

By Meghan Keck, Assistant Coach – Marquette University

LATE LAST YEAR, the NCAA adopted new legislation in regards to athletics personnel and its actions on social media platforms. The new legislation allows for deregulation of social media that extends not only to prospective student-athletes (PSAs), but to the PSA's team, coach or an athletic facility primarily used by PSAs. Coaches and staff were previously prohibited from endorsing these areas, but can now take "actions that indicate approval of content on social media platforms." Any action involving a keyboard is still prohibited across the board, but if you can click it, it's more than likely permissible. "Click, Don't Type" is a solid mantra.

With the recent deregulations, social media is now more than ever an integral part of the recruiting process. In the past few years, social media has become not only a way to connect with our fans and team, but also an important part of recruiting. I reached out to a few college recruiting coordinators to see how their programs are investing time and resources into social media. Here is a summary.

As social media has evolved in recent years, I've wondered how different programs are working with their media relations department on this topic. So the first question I had for my peers was, "Who from your staff is in charge of your social media?" It seems like everyone has their own little niche, from just one person (recruiting coordinator, director of ops, SID, etc.) to a coordinated effort by several people. One program I interviewed has a structured process when it comes to coordinating its social media habits. The recruiting coordinator acts as the "hub" for its social media group, which includes the SID, marketing and video departments. The group gets together once a month to discuss what projects each person is working on and how they can use each other's work to promote the program. Each group has its own agenda when it comes to social media and promoting the program, but the program has found by the group that meeting once a month allows its staff to control the message to the audience it wants, which is mainly recruits. The media relations contact is the only person that has the username and password to its social media accounts, so she

has to stay involved in the process since she's the only poster. Here's how each person contributes to the social media plan:

- **Marketing:** Creates 60% of all graphics & GIFs used throughout the year; promotes players and matches.
- **Video Department:** Creates stories about the players/program throughout the season that they clip to use on social media. They also produce 10- to 15-second hype videos to release.
- **Graphics Department:** Creates 40% of the graphics, many that they can just change out and use over and over again (Players of the Week/match scores/etc.).
- **SID:** Updates all graphics for match day. Posts videos/GIFs during the match. Retweets all posts from the head coach and anything related to the volleyball team. The SID also follows all the committed athletes and she likes or retweets anything they say related to the volleyball program.
- **Video Coordinator:** Is responsible for creating #TBT videos, a highlight of the week video, and videos for any athletes nominated for POTW. If the player gets POTW he can release a video when the award is announced. If she doesn't get it then they just release the video throughout the week.
- **Recruiting Coordinator:** Oversees all above. Creates the plan for the month. Monitors own social media pages and updates team Snapchat page.

Next I asked about a year-long social media plan. Some programs were in the beginning stages of establishing a social media plan, while others seemed to be organized with their efforts. One program has a plan for both in-season and out-of-season content. In season, the staff sits down with the marketing and graphics team with one big calendar to plan out what will be happening on which days involving social media. For example, they do player/coach takeovers, in-game promotions, player of the week graphics, birthdays, WOW of the week videos, etc. Out of season, they try to highlight areas that might be important to

recruits: academics, campus, Did you Know, fast facts and cohesive graphics.

In addition to the structure of its social media plan, I wanted to find out what some of my peers' favorite and/or most successful posts have been over the years. Here are a few great ideas that were shared:

- Lip-sync video (43,000 reaches on Facebook)
- Report Day, Non-volleyball and Boomerang type pictures. Using different filters makes the program more relatable to younger followers.
- Player Snapchat takeovers (when players repost the content of the program's account, it increases the program's followers)
- Match introduction video/hype videos
- Foreign tour recap video

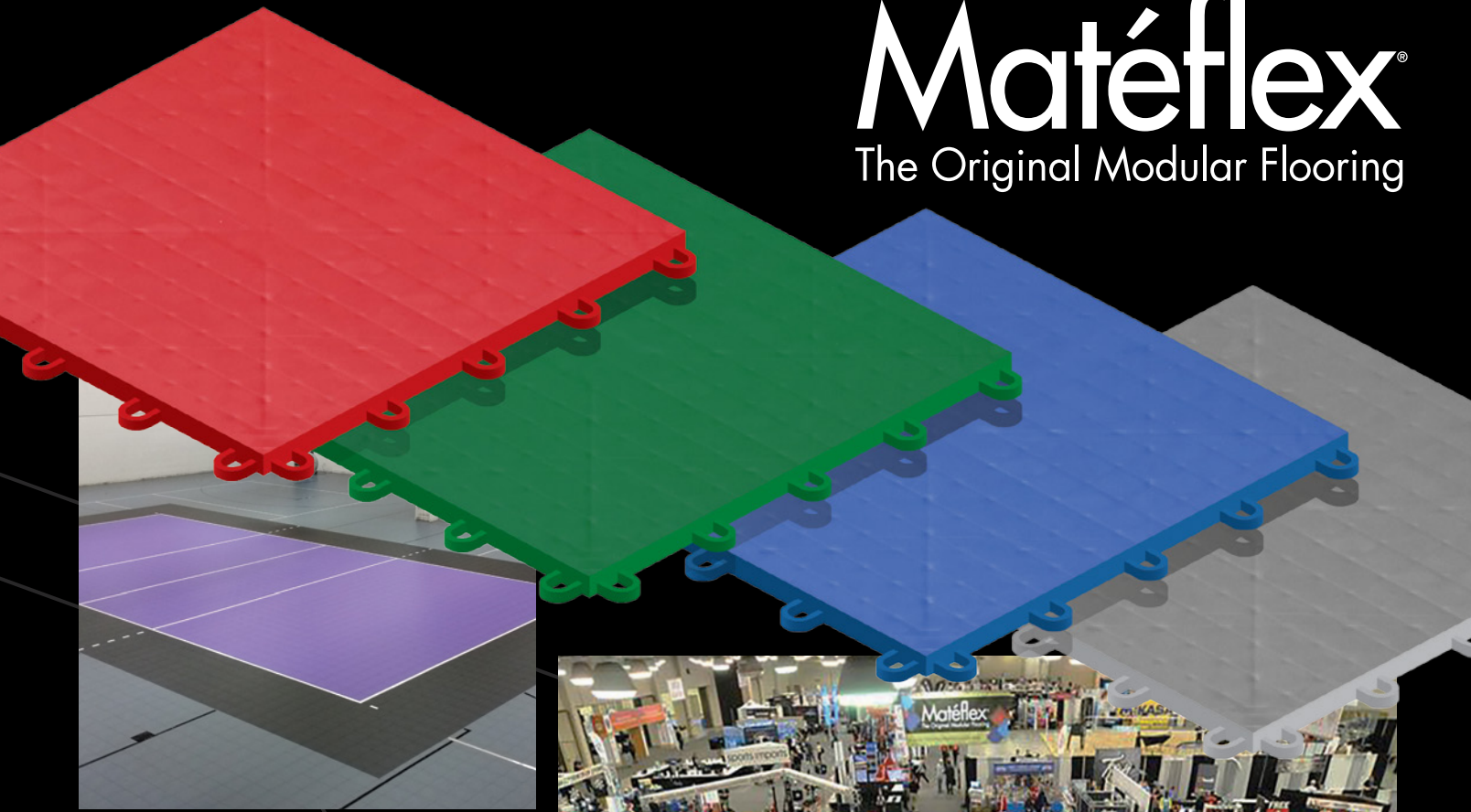
The final question I had for the recruiting coordinators I spoke with was, "How do you think social media affects your recruiting?" Not surprisingly, the responses from all five aligned. All believe that social media is extremely important to the recruiting process, as it gives recruits real insight into the program and also by following a recruit on social media, coaches are provided insight into that recruit as well. With recruiting happening so early, social media is the best way to communicate and get to know recruits. When a recruit comes on a visit or we speak with them on the phone, we can share with them some of our ideas/thoughts about our programs, but social media is one of the most effective ways for us to constantly educate our recruits about our programs, teams and campuses.

Regardless of what level you coach at or how much time you have to dedicate towards it, using social media effectively is important. Be creative and organized with your efforts, and your program will benefit from the results.

Special thanks to Lindsey Gray-Walton, Assistant Coach, University of Kentucky; Nicole Miller, Assistant Coach, Clemson University; Amy Pauly, Assistant Coach, Villanova University; Steve Vencl, Assistant Coach, Georgia State University; and Shannon Wells, Assistant Coach, University of Florida, for contributing to this piece.

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Click, Don't Type: A Review of Social Media Rules

By Alex Dunphy, Assistant Coach – Pepperdine University

SOCIAL MEDIA is a great tool for college coaches. It is a simple way to promote your team, to connect with recruits and to provide boosters and fans an inside look at your program. Further, staying active on social media only takes a few minutes per day and it is completely free. Given the increased use of social media by coaches and institutions, it is more important now than ever to understand the NCAA rules governing the use of social media. Last year, a new set of NCAA rules were implemented. This article will focus on the rules regarding three main areas: sponsors, practice and recruiting.

One of the easiest ways for coaches to thank a sponsor is to post a message on social media. When posting a message thanking a sponsor, coaches may always mention the sponsor's name in their posts. The only time this is not permissible is when a current student-athlete is in the photo. Similarly, coaches can thank businesses (such as restaurants) for their support, but cannot mention the name of the business if a current student-athlete is in the photo. Consider the following examples:

OK: Coach tweets, "Thank you @asicsvolleyball for the amazing gear."

OK: Coach posts an Instagram photo of a uniform folded on the ground and writes, "Thank you @asicsvolleyball, we love our uniforms."

NOT OK: Coach posts an Instagram photo of the full team in uniform and writes, "Here's my team in our awesome @asics-volleyball uniforms."

OK: Coach tweets a photo of players from a team meal at California Pizza Kitchen and writes, "The team really bonded during our great team meal this evening."

NOT OK: Coach tweets a photo of players from a team meal at California Pizza Kitchen and writes, "The team really bonded during our great team meal at @calpizzakitchen."

The rules regarding social media posts about practice are also important to understand. Per NCAA rules, there is a distinction between the 8-hour segment and the 20-hour segment. In the 8-hour segment, strength and conditioning posts are permissible at any time, but posts related to skill instruction are not allowed to be posted until after the activity has taken place. During the 20-hour segment, all photos, tweets, snaps, stories, videos and posts are permitted at any time. Coaches are never permitted to use social media to publicize open gyms.

OK: Coach posts a photo of student-athletes lifting weights in the 8-hour segment and writes, "Proud of our players for working hard in the weight room."

NOT OK: Coach records student-athletes participating in skill instruction during the 8-hour segment and posts it as a Snapchat story so followers can feel like they're at the practice.

OK: During a road trip in the 20-hour segment, coach records student-athletes at every activity throughout the day and posts the recordings as a Snapchat story so boosters, family members and recruits know what it's like to be on the road with the team.

NOT OK: Coach retweets a student-athlete's video from summer open gym and quotes, "The players are working hard in and out of season."

The area with the most complex set of rules for social media is recruiting. When it comes to recruiting, the absolute best policy is "Click, Don't Type." "Click" means any action indicating approval of a prospect's social media activity using the mouse: like, favorite, share, react, retweet, repost. "Don't Type" refers to any comments about a prospect's social media activity: comment, tag, mention, hashtag, emoji, quote or any

additional words added to a post.

As of August 1, 2016, it is okay to click, but it's still not okay to type. Give those fingers a rest and save yourself future trouble! If you would like to know a bit more, here are five frequently asked questions:

Q: At what age/year in high school can a coach follow or friend a potential student-athlete?

A: Coaches can follow and friend prospects at any time. Be sure to check your local state laws as the age to follow private social media accounts does vary by state.

Q: Can coaches post about upcoming unofficial visits?

A: Neither institutions nor coaches may publicize prospective student-athletes' visits to campus.

Q: During an unofficial visit, can prospective student-athletes post pictures of their visit?

A: Yes, prospective student-athletes can post pictures regarding their visit to campus on social media, provided the post was not done at the direction of the coach or institution. *Note: coaches are permitted to like/retweet such posts.*

Q: Can a coach friend or follow a prospective student-athlete's team, coach or recruiting service?

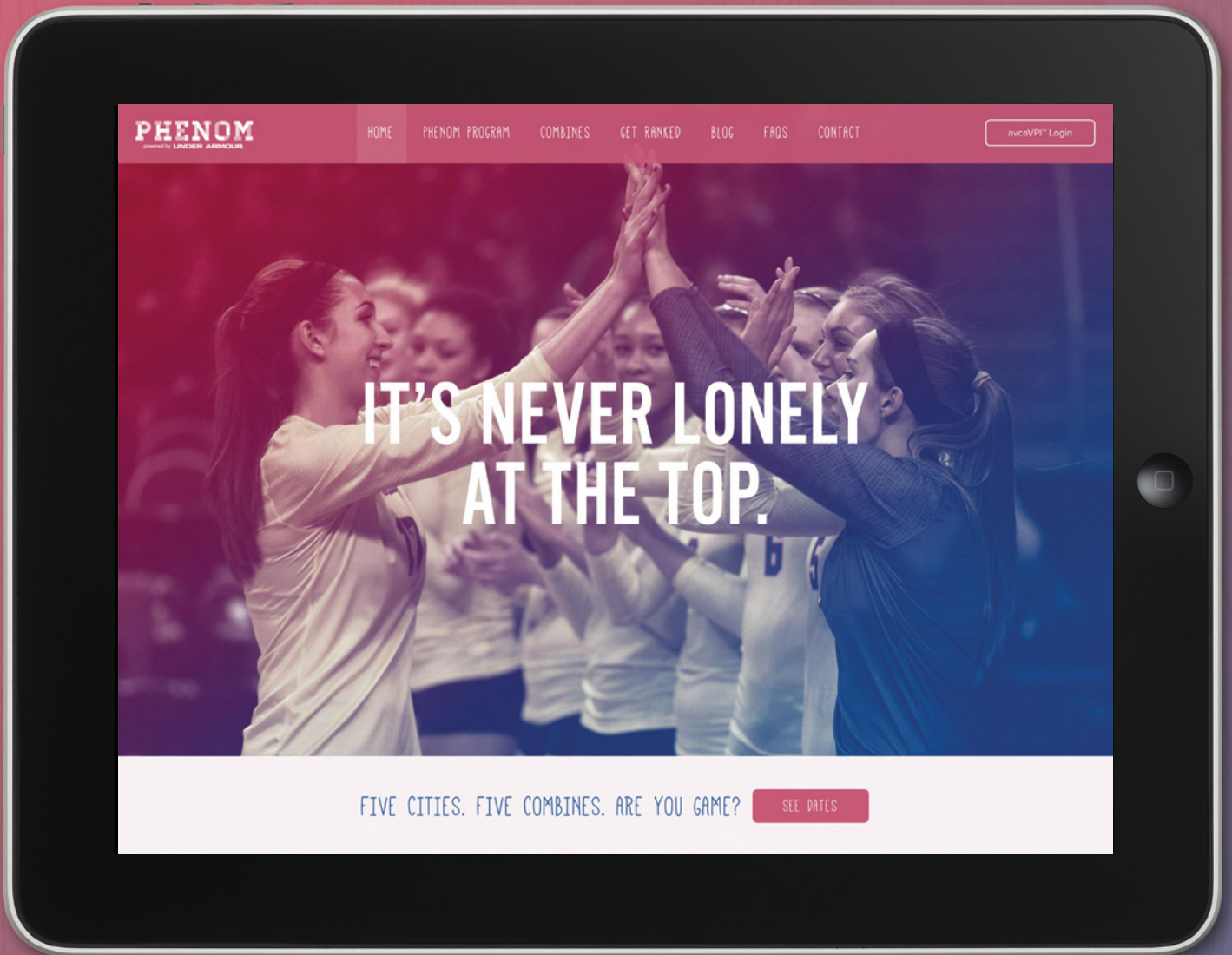
A: Yes, but the coach cannot comment on athletically related information posted by these entities. The coach may simply like or retweet athletically related information posted by these entities.

