**Hitting and serving for younger players**

**SERVING:**

SERVING PHILOSOPHIES & GAME STRATEGY

**1. SERVING PHILOSOPHY**

The serve, at the high school level, can be a major offensive weapon. However it can also be an achilles heel to many teams. Therefore your serving philosophy should compliment the competitive and skill level of the team you are coaching.

When adopting a serving philosophy, I would envision a scale of one to ten; with conservative being a one and aggressive being a ten. So obviously, moving up and down the scale, there are degrees of a conservative or aggressive attitude

**2. COMPETITIVE LEVELS**

ADVANCED LEVEL -- High level H.S. or Collegiate

Aggressive and accurate serve a must.

Measure effectiveness by Ace vs Error Ratio

Try to eliminate or reduce missed serves in net.

Accuracy -- Team needs to be able to hit target, high %

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL --

Accuracy becomes more essential in that your opponent is likely to have fewer competent serve receivers. Less experienced.

Will probably not be as competent with aggressive serves.

although it is important to stress good pace.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT LEVEL

Emphasis on reducing serving errors and making opponents pass the ball.

Accurate = In the court

Stats = Percentage of successful serves

**3. Our serving philosophy is to serve aggressively and find a weakness to attack.**

Before we break the huddle prior to a match, I usually remind them to concentrate on getting into their serving and passing game. It seems that when we are doing that, our offense takes care of itself.

By serving tough and aggressive, we:

A. Keep opponents out of serve receive offense. Less sideouts.

B. Allows us to get a ball we can convert in our transition offense for a pt.

Team must adopt attitude that good aggressive serving will ultimately win out if hey stick with the plan and execute. A good aggressive missed serve cannot be perceived as a let down, only a missed opportunity, that will be corrected with a sideout and the next server.

**4. AGGRESSIVE SERVING PHILOSOPHY**

1. Make sure your player understands your definition of a good aggressive serve.
2. Be consistent, the coach cannot express displeasure in a missed serve if you are asking for aggressiveness.
3. Eliminate net errors as much as possible

Make the opponent make a decision.

4. Not trying to better a perfect serve.

Establish a rhythm. Back one off if nec.

5. Mix up serve selection: deep and hard to short serve.

6. Understanding when to abandon aggressiveness and move towards conservative.

7. Good aggressive serving situations

A. Beginning of the game

B. When way ahead or behind

1. When behind in a match, the first thing I do is analyze our serving aggressiveness. It can change momentum immediately.

**5. ACCURATE SERVING PHILOSOPHY**

1. Weak Serve Receiver

A. Scouting or prev. knowledge

B. Do not assume a good defensive player is a good S.R.

2. S.R. who just committed an error. Passing or attack error.

A. Be relentless

3. Substitute

A. Particularly a late game entry.

4. Short or Deep Serve

A. Based on S.R. alignment

5. Seams

A. Requires decision, communication & movement

A problem for most teams

6. Zone that Setter is transitioning from

A. Distraction & confusion

7. Zone 1

A. Creates tougher pass for the setter to handle.

**6. IMPORTANT SERVING SITUATIONS**

1. Match or game point

2. After timeout

3. After substitution

4. Following missed serves by teammates

5. After winning a long rally or great play. Momentum.

6. First serve of the match or game

**7. SERVING SIGNALS**

1. Can players hit zones

2. Makes server concentrate more

3. Without signals, the player must decide. Good training

4. Reduce # of zones if having trouble (Deep or short)

**8. TENDENCIES TO LOOK FOR:**

1. Server missing 1st serve

2. Server hitting 1st or 2nd serve but missing consistently after that.

Bring to players attention, sometimes they do not realize they have created a mental barrier. Set a goal to erase the barrier.

**9. GAME STRATEGY & LINEUP CONSIDERATIONS**

1. Do you consider service strength when developing a starting lineup of rotation?

1. The weaker the skill level, the more important it is to get good servers early in rotation. Serving may be 70% of your offense.
2. **STATISTICS**

# Point system

5 = Serve an Ace.

4 = If serve causes opponent to overpass

3 = If opponent’s setter has but one setting option.

2 = If opponent’s setter has two setting options

1 = If opponent’s setter has three options

0 = Service error

## Percentage system

Percentage of successful serves versus the number of attempts

## Ace to error ratio

**Hitting**

**Teaching Progression**

* Tennis ball and partner working with swing from the ground, no jumping.
* Progress to a volleyball from the ground.
* Put player on a box with tennis balls or smashed cups
* Coach tosses ball to player on the box
* Player broad jumps to attack. (don’t worry about result)
* Player takes the last 2 steps of their approach
* Full approach off of a toss
* Full approach off a setter
* Coach tosses vs. a block
* Live attack vs. a block

Key Words

* Big drive step
* Left, right, left
* Load hips
* Elbow high
* Hip to elbow: Open Hips
* Snap and follow through
* Left hand high
* Get the ball high

**Ready Position List**

* Shoulders over toes
* Arms dangling
* Eyes on the ball

**Movement to Ball**

* Big drive step to the ball
* Find the peak of the ball
* Hips to your setter
* Explode as you slant

**At Contact**

* Left Arm is high
* Right Arm is high and back
* Right hip is loaded
* Elbow first
* Snap (like snapping a towel)
* Finish with natural motion

**Drill**

* Sef toss and hit
* Attack to target boxes
* Left to Left attacking (Right to Right, Left to Right, Right to Left)

Pepper exchange

* Box Swings
* Thumb Up and Thumb down progression

***Attacking Practice Plan***

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| **6:30** | **HAND CONTACT** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Discuss importance of hand contact | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Bounce & Snap | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Wall Work-** Attacking with no bend in the elbow \*emphasize snap\* | | | | | | |  |  |  |  |
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| **6:40** | **SHOT MAKER** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Down balls first (no jumping) | | | 3 min. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Approach and jump | |  | 3 min. |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **6:55** | **TECHINQUE - FOOTWORK & DRIVE STEP** | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Feet to the ball - not having long approach | | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Drive Step with feet together | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Position of feet when planting | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Use of arms in approach | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **7:05** | **Attacking Drills** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 1 | Drill approach on courts- approach and hit ball over with head | | | | | | 3 min each | |  |  |  |
|  | 2 | Flamingo Attacking | |  |  |  |  | 4 min each | |  |  |  |
|  | 3 | Full approach and attack | | |  |  |  | 4 min each | |  |  |  |
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| **7:20** | **Transition Attacking** | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Discuss footwork from block to transition | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Drill- Transition footwork attacking lines** | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **7:35** | **WATER** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **7:40** | **Controlled OoS Drill** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Setters in right back digging down ball (Coach initiated down ball) | | | | | | |  | | | |
|  |  | Liberos coming from left back setting OoS to pins | | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Other liberos digging the other side | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Goal- Plus 25 swings to deep corners** | | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |