

Arizona Sidelines

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Your Way? My Way? Why Is There Only One Way?

For the past two years I have heard coaches from almost every corner of the country criticize and debate over the proper way to train teams. I had an opportunity to simultaneously work with two very highly debated training philosophies in my first 6 months of coaching. At one end I was working with a highly successful college program that was a firm believer in the known “Carl McGown” way of training. On the other end, I was coaching for a highly successful club team in Northern California that was a firm believer in the “Toshi” method of training. The biggest difference in these two, one was big on technical training, the other was more game like.

If you’re reading this article to find some insight on a training philosophy that is more superb than the other, or looking for that secret way of training that is going to give your team the edge then you should probably stop reading now.

Here begins the reason for this article:

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Leg Exercise to Help Youth Female Volleyball Athletes Prevent ACL Injuries during Water Breaks

As many of us know there are many different ACL prevention program to aid in prevention of injuries, which is great, as well as needed. The constant rise of female youth competitive athletics has demanded that trainers keep themselves educated on this very topic. I have been doing prevention exercise for quite some time and I have decided to write about a few that has proved to be the most fun for youth athletes as well as challenging. Now, the is by far not the last in continuum, but they should provide a basis of what trainers can achieve if implemented correctly, not to mention it’s minimal equipment usage.

1. **Bodyweight Squats**—I use these to show youth proper squatting form before we get into the more demanding exercise of the program. Here we can make sure that the Kinetic chain is working in harmony;
 - a. Knees behind the toes, with proper alignment,
 - b. Back not protruding to far forward
 - c. Keeping the heels from rising
2. **Single Leg Squat**—This is the next progression to the body weight squat. I want them to be able transfer the same weight they were able to control with two legs now with one leg. The same techniques apply to proper squatting form. Make sure they are good at this exercise before progression to more speed or a lower squat position.
3. **Tennis ball pick-up and put-downs**—Once we have learned the skill of squatting now we can begin to use some movement skills along with the single leg squat.
 - a. Place small X’s of duct of similar product in different angle from the bodies’ anterior view, preferably 315 degree, 0 degrees, and 45 degrees.
 - b. Then we have the athlete place the ball in the center of an x, then single leg squat with a reach to pick it up and place on another x in a different spot. We work all three planes of motion with this exercise.
 - c. Once they get proficient in this exercise, just speed it up gradually and that will increase the intensity without any resistance load.

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Your Way? My Way? Why Is There Only One Way?

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Five years ago I got my foot in the door for coaching collegiate volleyball. At that time I had just graduated from college and had no real idea of what kind of training was right or wrong or which way was better. For that matter I didn't really have any concept of what kind of coach I was or what kind of philosophy I believed in.

At 21, my brain was nearly overloaded with trying to keep all of the fine details of each style in tact. On top of that, the minute I walked into the other gym all I would hear is how this was the way to train, and how the other style wasn't. I was almost timid at times just to give my suggestions on things for fear that I would intermix the two....which was a big "no no".

I had done both and quite frankly neither really worked better than the other for my team. Not to say that they aren't great...but they didn't fit me or my team. I was fed up with being told how to train my team. Why are there only two right ways to train? Who made this a law? And who says you're right? And why do you feel the need to tell everyone else that your way is right, and theirs is wrong? I've constantly been told that there is no universal way to coach, so why is it that you were trying to make me?

Here then began the journey:

Six months later, at the ripe age of 22, I got my first head coaching job at Loyola College in Maryland. (Where I am presently still employed). I was nervous on whether or not I knew how to train this team properly and was nervous about whether or not I actually knew what kind of Head Coach I was. The first 2 years were a huge learning experience for me. At first I chose the "Toshi" method for training....my team would do hours of technical training....I caught myself having to write down all of the details and specifics because I couldn't keep them straight. There were words on the way to perform an arm swing with the correct biomechanical. blah blah blah..(That's what I felt like when I read this stuff, and I knew my team probably felt the same way). I could still teach them the correct technique, but I had to find my own words. Since I was now in my own gym I knew that there wasn't a government listening to every word I said. The following year I started to add a few more game-like scenario drills, but they were usually at the end of practice and it was probably for about just a 30 minute chunk. And so passed a 7 win season...

Two years later I had 8 freshman coming in and four sophomores in my roster, and I had an epiphany...time to revamp my way of training! So, I got in the gym, and I decided to rethink my methodology and create a vision derived from my strengths and experiences. The best coaches and leaders are unique and use creativity to achieve their success. I had to take responsibility for my own development. I had to create a philosophy that I could communicate to my team...and that's just what I did.

I took bits and pieces of things I liked from almost every thing I had ever been taught or seen in the game/teaching of volleyball. I took things that stuck with me in college, things from Toshi's style of technical precision, things from Carl McGown's game like training, and then I added ME.

So, now the big question. How do I train my team? I teach them techniques for perfect situations, and the not so perfect. When we train and break down defense they have options at what kind of defensive move there going to make instead of me telling them to do 'downups' every time they pick up a tip. We also are always doing everything in some type of game like fashion. I have 14 girls on my team, so why not go 6 on 6, or anything versus 6 as much as possible? I isolate our focus then let the rest happen. We keep score during some parts of practice but not all the time. I also move our practices along at the speed of light. I don't like to spend training time listening to myself talk and I don't like my players standing around instead of working. I give feedback with options so they can try and figure out the best solution for them, instead of me telling them how I think there doing this wrong. I'm still giving them the answers that derive from the way we train, but I'm not telling them it's either this way or no way. The result a 22 win season, the best ever in Loyola history

So now when people ask which way I train my team, I say, "I like both and I use both." I'm not and advocate for either and I won't throw a protest if you choose one over the other. I'm not telling you which to choose in fact, I'm just telling you that you have to find out what works for you and who you are. Create your own way of training; break the mold. I will tell you that I know what kind of coach I am now, at 26, and I will tell you that if you walk into my gym you will see a fluent masterpiece of a group of girls that believe and know what our philosophy and training methods are, and if you don't like what were doing, then I'm sorry. We've got 22 wins this season so something has got to be right.

Kristina Hernandez is the Head Coach at Loyola College in Maryland. She just completed her 5th season at Loyola with a school record 22-win season. Hernandez is also involved with USA Volleyball's National High Performance Coaching staff.

AZ. COACHING RECERTIFICATION

Each of these upcoming Coaching events can be used as a recertification of your IMPACT accreditation with the proper paperwork filled out, signed and submitted to the Arizona Region Office.

COACHING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

USA COACHES CLINIC

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
FEBRUARY 28- MARCH 1
WWW.USACOACHES.COM

JASON WATSON COACHES CLINIC

TEMPE, AZRIZONA
MARCH 1
WWW.AZREGIONVOLLEYBALL.ORG

GOLD MEDAL SQUARED WEEKEND CLINIC

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY, MALIBU, CALIFORNIA
MAY 9-11
WWW.GOLDMEDALSQUARED.COM

USAV IMPACT WEBINARS

THROUGHOUT THE SPRING
WWW.USAVOLLEYBALL.ORG

Linear Ranking Tournaments- Do You Use Them?

Linear ranking tournaments or Bjerring tournaments have become quite the rage with those wanting to use more game like and competitive drills in their practices.

The process is unique in that you RANK ORDER your athletes by skill from best to poorest, using an UNBIASED methodology. The players simply play the game.

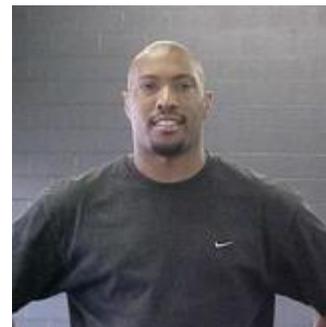
A website, <http://linearranking.com> now offers you the full package for learning and using the Linear Ranking tournaments. The cost is \$25 and is sent in disk form to you in a PDF format.