Q: Can a coach post a generic good luck or congratulatory message which mentions a specific high school or player?

A: No. ☹



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More than Teamwork

Managing the Coach-Parent Relationship

Contributions by
Sherry Fadool
(Triangle Volleyball Club),
Deb Grafentin
(River City VBC),
Jodi Schramm
(Premier Volleyball)



THE COACH-PARENT relationship is a complicated one, and also one that each club director or coach must deal with at some point or another throughout the season and beyond. It is important to remember that each situation is unique, and there are numerous ways to handle the varied and complicated scenarios that will undoubtedly present themselves. Most importantly, have a developed understanding of your own coaching and leadership philosophy and be committed to it. Your thoughtfulness and consideration will pay dividends if you can effectively communicate your beliefs to parents that are going to be bringing their own opinions, inexperience and questions to you.

At the foundation of the coach-parent relationship is the communication that must exist between the coach, leadership, parents and athletes.

Deb: I think the parents do have a voice, but I think there is a process that must be established and utilized. If we're talking about a subject as simple as, say, playing time, we establish that a parent will not come to me without first having their child/player speak to their particular coach beforehand. We have a handbook that's hosted online that the parents are directed to read, and as we move towards the beginning of the season, we have developed a step-by-step process that they must be aware of. I believe that the parents should have a say in matters, and largely believe that they have valuable feedback. "Culture" is a very big and important word in our club, and we like to believe that we have established a family-type setting. As such, we want to encourage communication and the sharing of opinions. It's up to me, as the director, to establish the line on what is appropriate and inappropriate both in terms of topics and engagement. If a parent is behaving inappropriately, I will address them in-person. One thing to consider when building your club is this: are the people in your culture adding to the fabric or tearing at the fabric? The more we work together as coaches, players and parents, the stronger that fabric becomes. If someone is tearing at that fabric, address it right away – the longer that you let it go

unchecked, the bigger the tear is going to get. Parents can come directly to me, but if they haven't first worked their way through our checklist, we'll send them to speak with the appropriate coach.

Jodi: I'm a believer that if you've signed up for something as intensive as our training program, hopefully you've done your homework and know what to expect. If you're going to invest in something like participating in a volleyball club, ideally you've done the research and are willing to trust the folks that are making this into a profession. We have a zero-input policy when it comes to parental involvement. It doesn't always make us the most popular or attractive club for people to play for, but at the same time, we attract the types of players that want to buy in to our approach and flourish. Though we encourage our players to address playing time concerns with the coaches, with our younger athletes, it isn't always as productive as they often cannot articulate their wants/needs, and in that case we will entertain questions from their parents.

Sherry: Our parent culture is a huge part of our overall club culture. Parents are just part of the deal. As a director or coach, you've asked for access to two of the most important things in their life: their wallet and their child. You aren't going to get that without them having some opinions. The reality is that you can have policies and rulebooks, but people are going to step out of line. The more that we can do to help our coaches establish proper communication with parents, the more effectively you can engage them as a partner. It helps you as a coach and a club director when the parents understand what you're doing, why you're doing and how you're going about it. That way, they can have your back when they're in the car on the way home and the athlete is complaining about playing time. We have a process that begins at tryouts wherein we engage, educate and attempt to build a positive interaction with our parents and coaches. Some coaches take to this naturally, but many are afraid of engagement, particularly negative interactions. We have to help our coaches get to some level of comfort so that they can have a positive team dynamic and reach greater success during the season.

One of the biggest issues that affect coaches and parents at the club level is the distribution of playing time. Often, playing time is handled differently at the various age levels. Parents at all levels will become involved in the playing time situation, given the opportunity.

Deb: Different ages require different approaches. The younger the player, the more you want to consider opportunities for everyone to have equal playing time. The challenge here is that volleyball isn't inherently a "timed" sport. Do you sub, do you hold off? And how many parents at this early stage in the career even understand what the substitution rules are? Hopefully, at the older stages, you and your coaching staff have already communicated what the overall goal is. Is the goal to win, or is the goal to maximize playing time opportunities? If you don't know the goal, you can't answer that question, and managing those

interactions will be difficult. Before interacting with a parent regarding playing time, have all of the information possible so you can be upfront about exactly why a particular player is getting the playing time that they are. Each player needs to feel valued when they come into your gym, and understanding their playing time situation plays a big factor in that.

