



HANDBOOK

Wisconsin Volleyball Academy Handbook

2009/2010

Name: _____

Team: _____

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B.J. Bryant – Co-Director

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Wende Fassbender

Bruce Moriarty

Steve Scheuerell

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Kelley Van Hammond, Secretary (non-voting)

Mike Voigt

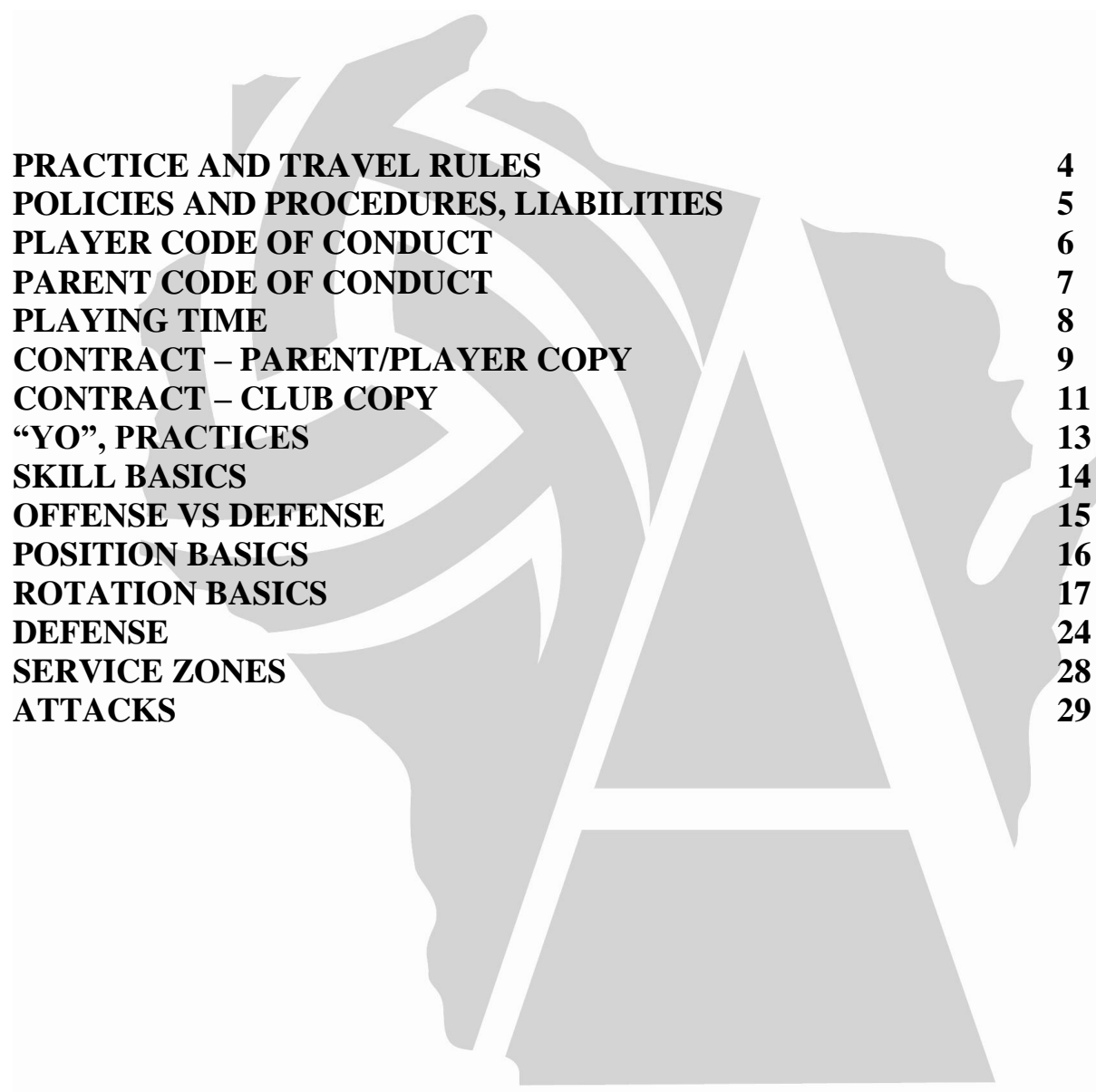
Website: wivolleyballacademy.com

The Wisconsin Volleyball Academy is currently entering its sixth season serving athletes in northeast Wisconsin in the sport of volleyball. Founded in 2004 as Fox Valley Volleyball Academy, the club now oversees roughly 20 teams varying in age levels from youth through seniors in high school. Merging in 2008 with Nightmares VBC, Academy is now the sole provider of boys club volleyball opportunities in the area.

Under the direction of Jon Ellmann and B.J. Bryant, Academy is dedicated to providing athletes of all age levels an opportunity to develop and excel in the sport of volleyball. Through consistent and focused physical and sport-specific training the club aims to maximize all club members' potentials. WVA also encourages youth athletes to achieve success in their studies, personal lives, and their communities through mentoring and charitable endeavors.

The club is incorporated as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit business and operates under a 7 member board of directors that oversees the daily operations of the organization. The board is comprised of club and local high school coaches as well as a parent representative.

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PRACTICE RULES

- 1) There is no sitting down in practice unless so instructed by your coach.
- 2) Practice will start on time and will end when all the equipment is returned to its place.
- 3) All taping and putting on of gear will be done at least ten minutes prior to practice commencing.
- 4) Run when called over by the coach for instructions.
- 5) Do not talk to teammates while the coach is giving instructions or talking. At the end of the instruction, the coach will address any questions that a player may have.
- 6) If you must leave the practice site or the practice itself for any reason, you must notify a coach.
- 7) Players must report any injury or illness immediately to their coach.
- 8) Failure to maintain emotional control during practice or a tournament will lead to dismissal from all or part of such event.
- 9) No profanity allowed at anytime by any member of the WVA family.
- 10) Mentally prepare yourself for each practice. Concentrate and focus on improving your skills at this time.
- 11) At tournaments or other events, always run off the court for time-outs or substitutions.
- 12) All players must wear team uniform in tournaments, but not at practices. All players will wear kneepads in practices and tournaments unless excused by coach.
- 13) Shag balls when asked
- 14) Work hard, and have fun!

TRAVEL RULES

Travel to and from practice will be the responsibility of the athlete. We suggest that individuals living in the same general area form car pools. The following guidelines will be strictly adhered to when traveling to tournaments outside the Fox Valley area.

1) Itineraries will be given to each athlete before each tournament. The tentative schedule in the itinerary is to be followed unless otherwise specified. Itineraries will include:

- A) Meeting Places
 - B) Meeting Times
 - C) Directions to Tournaments
 - D) Schedule of play when available
- 2) Only adult drivers (age 18 or older) will be allowed to drive to tournaments.
 - 3) Every athlete will attend and participate in all activities unless excused by a coach.
 - 4) If overnight lodging is required:
 - A) Athletes will stay with their parents, or another family of their team. (Team rooms may be available.)
 - B) Members of the opposite sex may not enter the team room for any reason.
 - C) You must be in your room with lights out by 11:00pm or 10 hours prior to the start of your morning match (Which ever comes first.)
 - 5) A player found disobeying the rules set forth by the coaching staff or team chaperone will result in immediate suspension. A player may be reinstated or expelled following a review.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 1) The Wisconsin Volleyball Academy requires that parents and players complete all paperwork and remit all dues or fees within the guidelines set forth by the club.
- 2) If for some reason, a player quits or is expelled from Wisconsin Volleyball Academy **ALL MONIES DUE MUST BE PAID IN FULL** that would have been their responsibility. Any legal fees incurred by Wisconsin Volleyball Academy in attempt to collect dues or fees; will be the responsibility of the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the player that has left the club.
- 3) All monies should be mailed to the address below.

MAILING ADDRESS:

Wisconsin Volleyball Academy
BJ Bryant
3700 N. Whitney Drive
Appleton, WI 54914

- 4) All checks or money orders must be made payable to: **Wisconsin Volleyball Academy**
- 5) All dues and fees paid to Wisconsin Volleyball Academy are **NON-REFUNDABLE, WITHOUT EXCEPTION.**
- 6) Parents, guardians, and players must act in accordance with all court, gym, tournament, and Wisconsin Volleyball Academy rules of decorum and etiquette. Wisconsin Volleyball Academy practices a “No Tolerance” policy. Any behavior deemed by Wisconsin Volleyball Academy directors, coaches, and/or staff as unacceptable and/or inappropriate, will be grounds for a penalty not short of barring an individual from practices and tournaments or immediate dismissal of a player. No refunds will be issued.

LIABILITIES

All coaches must inform their players, parents or guardians that they risk bodily injury, including paralysis, dismemberment and death, as well as loss or damage of property. In addition, they must inform them of the USA Volleyball policy that prohibits any player from transferring teams during the season once that player has represented a team or club in a USA Volleyball sanctioned tournament or has registered with a club unless under special circumstances (see Junior National Player Representation, page 4).

PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

We as a Club feel attitude is very important. We encourage a positive attitude from everyone who is on the team. All team members should be supportive and respectful of each other. A positive experience and growth process can only be achieved by having an atmosphere in which a team works together as a whole and not as individual players. As a team member for Wisconsin Volleyball Academy it is very important to respect all adults involved with the sport. This starts with the coaches, who try their best to bring out the best in all our players and are dedicated to the sport of volleyball. Every coach will see individual talent in a different way. Allow the coach to bring out this talent and it will make you a stronger, more talented and valuable player. We ask that on the court, you as a player do not argue with the officials of the game. We know not all calls are correct, but they tend to even out over time. We would like you to concentrate on things you can control, which is your playing ability. Good sportsmanship is a must. On and off the court, whether at a tournament or at practice only a positive showing of sportsmanship will be tolerated. Remember when you join Wisconsin Volleyball Academy you represent the Club and not just yourself. Each athlete will be expected to comply with the rules and regulations outlined in this handbook. Athletes will conduct themselves in such a manner that they bring credit and respect to their families, teammates and the Wisconsin Volleyball Academy. Anyone who willfully performs any act that is detrimental to; themselves, their school, or the Wisconsin Volleyball Academy shall be subject to discipline, suspension, or expulsion from the program.

DISCIPLINE: Will mean any form of corrective action deemed necessary to correct the problem.

Each athlete will be told what needs to be corrected and given a specific time frame in which to accomplish it. The athlete will be expected to participate in practices and travel to tournaments even though they may not play. If an athlete makes no attempt to correct a specific problem in the specific time frame, he/she may be suspended or expelled from the club.

SUSPENSION: Will mean a suspension from participation in any team related activity for a specific number of days. A suspension is usually a last chance result of a disciplinary problem.

EXPULSION: Will mean that the athlete will be denied the right to any future participation or privilege of the Wisconsin Volleyball Academy. No refunds of any kind will be given in the case of an expulsion.

Prior to the implementation of the above sanctions, a conference with the athlete will be conducted to ensure the athlete's understanding of the problem and its actions.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Your child has a large amount of options in sports these days. The Club asks you as a parent to help your child decide whether or not they are willing to put in the effort and commitment that is necessary to achieve the positive outcome we are after. This would include an effort as a parent to get your child to all practices and games. This includes proper nutrition and sleep so a consistent improvement in skills can be realized. We ask that parents learn the club rules of volleyball. By learning the rules it makes the practices and games more enjoyable for all. This will also help you to understand what the coaches are trying to do and why they are doing things a certain way. We as a club try to explain any rules and regulations of the game so we can all be better spectators and be positive role models for our children. It is very important for the parents to respect the coaches and the officials. If the parents do not respect the people of authority involved with the sport of volleyball then how can we expect our children to respect the coaches and officials? Children learn by example, therefore, be a positive role model for your child. Keep in mind everyone is trying to do the best job that they can and your support is appreciated. Obscenities in and around practices and games will not be tolerated. If you learn to keep your composure you can teach your child to do the same.

When your child becomes a Club member, they also become a member of the Badger Region of USA Volleyball. When that happens they sign an agreement to follow the code of conduct outlined by Badger Region. In that code are rules for parents and spectators to abide by. If these rules are broken there are a set of consequences for both the parents and player and possibly the team. Remember when you attend an event you represent not only yourself but also the rest of our Club.

WVA staff and/or Tournament Directors reserve the right to remove ANY spectator from an event if they are displaying unsportsmanlike conduct. No warning is necessary for such action.

We as a Club run on volunteer help. It is expected that all parents be involved in some way when asked.

If a parent has an issue with practice or a tournament we ask that this procedure be followed. A mandatory 48-hour cool down period be observed. After 48 hours you as a parent may speak to the coach in a calm manner about your concerns. We ask you try to keep an open mind. If you choose you may also contact any of our Board members. The matter will then be brought before the Board for discussion. We would like to hear of any comments or questions so we may resolve the problem and continue to grow as a club.

Together we can enjoy the season and encourage our kids to be better athletes and more importantly better people.

The following acts shall constitute sufficient cause for implementing disciplinary actions...

- 1) Disruptive or unsportsman-like conduct
- 2) Excessive tardiness or unexcused absences
- 3) Disobedience or display of bad attitude towards coach
- 4) Excessive late payments

- 5) Illegal transport, illegal possession, or use of illegal drugs or other substances banned by the RVA or USAV
- 6) Use of a recognized identification card by anyone other than the individual described on the card
- 7) Physical damage to a facility or theft of items from a room, dormitory, residence, or other person
- 8) Possession of fireworks, ammunition, firearms, or other weapons or any item or material which by commonly accepted practices and principles would be a hazard or harmful to other persons, state or local ordinances
- 9) Violation of the specific policies, regulations, and/or procedures of the USA, USAV or the facility used in conjunction with a sanctioned event
- 10) Conduct which is inappropriate as determined by comparison to normally accepted behavior
- 11) Physical or verbal intimidation of any individual

Playing Time

12S / 13S – Even playing time is the goal at these levels

14s and up – It is expected that all athletes will participate at each event, however, even playing time will most likely not occur and should not be expected.