4. **Floor Bridge**—This is an exercise where we can show how to activate the wonderful Glute muscle and well as stabilize the body.
 - a. Have the athlete lay on their back with the knees bent to 90 degrees.
 - b. Next activate the glute muscle and make sure the abs is tight.
 - c. Raise the body by pushing through the heels until the body is in a straight alignment, hold for about 2-3 seconds. And slowly lower and repeat until desired reps are achieved.
 - d. This exercise has some progression, but don't move to fast.
 - e. Floor bridge one leg extended, floor Bridge with marching, bridging with one leg on a ball. These are few progressions to work your athletes through.

5. **Floor Glute-Ham Raises**—This is a method I use before we get onto a full-blown glute-ham bench. It works wonders for my youth athletes, gives them an idea of what's required once they are on the glute-ham benches.
 - a. Have the athlete lay down facing downward, stomach on the floor.
 - b. Have a partner of something to hold the feet and ankle complex steady.
 - c. Have them slightly push themselves up with a pushup and raise the body up to a straight alignment, proper posture position. Next, have them slowly lower themselves down and repeat until reps are achieved.

These are only a few exercises I use during some of my Pre-Hab conditioning classes away from my training facility. They require very little equipment and can work wonders getting your youth athletes going strong. They are fun and challenging, and kids love them.

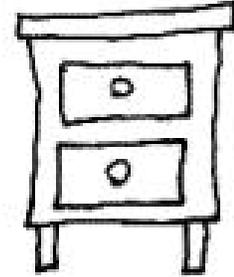
Robert L. Brown, PES, CAP III Certified
USA Volleyball VCAP Master Instructor



www.rbrownsports.com

On the Night Stand

In this feature, we will highlight articles, books and resources that may help you on your journey toward coaching excellence.



The Secret to Raising Smart Kids

By Carol S. Dweck Published November 28, 2007 Scientific American Mind

Hint: Don't tell your kids that they are. More than three decades of research shows that a focus on effort—not on intelligence or ability—is key to success in school and in life

<http://www.sciam.com/article.cfm?id=the-secret-to-raising-smart-kids&print=true>

Wins, Losses and Lessons by Lou Holtz

Yes, he's a football coach and yes, he's got nothing to do with volleyball. But reading his book is a great insight into a fascinating coaching mind. Many of the lessons he speaks of are for every coach looking to become better.



What is Game-Centered Training?

By The Scottish Rugby Organization

You are probably more familiar with it than you think! For an article on Game Centered training through the eyes of a Rugby coach, go to

http://www.scottishrugby.org/shadomx/apps/fms/fmsdownload.cfm?file_uid=311D33BE-0413-8337-9726-3CD136FA2421&siteName=sru

Why Female Athletes Decide to Become Coaches — or Not

By **Guyllaine Demers**

The idea for this article came from the findings of coaching studies showing that women are under-represented in the coaching profession in Canada. However, many of the issues Demers uncovers are those of American women in coaching-- or not.

<http://www.coach.ca/WOMEN/e/journal/july2004/index.h>

Q and A with New Sun Devil Head Coach Jason Watson

Jason Watson takes over the reins of the Arizona State University Women's Volleyball program after a sensational 3 year stint as the head coach at BYU, including 3 NCAA appearances and a trip to the final 8 in 2007 before losing to eventual National Champion Penn State. Watson and Arizona Juniors will be hosting a Coaching Clinic on March 1st from 9:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m. at the P.E. East building on the campus of Arizona State. Cost is \$20 and attendance will be considered a coaching recertification for the Arizona Region.

Q: Why ASU and why now?

JW: "I thought it was a good fit for my family, the community here. I thought the University itself and the athletic administration presented a very positive picture of the community. My wife is from California, I grew up in Australia so the weather here is a little more conducive to what we're used to. So those were the real reasons we were interested in ASU. It just seemed like a good fit and a good time to make the move."

Q: Did your wife play volleyball?

JW: No, she's a soccer player. She went to school at BYU but they didn't have a college soccer program there.

Q: What are you going to bring to this program?