Jodi: When you have a non-approach style of managing your club and teams, things need to be handled a little differently. We state right upfront what our philosophy and goals truly are. Do we want to win, develop fully, travel and have fun, develop players for certain positions and schools? Whatever our goal, we have to stick to it from day one all the way to the end of the season. If you tell everyone they'll get playing time – coach it that way. We keep basic stats and evaluate at the end of a weekend, looking at how often players got into the match. We also try to manage the schedule so that we're finding situations where we can make sure

to play everyone as well as events where we play stronger lineups. Many smaller issues can be alleviated through strong management – such as making sure better players don't feel underused, etc. Playing time must also be managed from an overuse perspective. If you're playing a long season, even the most talented players shouldn't be playing more than 70%, especially considering the surfaces. When you factor in training and match hours, it is crucial to minimize risk of injury and make parents aware of the potential negative impact that overuse can have – there's value in not playing all of the time.

Sherry: We do try to play at the highest level possible in our club. What we tell our coaches when picking their roster (we have rosters of 10 instead of 12), is that we emphasize that everyone is to have a role, understand what that role is, and how they can affect their standing on the roster. We spend a lot of time instilling in our coaches the value that comes from a positive team dynamic. Having someone on the floor that



The advertisement features a large indoor sand volleyball facility with a high, arched metal roof and multiple volleyball nets. A woman in a black and grey athletic top is smiling and holding a yellow volleyball in the foreground. An American flag is visible on the right wall. The Creative Tent International logo is in the top left corner.

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has a slightly higher vertical than a kid on the bench that's upset and complaining because they aren't playing can counteract each other.

Our experience has shown that the concept of fair playing time has different meaning to coaches, parents and athletes. Disparate views on what constitutes fair playing time are the most common source of athlete and/or parent frustration in youth sports.

A big part of the parental involvement is educational – for example, we'll find that a parent had no idea what a back row player and a middle blocker were, or didn't understand rotations, and at the end of the conversation they'll have a better understanding of how the sport works and leave happier. In our club, every playing time discussion is held by appointment only. It cannot happen before, during or after any practice or competition. Our goal in these interactions is to always reach a positive outcome. Nobody wants frustration to lead to quitting. We don't label parents with playing time issues as problems or helicopter parents – they may just simply not understand the situation clearly.

If we see parent behavior of any sort that we think of as detrimental to the athlete, we will proactively contact the parent and try to bring them in for a meeting. Oftentimes overbearing parents, in an effort to help their child, end up hurting their development in more ways than simply on the court. At the start of the season, beginning with tryouts, we're initiating parents into our culture. We have a mandatory parents' orientation that must be attended, even if the parents have been in our program for seven years. We engage with them to proactively address any issues or concerns that may come up. We know that not everyone will be happy at the end of the season and encourage parents to come to us if they feel things aren't going in a direction they like. If the experience isn't enjoyable, they won't be back.

Situations that are typically difficult to navigate can be even more challenging when coaching your own child.

Deb: We keep it pretty simple – at no time during practice, team events, travel,

etc., is the daughter able to address the coach as anything other than “coach.” If I could offer one piece of advice, it'd be to not let your kid call you “mom” or “dad” when in an open setting. You don't want to infer that there is a sense of privilege or different expectations than the rest of the team. Keep the parental expectations separate from the expectations you would have for them as an athlete.



Jodi: We typically don't allow parent-coaches. When the mentality shifts from being the best coach to being the best parent, the treatment of the players can change and things can go bad quickly. We had a bad experience which resulted in the firing of a coach in the middle of a tournament because the preferential treatment got so bad. Inevitably, though, situations like this will come up. Just be aware of the potential dangers.

Sherry: We started with a rule that parents can't coach their kids, but inevitably we have a bunch of parents that ended up coaching their kids – these things are hard to plan for. We had a coach that had her daughter on the team for three years – at 16s and 17s everything went fine. As we went into the 18s season, we sat down to discuss the possible pitfalls. This particular team had three high-level setters colliding in the same year. No matter what decision the coach made, it would look like favoritism was a factor. After we discussed it, she came to me and moved to a different team and has since expressed that she was

so glad that she didn't put her daughter in that difficult position. Everything was professionally handled. If it's close, try to avoid having the player face that scrutiny for the duration of a season. If you do coach your child, have your assistant take the primary coaching role over her.

Sometimes you need to be firm about a no-contact policy with parents.

Jodi: If you want to make an impactful change, you have to have some guts. You have to be able to bite the bullet and just do it – you will always go through some pain in some way regardless of what type of change you make. If you make a decision, go at it 100% and be willing to work through the repercussions. Maybe you don't get the best players, maybe you don't get the coaches you want. Work on educating your parents so that you don't need constant meetings to help them understand their respective situations. Utilize your website. Establish a “parent corner” and post content there to make them feel engaged. Since we have closed practices, we add video updates explaining what we're focusing on. People love videos – parents love seeing and hearing what their children are doing. If you provide enough engagement and education, you can limit and reduce the need for meetings.

Email can be a valuable tool for communicating with parents. I have one rule when I'm responding to a parent that has written me with concerns: is there anything educational in the message that I'm sending? I want to make sure that before I hit “send,” I'm giving them something useful and expanding their knowledge of the sport.

Maintaining a positive relationship with the parents associated with your club can pay off greatly in terms of athlete satisfaction, excellent reputation and retention. Coaching your coaches on the importance of cultivating such a dynamic is beneficial to everyone involved. ☺

More information on this topic and a full recording of this AVCA Convention seminar are available at www.avca.org under the Events Seminars tab. Use your AVCA login to access more great content!