If a player or parent has an issue or question in regards to playing time make sure to address it with the coach after the 48hr cooling off period.



CONTRACT

To assure that we have the same commitment from everyone in the Wisconsin Volleyball Academy we would like you and your parent(s) to sign the following contract. This contract acknowledges that you and your parent(s) have read and will abide by the club rules set forth in the player handbook.

I, _____ have read, comprehended and agree to abide by the rules stated in the players handbook.

Player signature Date

I, _____ have read, comprehended and agree to abide by the rules stated in the players handbook. I also assume all financial responsibilities related to my son's/daughter's team in the 2009-2010 club season, regardless of her individual completion of the season.

Parent signature Date

The Internet has become a popular tool in advertising and exchanging information. The Wisconsin Volleyball Academy website is www.wivolleyballacademy.com. We will place pictures on the website of players and possibly family members. Our policy is not to place first and last names of minors as captions near posted website pictures. We ask the parent's permission to use the athlete's picture on the website. We also understand that this may be a sensitive issue, and a parent may choose not to allow their child's picture to be used. The Wisconsin Volleyball Academy staff will respect either choice selected.

Yes, pictures may be used. _____
Parent Signature Parent Printed Name

No, pictures may not be used. _____
Parent Signature Parent Printed Name

TEAM _____

**MANDATORY TO SUBMIT THIS SHEET
WITH 1ST INSTALLMENT PAYMENT**

CLUB FILE COPY



“Yo” - From time to time when the coach needs the attention of the entire team, he/she may yell “Yo.” At that time all the players in the gym will yell “Yo – Yo”, and direct all of their attention to the coaches. When a coach is talking, give them the respect they deserve. Hold onto your volleyballs, refrain from talking and laughing (unless we tell a joke – then laugh even if it’s a bad one), and always maintain eye contact.

Practices - The focus level of our athletes is expected to be high. Other factors outside of volleyball, will take a distant second behind what we have to do on the court. Any factors that disrupt practice or the focus level of the team, or individual will not be tolerated. Just like a classroom, we require the athlete to learn and apply their knowledge to each drill, scrimmage or meeting we have.

Championship teams and their players understand the game. Each drill, technique, or scheme (defensive, offensive, etc.) requires full attention and cooperation. The athlete must know why we are executing these tasks, and understand how they apply to the game. When the team or individual goes through the motions with the minimal focus level, errors start to occur, greatly increasing our chance of failure. Our team and program will have the edge over teams and players that do not understand the game. We must focus in practice.

- Practice always starts on time.
- You will be ready to go five (5) minutes before.
- No one leaves practice early.
- All players must be dressed in required practice apparel.
- All nets must be set up without verbal orders from coaches. They must be set up as soon as we are allowed on the practice courts.
- Each team will set up and take down their own net.
- Teams will be in charge of cleaning up after practices, meetings, tournaments, etc.
- No jewelry or gum on the court.
- Run everywhere during practice.
- 100% focus and attention is required during practice.
- Practice huddles/talks
 - Players will huddle tight in front of coach(es) and stay attentive until dismissed. All eyes are on the coach.
- All loose balls will be shagged promptly and placed in the cart before water breaks.

Skill Basics

Serving - Serve consistently and serve to score. This does not necessarily mean an ace. A good server does her job by forcing a free ball or one option play. We want you to be aggressive and smart. Missing three serves is not being aggressive. Jump serves are encouraged as long as they are effective and consistent. If you are jumping 50% and the serves that land are being passed easily you shouldn't be jump serving. Most important of all; be confident, take a deep breath and concentrate. Serving is the only skill that you have complete control over. Developing a pattern or routine before you serve is essential.

Our zone system is based on the theory that we want to serve seams as much as possible. Anyone can pass a ball served directly to them. With our zone system there should be at least two or three seams with any serve receive we might face.

Passing- It is a well known fact that in the game of volleyball passing is the key to everything. It is a true art and successful players take much pride in it. We have so many more offensive options when we pass well. Each and every player must want to pass the ball. Every passer will touch the ground before every play and call the ball at least three times before making contact.

Blocking - Blocking is the first line of defense. All six players must move together. If one player misses her assignment the entire blocking scheme breaks down. Hands need to be high at all times, knees slightly bent, and all three players at the net need to be in the frame of mind that they are going to block their hitter. We need at least two blockers up every time. Try to anticipate by watching the pass and eliminating the setters options based on the pass. Each setter has tendencies. Good blockers figure out what they are. Finish your block no matter where you are. Just because you may have been fooled doesn't mean that you won't get a piece of the ball if you go up strong and close a hole. As soon as the ball passed your shoulders you need to be thinking, get off the net, call a set and hit.

Below is our defensive position when we are playing perimeter defense. Communication is the key. Leftsides are in charge of following the setter and need to let the rest of the team know whether she is up or down(front row or back row). Middle blockers are responsible for knowing who is in the front row and calling the hitters out to the rest of the team. Hitters won't always attack along the same spots at the net so it is crucial that you always know where your hitter is and always communicate. ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR HITTER!!

Offense vs Defense

Defense - Relentless Pursuit!!! Not going for a ball is letting your teammates down. Effort does not take height or skill. Great defensive plays, regardless of the result will be rewarded in practice. Great defense will result in points – after we serve that is the system we are in. Players need to stay low throughout the duration of the rally and keep their feet moving until the play is blown dead.

Our main defense will be a modified perimeter. We will adjust our defense based on our opponent. All six players will start in base and then release to their defensive positions when the ball is set. Positions will vary depending on the block.

Offense - Getting our best offensive threat in position to score is our philosophy. Hitters always need to be ready to attack anywhere along the net, not just the traditional sets for their position. Everyone needs to be smart. There is no need to force a quick middle off a bad pass when our outside is faced against a four foot setter. We also need to work on our shots. Swinging as hard as you can into the net or a block doesn't do us any good. All hitters need to see the block in front of them and be able to work all the angles.

For the most part the setter will be determining the patterns of attack in serve receive. She will make the call based on who is in the front row and what has been working. In transition the hitters will audible what they want. We want our hitters to use the entire net, especially in transition. Middles will call first, then outsides, then rightsides. Our setter will need to listen and process information quickly. We will have a game plan. We do not follow the equal distribution theory. As the season progresses we will work on using more and more sets.

We will use numbers for our high sets and letters for our quicks. The number of combinations we can run is mind numbing. Remember, it all starts with the pass!

Position Basics

Libero - You will be our defensive anchor. You are a constant spark plug in our system. You will communicate where the attack is coming from. Be the most aggressive passer on the court. You will be in more defensive plays than any other player on the team. Learn the habits of the hitters and use that knowledge to your advantage.

Outside Hitters - First and Foremost, pass the ball! Be available for the set every time. You will get the most sets, you need to live up to that responsibility. Limit your errors. We need our outsides to be smart while staying aggressive. We need you to put balls away consistently. You also have the responsibility of blocking the opposing setter when she is front row.

Middle Blockers - Blocking!!! You are a middle blocker, not a middle hitter. Always remember that. Finish every block by not giving up and going up strong. Create one-on-one hitting situations for your outsides by running a hard approach every time. Good middles work hard on every play. Be vocal. Communicate the hitters to your teammates and be the first to call an attack zone in transition.