JW: We feel that this is a school that has an enormous amount of potential with an incredibly supportive volleyball community that feeds into it. We want to make sure we are appreciative of that community. We want to put a good product on the floor that people can be excited about. It's going to be a major undertaking as the PAC-109 is THE volleyball conference in the country but we want people to be excited about what it is and the progress we're going to be making. We're going to get a little bit better every day and we want to include as many people as we can in that process.

Q: What should a fan expect of a Jason Watson coached team?

JW: We're going to try to be explosive, we've got some athletes on this team that are very explosive and we want to tap into that. We want them to be excited to play volleyball. We want them to be intense and we want them to love to compete. I think if you come and watch our program and our teams over the years, we hope you'll see that. We hope you say wow, they work incredibly hard and they're very passionate about what it is they're doing. They enjoy competition.

Q: We've heard that your 7-year-old son is a wizard using the data-volley scouting system already. Is this true?

JW: He's not quite there yet. Brandon is his name and he learned to count by keeping score at our practices. You know, my family is an important part of this. My kids are going to come to practice and they're going to be around this team a lot. He's going to follow the games on GameTracker and he's going to tell me that we missed too many serves and he's going to tell me that we need to block a little bit better based on what he's seen on GameTracker. Actually, he's shockingly intimidating to be quite honest that a 7 year old can dissect this, but yeah, he's very into it.

Q: Will he come into the locker-room and give the girls some halftime speeches?



JW: Occasionally in between games 2 and 3 when you're walking off the floor, he spots you and he lets you know what it is you need to do. He's phenomenal.

Q: Who was your coaching mentor?

JW: I played volleyball at BYU, so I played volleyball for Carl McGown and I am heavily influenced by him. That influence actually made me want to get into coaching so I owe a tremendous amount to him. He brought me from Australia to BYU and gave me the opportunity to get an education and to play. Just by sitting with him and watching him analyze film and watching him putting together practice plans, watching him do those things really influenced me to getting into this profession. I owe him an enormous amount and I have a tremendous amount of respect for what he's been able to accomplish at BYU and throughout his life. He's a remarkable person."

Q: What book are you reading currently?

JW: I haven't had time to read a book lately. The last book I read was "Good to Great." I was reading that concurrently with "Talent Isn't Enough," the Maxwell book talking about how everybody has talent but just relying purely on talent isn't enough. There are other things you need to do. It's a really good book.

Q: How are you going to bring the casual volleyball fan into Wells Fargo arena this fall?

JW: Be patient with us, we're going to put a good product on the floor. We're going to see a great return on that investment, the investment that you're going to make in our program. It may not happen as quickly as you want it to happen, it may not happen as quickly as I want it to happen, but it's going to happen. It's going to be a process we go through. So be patient, we'll get there. We're going to work incredibly hard to put something on the floor that you can be very, very proud of. We're excited, we're enthused and we have a great staff and we're going to get some things put in place.

FREE COACHING RESOURCES

USOC OLYMPIC COACH E-MAGAZINE

FREE UNITED STATES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE ARTICLES ABOUT IMPROVING ATHLETE PERFORMANCE IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS, SUCH AS PSYCHOLOGY, NUTRITION, SPORTS MEDICINE, STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING, AS WELL AS OTHER TOPICS OF INTEREST TO COACHES.

[HTTP://COACHING.USOLYMPICTEAM.COM](http://coaching.usolympicteam.com)

DANIELLE SCOTT WEBLOG

FOLLOW THE LIFE OF THE USA OLYMPIC TEAM'S FORCE IN THE MIDDLE AS SHE PLAYS INTERNATIONALLY AND PREPARES FOR BEIJING

[HTTP://WWW.DANIELLE-SCOTT.COM/WORDPRESS](http://www.danielle-scott.com/wordpress)

CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF RESPONSIBLE YOUTH SPORT

A FREE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER DEALING WITH COACHING ALL SPORTS TO YOUNG ADULTS AND THE ISSUES THAT ARISE

[HTTP://HDCS.FULLERTON.EDU/KNES/CARYS/HOME.HTM](http://hdcs.fullerton.edu/knes/carys/home.htm)