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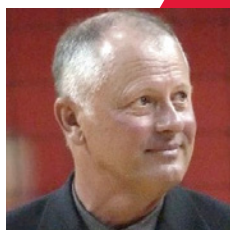
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WRITER'S DESK

A Conversation with Kirsten Bernthal Booth, the Head Coach of Creighton Women's Volleyball

Terry Pettit

KIRSTEN BERNTHAL BOOTH is the head coach of the women's volleyball team at Creighton University. She inherited a team that went 3-23 in 2002 and has developed a program that has been ranked in the top-25 for the past five years. The Bluejays have won three consecutive Big East Championships while advancing to the Sweet 16 in 2015 and the Elite Eight in 2016. This past season Creighton upset number 5 seed Kansas in Lawrence, KS, and number 12 seed Michigan in the Austin Regional semifinals. Prior to coaching at Creighton, Kirsten was the head coach at Kirkland Community College in Cedar Rapids, IA. Kirsten was the 2015 and 2016 AVCA-NCAA East Region Coach of the Year. She and her husband Erik have three daughters: Reese (11), Hayden (9) and Berkeley (5).

This was your 14th season at Creighton and your fourth in the Big East Conference. Last year the Jays advanced to the Sweet 16 and this year to the Elite Eight. What are the reasons for your recent success in the NCAA tournament?

We have had more success than people might realize. In the last six years, we have advanced past the first game in all but one season. The Big East has also given us greater visibility with recruits, especially with the success of men's basketball in the conference. It is attractive for recruits to know that we get to travel to some of the best cities in the country like Philadelphia and New York.

What is the most important thing you get from your athletic administration?

Access to the Director of Athletics is very important. My AD (Bruce Rasmussen) treats me the same after a win or a loss. He's never too high and never too low. He cares about our staff, our team and the process of developing a great program. He can help me make decisions that are in my best interest. He is just a very good person.



How is recruiting against other Big East Teams?

We rarely recruit head to head with other Big East Teams but rather the schools that are closest to us, such as Iowa State, Kansas State, Kansas and Northern Iowa. As time goes on we may recruit more players from traditional Big East territory, but right now we are an alternative to the Big Ten and Big 12 schools that surround us. Jaali Winters and Taryn Kloth and many other players on our roster were recruited by Power Five conferences but they chose Creighton because of the different experience we can offer.

How supportive is the Big East Conference to women's volleyball?

This year two Big East teams made the tournament; the previous two years it was three. Our conference is ready to explode with volleyball. The schools are great academic institutions, many of them with very good volleyball venues. When the last couple of schools are fully funded we will take off.

How are you able to accomplish what you have done at Creighton while also being a spouse and a mother to three young kids?

The support I receive is very good. When my first two kids were born, I asked for

someone to be able to travel with me and the baby on road trips. When the babies were young I could work from home in the morning and then come in to practice without feeling guilty about not being with a newborn. We have a wonderful venue that was designed with volleyball in mind and new locker rooms and a ready room.

What is your greatest strength as a coach?

This may sound strange, but my greatest strength is not so much in technical things or tactical adjustments but that I believe I'm a good person. I treat people well. I have had assistant coaches, administrators, mentors and other people who could fill in the gaps as I developed as a coach. For example, Angie Behrens (assistant coach) is the glue to our staff. She is so efficient in everything she does because she has great forethought. She knows her stuff, relates well to players and doesn't have to be asked to do something because she has already thought of it.

Your pre-conference schedule is filled with strong team from Big Ten, Big 12 and Missouri Valley Conference. Is that to improve your RPI?

Yes, but that is just part of it. Our players want to compete against teams like

Nebraska, Kansas, Kansas State, Iowa State, Northern Iowa and Wichita State. Maybe in five years I will feel differently, but right now our long term-goal is to win a national championship in Division I volleyball.

How have you been able to schedule home and away matches with teams for the Big Ten and Big 12?

Scheduling is built around relationships, and I have been fortunate to develop great relationships with the head coaches of many of the non-conference teams we play.

How has the success of Nebraska volleyball impacted Creighton volleyball?

There is such a long-standing importance to women's volleyball in the state that Nebraska volleyball helped to create. That focus on volleyball impacts every college in

the state. The high school and club coaches in Nebraska are very strong, which leads to educated players.

If you could change one rule in college volleyball what would it be?

I would eliminate the double contact call on the second contact as long as the ball does not travel over the net. There is no advantage on setting a ball that doesn't come out of the setter's hands perfectly.

What is your sense of purpose?

My purpose is to help develop confident women who come to believe they can do anything they want to, whether that be becoming a CEO, a stay-at-home mom or a coach.

What is a mistake that you made as a coach that you regret the most?

When I was a young coach at Kirkwood Community College, a kid on the team was causing all kinds of trouble, and I don't think I reached out to her as much as I would now. She was making bad decisions and I think I avoided confronting and helping her.

What is the deal-breaker in whether or not you will offer a scholarship to Creighton?

A lack of character. We watch how players interact with their teammates, their parents, and their demeanor when they visit campus. Players are going to make mistakes and that's fine if they take ownership of it. If a player responds to those mistakes with lies, however, she will not survive.