Rightside Hitters - Block our opponents outside attack. That's where most of the sets will go. Be up to the challenge. Want to block her every time she gets set. You also need to be a back up setter. When the setter takes the first ball you need to step in with confidence and deliver a hittable ball. You are also an outlet for the setter in the back row so be ready to hit a back row ball at all times.

Setters - Be in charge on the court and set hittable balls. Be a leader. If you want your hitters to respond to you, give them a reason to. Setters always have to work harder to hold the respect of their teammates. You need to keep the defense guessing by always being an offensive threat. When you are back row don't forget that your first priority is defense. "Defense First"

Bench - Whether you are on the bench for one play or the entire match the objectives remain the same. Volleyball is a game of momentum. A consistently supportive, loud, and fun bench contributes huge amounts of positive energy to the team. Never sulk or "check out" of a match. Always keep your statements positive and uplifting. Participate in team cheers. Bottom line – we will always have the loudest and most supportive bench!

Note: Remember that at any given time your role/position can change. Accept this change, know that it's what's best for the team and be ready to contribute no matter where you are.

Rotation Basics

A team's success in volleyball is directly linked to each player's ability to understand his or her position on the court. The 5-1 rotation—1 setter and 5 hitters—provides the greatest flexibility and consistency for a team's offense and defense. The following document describes the basic serve-receive set-up and a basic defensive posture. The diagrams are only a starting point. In both serve-receive and defense, players should be able to adapt to the opposing team.

Some basic principles to keep in mind:

1. **Communicate.** There is no greater tool on the court than your mouth. Call every ball. Talk to your team before, during and after each play. Stay positive. Focus on what the team needs to do; resist the urge to spend energy on what the team should not be doing.
2. **Know your position.** Each player should have an identified position—2 middles, 2 outside or left-side hitters, a setter, and an opposite (i.e. opposite the setter) or right-side hitter. After the serve-receive or after the ball is sent to the other side, players should transition to their designated positions—the front-row middle to the middle; the back-row middle to middle-back, deep; the front-row outside to the left; the back-row outside to left-wing; the setter and opposite, always to the right-side
3. **Know your opposite.** Players line up opposite each other and remain so throughout the rotation. In Diagram I-1, S is the setter, lined up diagonally across from the opposite (3). 2 and 5 are middles; 1 and 4 are outsides. If you get confused during the match, look for your opposite.
4. **Don't overlap.** At the moment of the serve, players must be in the correct position. Those out of rotation are considered to be "overlapping." This applies among front-row players and among back-row players. In the rotation shown in Diagram I-1, for example, 3 can never be to the right of 2; 5 can never be to the left of 4. (It is possible for 2 to be to the left of 4, as long as 4 remains to the left of 5 and 2 remains to the right of 3.)
5. **Transition.** Once the server makes contact with the ball, the receiving team should transition quickly. Before the ball passes the plain of the net, the setter should be in position, right-of-center, ready to receive the pass. Hitters should move to their position and be ready to take an approach.
6. **Always pass right.** It does not matter where the setter is coming from, passes should always be right-of-center about 2 feet off the net. It is the setter's responsibility to be in position each and every time. The passers need a visual and auditory target to direct the ball. Even when passing falters, it is critical that the setter be in position; all 'emergency sets' should *begin* from right-of center.
7. **Listen to your setter.** The Setter is the quarterback of the team. When setting up the serve receive, each player should look to the setter for hitting instructions. Setters, therefore, should be familiar with the set-up of each rotation.

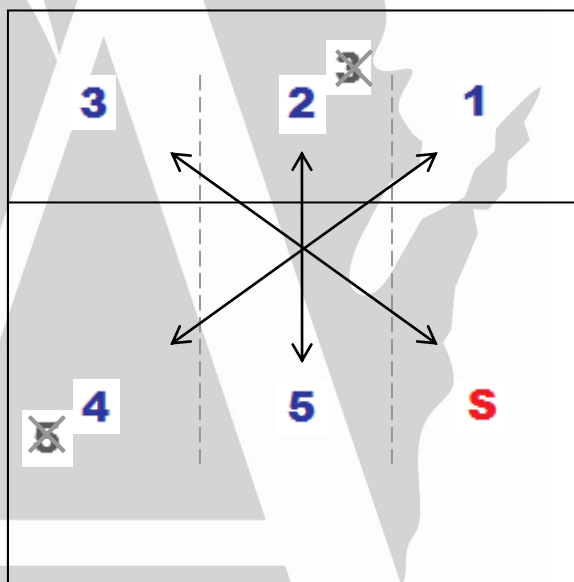
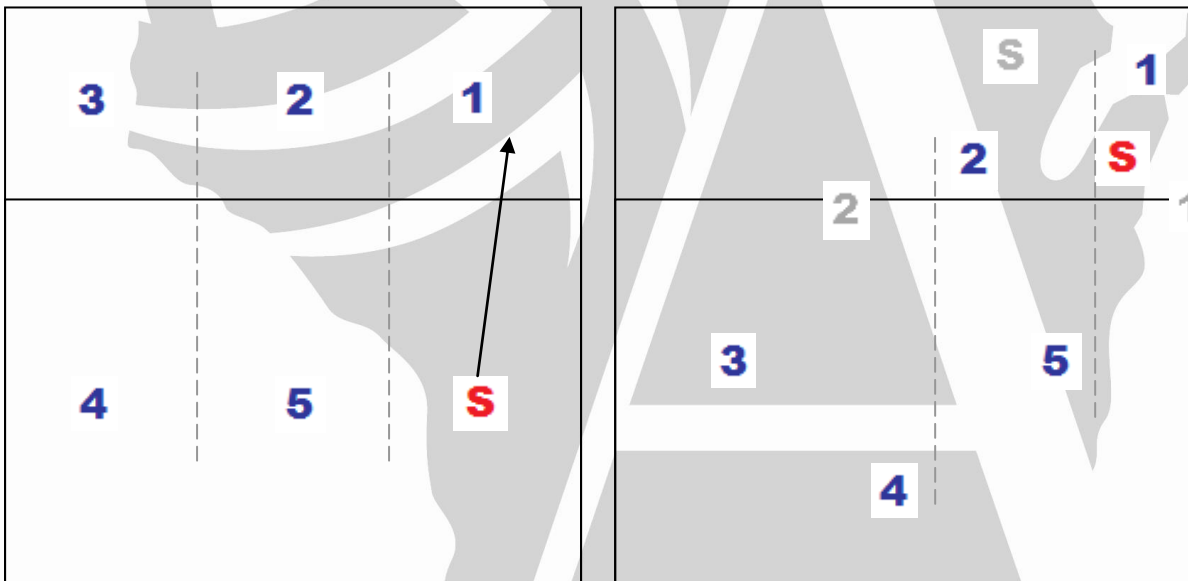


Diagram I-1

Serve Receive

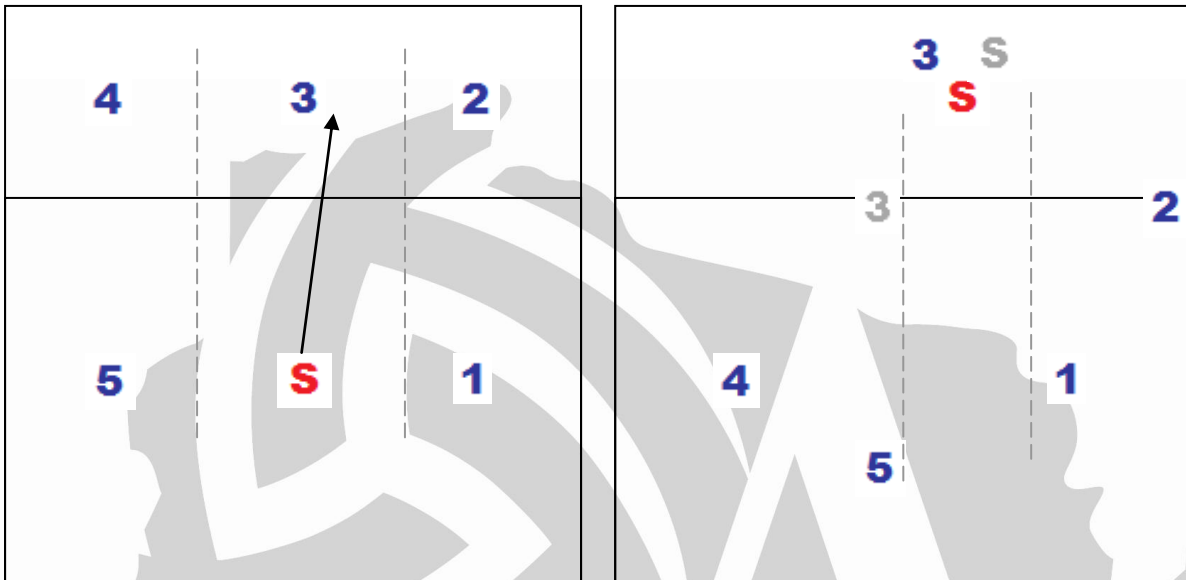
The following diagrams will help you to visualize positioning on the court. The diagram on the left shows where each player begins in the rotation. The diagram on the right shows where each player should be for serve-receive. After the offensive attack has been completed, middles should transition to the middle, outsides to the left and the setter and opposite to the right-side. This is especially critical for the opposite, as he or she is expected to be the back-up setter when the setter plays the first ball. Since all passes go right, if the setter requires help, the opposite should be in close proximity to assist.

Rotation #1 (Stack Right)



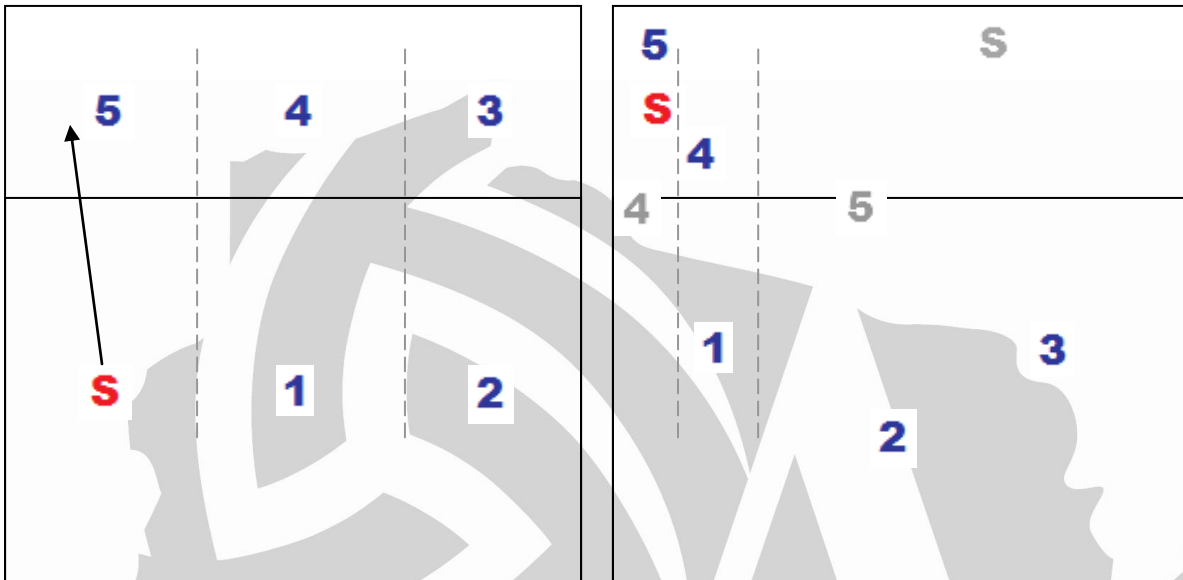
In the first rotation, the Setter pulls 1 up to the right-hand corner. As soon as the server makes contact with the ball, the Setter should move to the setter's position, right-of-center on the net. 1 and 2 should move to their hitting position, ready to take an approach. 3 drops back to help 4 and 5 pass the ball. In this rotation, overlap-risks are minimal, as long as the Setter remains to the right of 5 and 'behind' 1.

Rotation #2 (Stack Middle)



In the second rotation, the Setter pulls 3 up to the center-front. It is critical, as soon as the server makes contact with the ball, for 3 to back up into hitting position. Otherwise he or she will be in the way of the setter. 4 drops back to help 5 and 1 pass the ball. In this rotation, there is an overlap-risk with the back-row. The Setter must be in between 5 and 1 and 'behind' 3.

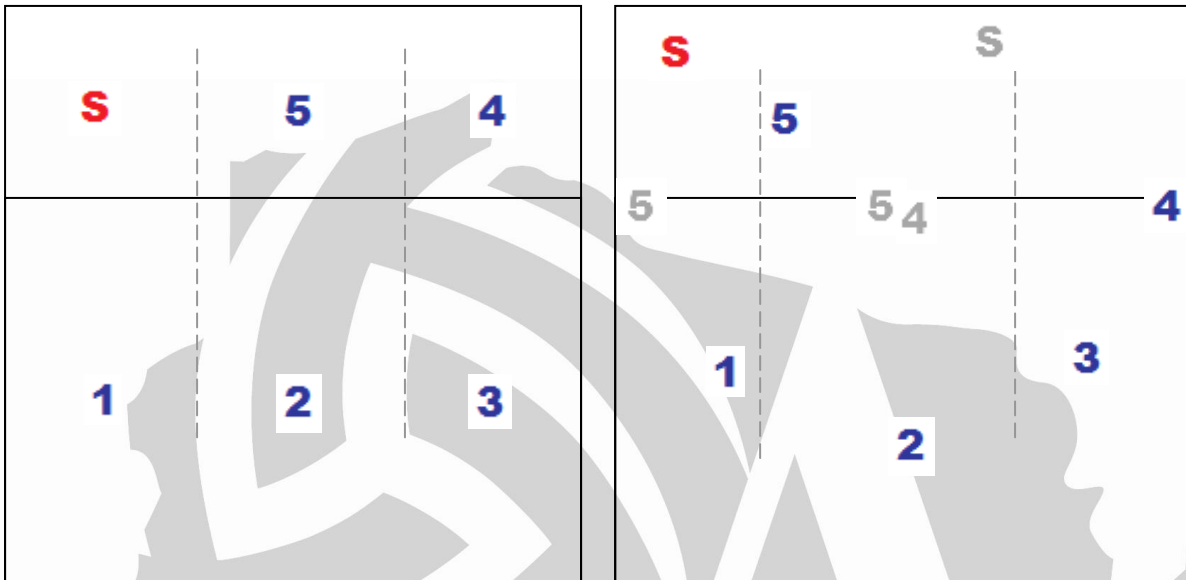
Rotation #3 (Stack Left)