Terry Pettit, author of A Fresh Season and the DVD "The Journey to Extraordinary Coaching" at www.terrypettit.com



The poster features a large orange volleyball in the center. To the left is a palm tree and a sailboat on the water. The background is a light blue sky with clouds and birds. The text is in various fonts and colors, including blue, orange, and white. At the bottom, there are logos for Molten, Visit Richmond VA, and the Greater Richmond Convention Center, along with contact information for the Richmond Volleyball Club.

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Reviewing Replays: Give the CRS a Chance

David Portney

CREATING A GREAT volleyball viewing experience for the in-arena audience and on television must be two separate goals that complement each other. One can't cannibalize the other. Part of the experience that's now commonplace among the more mainstream spectator sports is the evolution of the challenge review system. We want the calls to be right, but not to the detriment of the audience that's there to simply enjoy the game. We still have a long way to go in order to get it completely right, but we're getting there.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward." Granted, the context of this quote when he said it was much different, but the same principle applies. I hear a lot of negatives about our technological limitations, but even the NFL was dealing with similar issues when they first started down this path. The first NFL game to utilize some form of a challenge review system, or "CRS" for short, was way back in 1978 at the Hall of Fame Game between the Philadelphia Eagles and Miami Dolphins. They had every problem in the books as far as costs, technology and pace of play, so they canned it until 1986.

They improved the costs and technology, but that version's CRS lasted just five seasons. The owners were concerned about pace of play and getting enough calls overturned to make the investment worth it. They picked it up again in 1999 with more tweaks and improved technologies and now there's no turning back. Why do I briefly outline the history of the CRS in

the NFL? They went through all of the ups and downs that we're going through now, but they kept tweaking to a point where we now can't live without it. Just to think how much sooner they could have gotten to where they are today if not for a handful of critical owners voting to shelve it.



The point is we have to keep at it and live with the growing pains. We have to keep looking at the data to track and compare year-over-year, so we know what's working and what's not. As we get better at the operational and logistical aspect of the CRS, the technology will become more accessible and cheaper. I'm not just talking about Division I.

NCAA Division II's University of Central Missouri started using it this fall season, and by all accounts has received positive reviews. UCM Head Coach Flip Piontek said it's a pretty simple setup. They use the same primary sideline camera as their home telecast and drop a separate cable down to the scorer's table where it's hooked up to a monitor. They can record that feed from the monitor

and play it back when a challenge is requested. Admittedly and quite obviously, that one camera angle won't cover everything perfectly, but they're moving forward. Even if the angle doesn't provide the proper video evidence to give it the perfect look, the worst that can happen is that the call on the

floor stands anyway, and the fans know you at least gave it a look.

If your season takes place in the fall, it's time to start thinking about how you can use some version of a CRS in your gym. If you're in the spring season, get going! If you want to implement 12 cameras and cover every inch of the floor ... great! If you're everyone else, all you need is a camera and a TV monitor. I used this technology when I attended Ridgewood High School in Ridgewood, NJ, while a co-producer at RHS-TV Sports. A halfway-decent camera will run you a couple hundred bucks, and a monitor can cost you as little as \$20 depending on the size. The last component would be a recording device connected to your monitor, so you can play back what your camera is recording. However, depending on the ease of the camera's ability to play back, you can always record the match on the camera and use the camera's shuttle function to play it back at the scorer's table.

There are obviously many challenges in addition to the technology that makes for a successful CRS. You need to remember the NFL went through those same issues, and eventually made it pretty good (it's still not perfect). Each season will be better than the previous, giving our fans the best possible experience at home and on television.



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GETTING FIT

Time to Move on Movement to Muscle

Ken Kontor

IN THE LAST ISSUE, we introduced in this column the Movement to Muscle (M-2-M) program. Now it's time to get a move on. The nine tests are the key. The URL below provides you with information on the nine tests, how to do them, what they measure and what to look for on a pass/fail basis. We also have included a score card you can use for each of your athletes. If your athletes pass the nine tests, you can start them on their strength program knowing that they possess good movement skills. We really appreciate the relationship we've had with the AVCA these past 22 years and hope this program is a start to advancing the health of the volleyball athlete. Enjoy!

Let's get started:

The following is provided by Lisa Bartels, PT, DPT, PRC, member of the USA Volleyball Sports Medicine and Performance Commission.

Here is the equipment you will need:

- Table: strong enough to support the weight of the heaviest athlete and high enough for the tallest athlete to be able to dangle their legs at the knee while sitting

- 6" block or step
- Red TheraBand Loop (the red loop provides the minimum resistance recommended)
- Two one-pound ankle weights
- Small textured rubber ball the size of a large grapefruit
- 18-inch pool noodle

Here are the nine tests. To see details about each test, visit: www.performancecondition.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/VB-Movement-to-Muscle-Part-2-The-9-Tests.pdf

The first four tests are objective, 5 through 9 are functional. Because of limited space we will provide only brief highlights. Full explanation is provided in the document linked to above.

1. Seated Hip Internal Rotation

Purpose: Tells you something about the tone/strength of the gluteus medius, a key muscle needed in keeping the hip, knee and lower leg healthy.

2. Seated Hip External Rotation

Purpose: Measuring passive external rotation gives you an idea of pelvic position

relative to the femurs, and the ability of gluteus maximus to function.

3. Straight Leg Raise (SLR)

Purpose: Measuring SLR with the athlete in a back lying position gives some indication of hamstring length/tone/strength as well as gluteus maximus function. The first line of defense against an ACL rupture is the hamstrings.