In the third rotation, the Setter pulls up 5 and 4 into the left-hand corner. It is critical, as soon as the server makes contact with the ball that the Setter sprints into position. 4 should quickly move into position on the outside. Once the path is clear, 5 should quickly move into position. 3 drops back to help 1 and 2 pass the ball. In this rotation, overlap-risks are minimal, as long as 5 remains to the left of 4, and the setter remains ‘behind’ 5. The setter also cannot leave too soon without risking an overlap with 1.

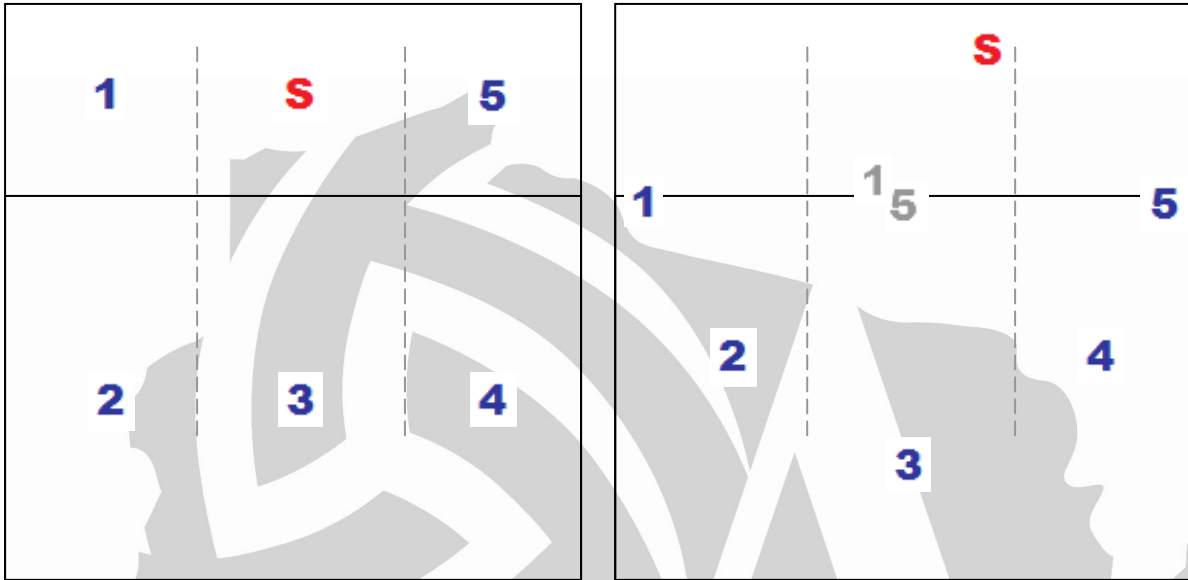
(For a 6-2 rotation—6 hitters, 2 setters—setters always sets from the back-row. In the front row, the setter becomes the opposite hitter; the Opposite (3) sets when entering the back. Positioning recycles to Rotation #1.)

Rotation #4



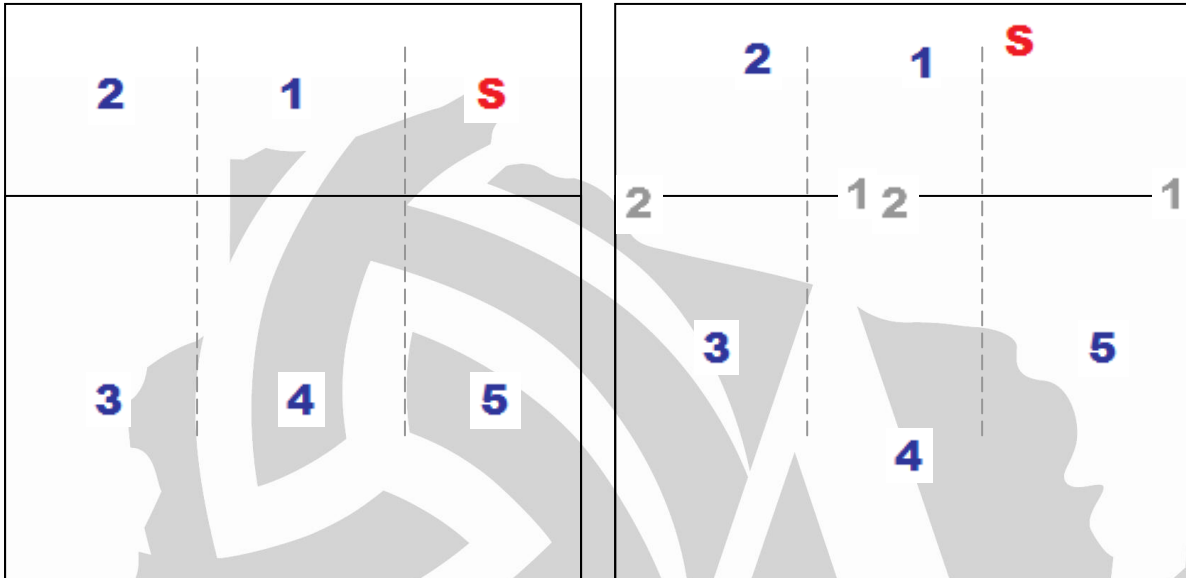
In the fourth rotation, the setter is now in the front row. When the Setter is in the front row, the remaining two hitters have greater flexibility as to where they set up and where they hit. As long as the Setter is to the left of 5, and 5 is to the left of 4, all is well. The three front-row players could, conceivably, all ‘stack’ in the left, middle or right depending on where the hitters are heading.

Rotation #5



In the fifth rotation, much like the fourth, the front-row has a lot of flexibility. The diagram above shows what is called “split-hitters.” The Setter should still expect passes right-of-center. If the setter receives passes in the middle (i.e. calls to the team “pass middle!”), the opposing team will know there will be no middle offensive attack.

Rotation #6



In the sixth and final rotation, much like the fourth and fifth, the front-row has a lot of flexibility. Hitters 1 and 2, at the direction of the Setter, can hit from wherever they'd like. Depending on the offensive play, all the back-row players should be ready to hit.

Defense

Though a decisive spike feels good, defense wins games in volleyball. The previously described serve-receive set-ups and transitions are as much about preparing a team's offense as they are about preparing the team's defense. While it may be convenient for players to remain where they fall in the rotation, by transitioning to the same position play after play, the team builds cohesion and consistency. When a defensive player returns to the same position over and over, he or she is more likely to learn.

Some basic principles to keep in mind for the back row:

1. **Perimeter defense.** The most common defensive set-up is called a "perimeter defense." In other words, back-row defensive players position themselves along the perimeter of the court, with one foot on the line. Players are always ready to move *into* the center. This way they know when balls are out; and their movements are directed into the court and the rest of the players. The reverse—starting in the center and chasing balls on the line—has the predictable outcome of sending balls flying into neighboring courts.
2. **Get low. Keep moving.** Back-row defense is played low, with your knees bent and butt low. Hands should be in a neutral position in front of your body, ready to move left, right, down or up. Defense is never played standing up. Defenders should constantly be moving through the entire play, adjusting and anticipating the direction of the ball.
3. **Be in place.** When the opposing hitter is attacking the ball, STOP! Even if you are out of position, STOP! Be low and get ready. You have a better chance of passing the ball from a stationary, neutral position, then when you are a moving target. As the level of play improves, increasingly it's just about getting a good touch on the ball.

Some basic principles to keep in mind for blocking

1. **Block the court.** Blocking is not about the opposing team; it's about defending your own court. Blocking is about what's behind you, and what's in front of you. The block should take a piece of the court away

from the hitter, directing the ball to the positions of the back-row defense.

2. **Get low.** Blockers should also be low, cocked and ready to jump, with their hands in front of their face. When the hitter attacks, only one thing should be needed: to jump.
3. **Seal and penetrate.** A good block is set by the outside or opposite blocker, about 5 feet from the antenna. Yes, *five* feet from the antenna. The middle blocker should transition to close the block by feeling for the shoulder of the second blocker. Blockers should jump *together* and pike over the net.
4. **Block straight up.** Jump straight up—even if you're not in position. The defense sets up behind the block. If you drift, the hitter is certain to tip off your hands or find the hole you've created behind you.

When competing, it's valuable to under react. Sometimes the opposing team will have a good hit. Sometimes a player will incorrectly anticipate the ball, or cheat too far in one direction. That's ok. Return to the basic principles and the basic set-up before making dramatic changes in the rotation or positioning of each player.

Above all, in defense, be flexible. The following four diagrams will demonstrate a generic defensive pattern. Defensive positioning should always adapt to the hitters. Some hitters are incapable of hitting a hard line shot. If so, the sideline defender can shift up to cover closer behind the block. Other hitters love to tip the deep corners. If so, the sideline defender should stay back ready to cover over his or her head.

Outside Blocking

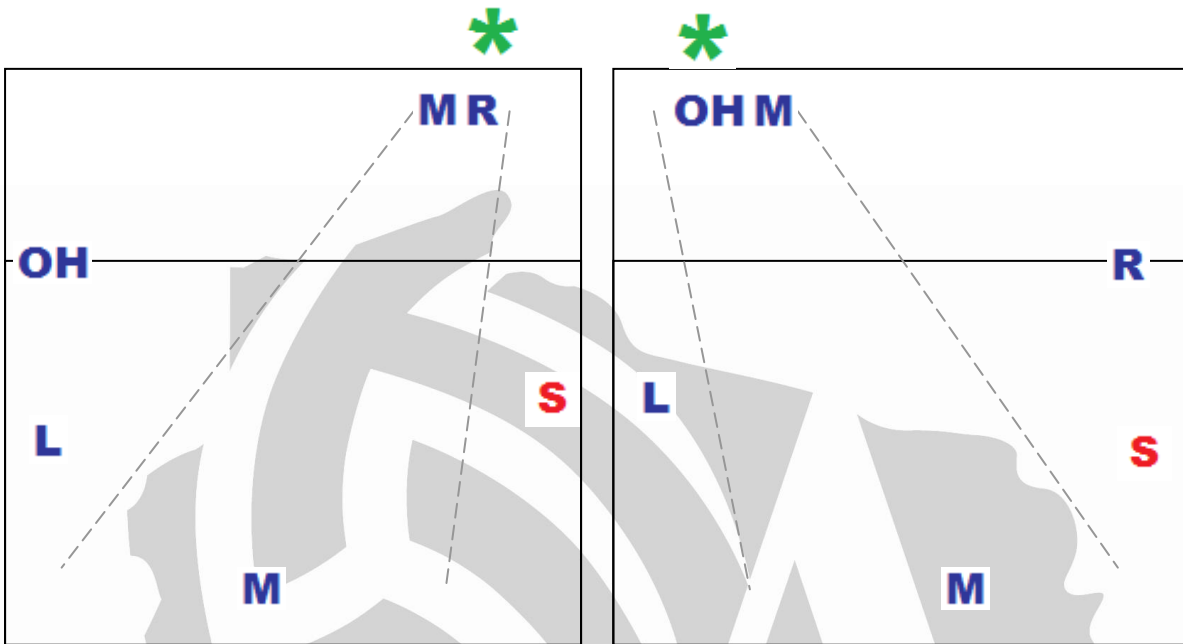


Diagram D-1

Diagram D-2

Right

Their outside hitter is likely their strongest, most reliable hitter. Thus, every defense should know how to block the right-side and set up defense behind that block. In the diagram D-1, the middle blocker (M) closes to meet the right-side blocker (R). Together they protect the bulk of the court.

The Setter is prepared to defend the line—both hard line hits and soft touches over the block. The outside hitter (OH) drops back to the 10-foot line and is prepared for touches and hard angle shots. The left-wing (L) is prepared for deep cross-court shots. The middle back defender remains on the back line, prepared to assist with deflections off the block and tips into the deep corners. Together, L, M and S defenders cover the middle of the court. The OH covers in front of the 10-foot line. To do this, each player must be in a neutral defensive position, on the perimeter. You cannot dig your heels in to stay, nor cheat to anticipate the ball before it is hit.

Left

Blocking left—their right-side hitter—is the exact opposite of blocking right.