4. Shoulder Position

Purpose: Looking at resting position of the shoulder.

Functional Tests 5-9

5. Subscapularis

Purpose: In a back lying position, can the athlete rotate the arm forward in the shoulder socket without moving the shoulder?

6. Hamstrings

Purpose: Can the athlete perform resisted hamstring curls lying in a prone position?

7. Hip adductor and gluteus medius synergy

Purpose: Can the athlete perform a standing hip shift?

8. Gluteus maximus and quadriceps synergy

Purpose: Can the athlete push into a single leg stance with the knee remaining unlocked and feel the lower section of their rear end contracting/working to hold them up?

9. Posterior hip capsule perception and flexibility

Purpose: Can the athlete push/rotate the femoral head into the posterior aspect of the hip capsule?

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Pro Points

By Eric Hammond



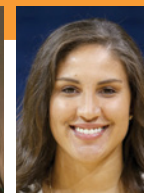
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Marie Zidek
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FOUR-TIME OLYMPIAN Reid Priddy recently retired from an extraordinary 16-year professional indoor volleyball career in which he earned gold (2008) and bronze (2016) medals, amidst several other championships and awards. In a recent phone interview with me, he shared some pointers gleaned through experience that could help coaches drive our players toward the peak of their potential. Priddy discussed a wealth of wisdom that would be impossible to fit on one page. Here are a few of the highlights.

Bounce Back

Priddy found setbacks to be crucial in his development, including injuries, match defeats and not making the Olympic travel squad in Sydney. “If I look back on my career, there are a half dozen of those moments that from tremendous loss came catalytic change that catapulted me to success,” he said. “When people start listing all the accomplishments, I think it’s more valuable all the things I lost.”

An ACL tear during the last Olympic quad opened up so much more of his potential from both mental and skills standpoints. Before the injury, the weakest part of his game was out-of-system swings. While getting back to full health, he went through a period of time where he was jumping under his normal vertical, so the block was now a more opposing obstacle. This caused him to realize that using, instead of avoiding, the block should be priority #1. Since blocking is very difficult, the attacker has an advantage because of vision and position on the court. They can tool the block and not have to deal with the defense. Even though Priddy wasn’t hitting straight down during that time, he was putting up some of the best stats in his career.

Be In the Game, Even If You Aren’t IN THE GAME

A perennial starter throughout his first three Games, Priddy was assigned to a substitute

role last summer in Rio. This caused him to rethink the way he approached matches. How could he contribute and take ownership over matches if he never touched the ball? Keep substitutes primed mentally and strategically by helping each develop an understanding of your real-time game plan and what they need to do if they have to go in and immediately score a point.



To remain prepared physically, Priddy developed a routine of constant motion from first point to match point. Through a series of exercises performed in the bench area, he was determined to be as physically invested as the players on the court. Consult your strength coach or athletic trainer to develop a routine for your subs to perform periodically throughout a match. In addition, have the bench perform sprints and dynamic movement during each timeout before you and your staff address the entire team.

It is up to the group to play for each other. If in a slump and struggling with their confidence, encourage your starters to think about their teammates, dig deep and play for them. Remind the first team that it is easy to be focused when you start or play a significant portion of the match. In contrast, it’s hard to stay engaged and legitimately ready in a secondary role.

Passing Thoughts

Last summer, he struggled with serve receive, going through what he describes as “the yips” for a passer. “We all go through ebbs and flows,” said Priddy. He started questioning himself, believing he wasn’t seeing the ball well enough and needed to see it sooner. This led to him actually making moves too early. He went back to the basics to recapture his previous level of execution.

“Vision is the #1 thing for me,” said Priddy. Train your players to create a virtual “strike zone” on the server. This imaginary box should include only half of their head (on their strong side) plus their shoulder, arm and hand. Have them watch the toss and then picture the zone. Once the server makes contact, focusing on the ball as it’s coming in is critical for last-second adjustments. Priddy doesn’t look for particulars on the ball itself until it’s about 15-20 feet away.

“That’s where I found the difference between just a good pass and a great pass over time was just that ability to track the serve,” he said. “So I’m making adjustments tracking, but I’m still SUPER-focused and trying to really see the detail of the ball by the time it gets there.”

Progress leads to success! To hone his angles and touch, Priddy starts sessions with easy jump spin and float serves. Have your server start shallow in the court and with light pace on the ball. Progress distance and speed over several reps.

“I groove at slow paces and I make sure that my fundamentals and technique are dialed at that pace so that by the time that I get to 75-80 mph it’s subconscious,” said Priddy. “I’m not thinking about dropping my this or moving here. I’m just seeing the ball and I’m making the right angle because I’ve done it a million times.”

Want to hear more from Reid’s perspective? Download his FREE e-Book at: <http://reidpriddy.com/max-potential-playbook/>

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TEAM WITH *The Best*

VFC1000 Series

- Premium leather cover indoor volleyball
- Cotton core construction
- True Shape Accu-Balance Technology
- Size 5 - Official



VQ2000 Series

- Competition indoor volleyball
- Micro-cell composite cover
- Cotton wrapped construction
- True Shape Accu-Balance Technology
- Size 5 - Official



The VQ2000 comes in every color under the sun, pick the one that matches your team colors!



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