Middle Blocking

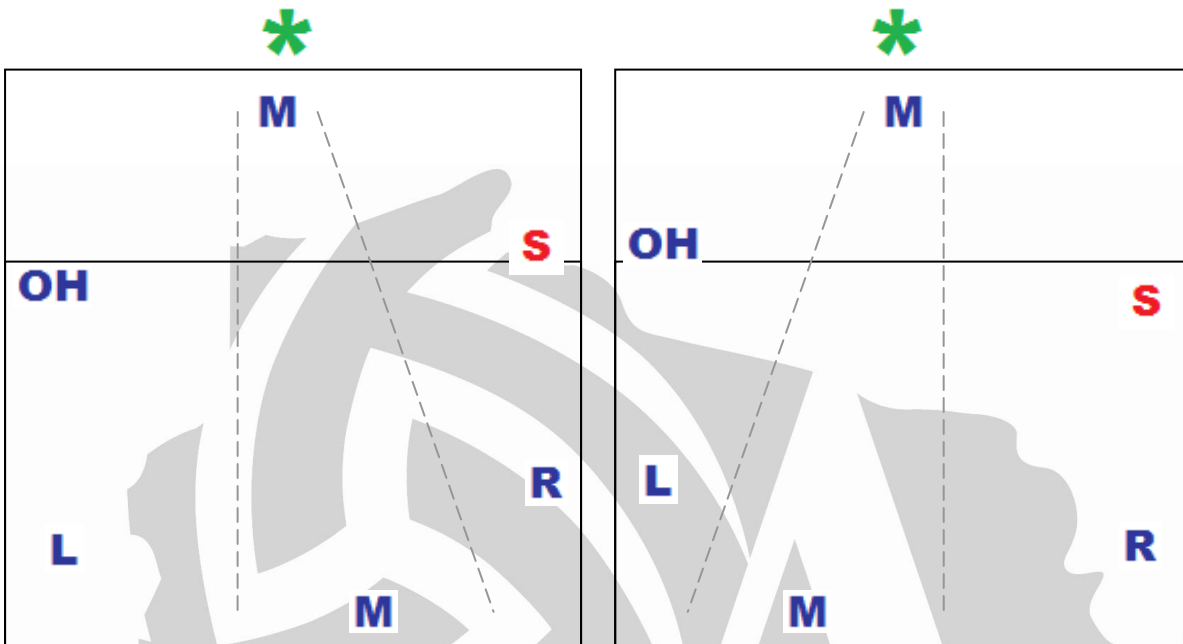


Diagram D-3

Diagram D-4

Hits from the middle are likely to be quicker than those from the outside. Occasionally, the middle blocker (M) blocks alone. As often as possible we want our leftside doubling with the middle. Obviously, a lone blocker cannot take away as much of the court as a double- or triple-block. The team should decide based on the skill of the team's defender and the tendencies of the opposing hitter which half of the court the blocker will protect. If the hitter likes to cut to the right, go with Diagram D-3. Or, if your best defensive player is your right-back (R), go with Diagram D-4.

Taking a closer look at Diagram D-3, the middle blocker (M) is protecting the right-side of the court. The right-back defender (R) should line up on the right shoulder of the blocker prepared for hard angles and tips. The left-back defender (L) should line up on the left shoulder of the blocker prepared to dig the strong angle of the hitter. The Setter (S) and the outside hitter (OH) should be ready for hard angles, tips and—most importantly—deflections off the block.

When the middle blocker is protecting the left side of the court (Diagram D-4) the above description applies in reverse.

When left front doubles left back will move up to cover tips, rolls, and deflections off the block.

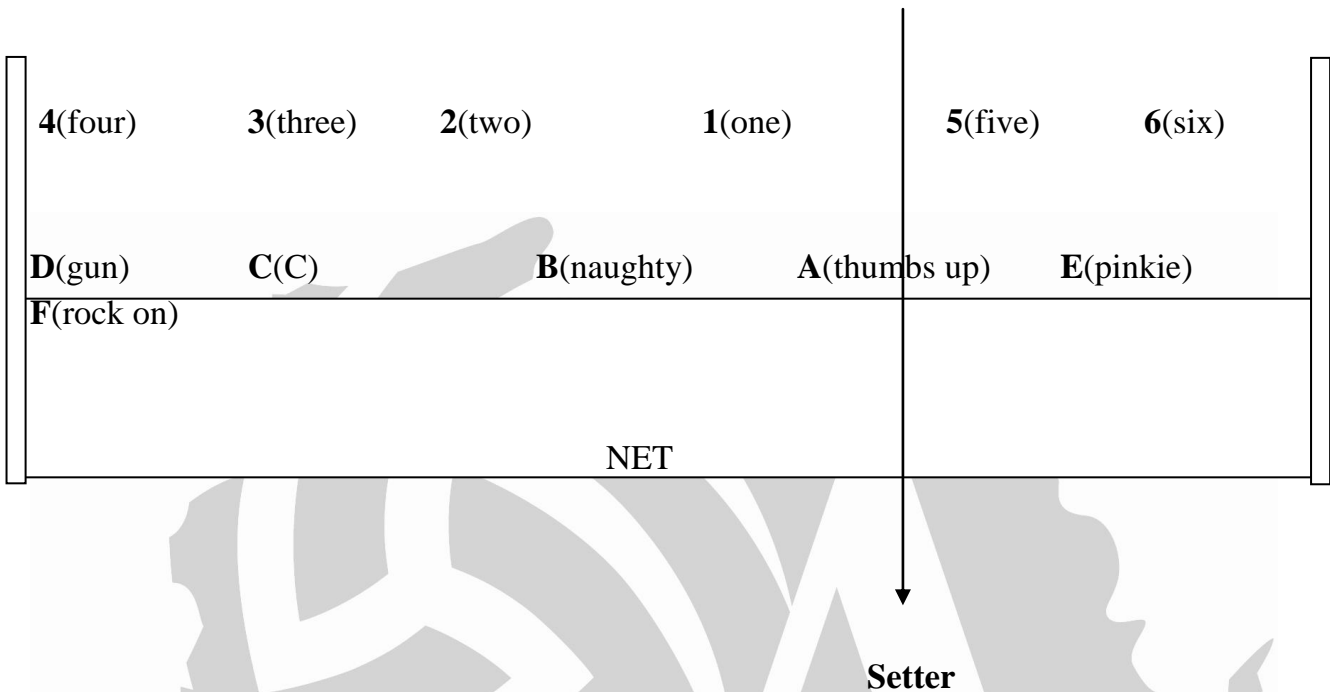
Service Zones

This diagram shows our 8 serving zones. We want to serve the last 6 feet of the court or the first ten feet of the court. Our goal as a team is to serve aggressively and consistently. We would like to promote float serves, jump floats, and traditional jump serves which create topspin after contact. A player can receive the “green light” for jump serves after successfully serve 80% during a practice session.



Service zones will be signaled to the server by coaching staff prior to the serve. Players should look to the bench to receive zone. We are looking to exploit poor passers, bad positioning, and perhaps weaknesses in setter/hitter movement or ability.

Attacks



Serve Receive – When we are in serve receive all of our attacks will be predetermined and signed to our hitters by our setter. The hand signals are shown above in parentheses. Our hitters will make eye contact with our setter and say “yes” to confirm that they know what they are hitting.

Free Ball Plays – Each team will establish their own predetermined free ball plays. Each play will have its own name and will be called out by the coach or setter. A free ball play may be called in as early as prior to a serve or perhaps quicker like during play.

Audibles – Players can audible their attack when the predetermined call is no longer possible. Example... A middle blocker was told to run a “C” but the pass was too far off the net. In this case the Middle Blocker could Audible for a “2” or “3.” Instead of losing an offensive option this has kept our middle in the play by creating a different attach that may still be effective. This also keeps the blockers on the other side of the net honest. If they know our middle quits after a bad pass it becomes easier to block our team every time we have a bad pass. Audibles can also be used to create more effective attacks during a longer point. The longer a point carries on the more a teams defense tends to break down (not our teams) so by audibling to something other than our traditional “4, A, or 6 we may have a better chance of terminating the point. In the event that we do use audibles this is the order in which we do so. Our middles call first, followed by our left sides, and lastly our right side.