

Making Everything Easier!™

Coaching Volleyball

FOR
DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Teach essential volleyball skills to young players
- Understand the sport's rules
- Get the most out of your practices
- Lead your team effectively during a game

**The National Alliance
for Youth Sports
with Greg Bach**



Coaching Volleyball For Dummies®

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[About This Book](#)

[Conventions Used in This Book](#)

[What You're Not to Read](#)

[Foolish Assumptions](#)

[How This Book Is Organized](#)

[Part I: Getting Started Coaching Volleyball](#)

[Part II: Building Your Team](#)

[Part III: Basic Training: Teaching Volleyball Fundamentals](#)

[Part IV: Net Gains: Zeroing In on Advanced Volleyball Skills](#)

[Part V: The Extra Points](#)

[Part VI: The Part of Tens](#)

[Icons Used in This Book](#)

[Where to Go from Here](#)

[Part I: Getting Started Coaching Volleyball](#)

[Chapter 1: Teaching Volleyball to Children](#)

[Recognizing Your Behind-the-Scenes Responsibilities](#)

[Working with children and parents](#)

[Understanding rules and terms](#)

Taking the Court

Planning and executing practices

Handling game day duties

Juggling the Dual Parent-Coach Role

Preparing for All Kinds of Obstacles

Chapter 2: Building a Strong Foundation for a Successful Season

Developing Your Volleyball Coaching Philosophy

Eyeing the importance of a philosophy

Crafting your philosophy to match your age group

Emphasizing teamwork

Motivating players

Creating a positive atmosphere

Keeping communication lines open

Making every child count

Putting fun and skill development first

Making good sportsmanship really matter

Understanding the League You're Coaching In

Knowing the rules

Playing for fun or first place

Getting on Schedule

Scheduling team practices

Dealing with makeup matches

Dressed for Success: Volleyball Equipment

What the league provides

What players must bring

Chapter 3: The Rundown on Basic Volleyball Rules

Stepping on the Court

Examining the markings on the court

Eyeing the court and the net

Knowing the Rules of the Game

Identifying the basic rules

Considering special rules

Mastering Volleyball Lingo

Understanding the Official's Signals

Getting Your Kids Ready to Step on the Court

Pointing out player positions and their responsibilities

Filling out a lineup card

Highlighting the basic skills your kids need to play the game

Chapter 4: Getting in Sync with Your Players' Parents

Introducing Yourself

Explaining Your Coaching Philosophy

Verbalizing your stance on wins and losses

Emphasizing good sportsmanship for players

Maintaining model parent behavior in the stands

Determining playing time and positions

Shuffling Papers: Managing Parental Forms

League documents

Personal packets

Recruiting Parents to Help on the Sidelines

Finding assistant coaches

Filling support roles

Meeting Players' Special Needs

[Concluding Your Meeting with Q & A](#)

[Part II: Building Your Team](#)

[Chapter 5: Overseeing Your Team](#)

[Sizing Up the Players](#)

[Evaluating skills](#)

[Identifying players' strengths and weaknesses](#)

[Choosing a Starting Lineup](#)

[Assigning positions](#)

[Finding roles for all your players](#)

[Coaching All Kinds of Kids](#)

[The average child](#)

[The inattentive child](#)

[The shy child](#)

[The child who's afraid of getting hurt](#)

[The bully](#)

[The ball hog](#)

[The athletically gifted child](#)

[The child who doesn't want to be there](#)

[The inexperienced child](#)

[The uncoordinated child](#)

[The child with special needs](#)

[Chapter 6: Running Fun-Filled Practices](#)

[The Opening Practice: Starting the Season on a Good Note](#)

[Making a great first impression](#)

[Coming to practice prepared](#)

[Starting and finishing with fun drills](#)

[Devising Fun Practices for the Whole Season](#)

[Setting the tone](#)

[Determining practice length and frequency](#)

[Persuading parents to take the court](#)

[Keeping practices consistent](#)

[Using practice time efficiently](#)

[Making Practice As Productive As Possible for All Players](#)

[Building basic skills](#)

[Providing help for those in need](#)

[Piling on the praise for effort](#)

[Ending on a Positive Note](#)

[Chapter 7: Making Game Day Memorable — For the Right Reasons](#)

[Tending to Pregame Matters](#)

[Arriving at the court early](#)

[Meeting with referees and opposing coaches](#)

[Submitting your lineup](#)

[Holding the Pregame Team Meeting and Warm-up](#)

[Pumping kids up](#)

[Warming up](#)

[Coaching a Great Game](#)

[Providing constant motivation](#)

[Communicating plays](#)

[Making player substitutions](#)

[Employing advanced strategy](#)

[Working with the Referees](#)

[Remembering respect](#)

[Asking about rules, not judgment](#)

[Modeling Good Sportsmanship](#)

[Winning gracefully](#)

[Losing with class](#)

[Wrapping Up the Day: Delivering the Postgame Talk](#)

[Zero in on the fun factor](#)

[Highlight the positive](#)

[Spotlight good sportsmanship](#)

[Part III: Basic Training: Teaching Volleyball Fundamentals](#)

[Chapter 8: Racking Up Points with Offensive Fundamentals](#)

[Focusing Your Approach for Newbies](#)

[Mastering the Basics](#)

[Serving](#)

[Setting](#)

[Setting strategies](#)

[Attacking](#)

[Chapter 9: Developing Defensive Fundamentals](#)

[Stressing the Importance of Defense](#)

[Mastering the Basics of Defense](#)

[Maintaining sound defensive position](#)

[Serve receive](#)

[Passing out of the net](#)

[Blocking](#)

[Digging](#)

Chapter 10: Fundamental Drills for Beginners

Warming Up Right

Going On the Offensive

Serving smorgasbord

Setting the table with good sets

Passing

Making kill shots

Dialing Up Defensive Drills

Receiving serves

Digging

Blocking

Putting It All Together: A Sample Practice Session

Chapter 11: Refining Your Coaching Strategies

Adjusting to Changing Team Dynamics

Revising your coaching plan

Handling challenges as your team improves

Conducting the Midseason Review

Resetting your coaching goals

Helping your team reach its goals

Exploring different approaches for reaching goals

Moving kids to new positions

Helping players conquer injury fears

Meeting One-on-One with Parents

Chapter 12: Taking Your Drills to the Next Level

Upgrading the Offense

Packing more service punch

[Spicing up the setting](#)

[Passing](#)

[Attacking](#)

[Strengthening the Defense](#)

[Serve receive](#)

[Digging](#)

[Blocking](#)

[Putting It All Together: A Sample Practice Session](#)

[Part IV: Net Gains: Zeroing In on Advanced Volleyball Skills](#)

[Chapter 13: Revving Up the Offense](#)

[Eyeing Advanced Offensive Techniques](#)

[Pumping up the serving](#)

[Upgrading the attack](#)

[Transitioning from Defense to Offense](#)

[Examining the setter's responsibilities](#)

[Taking a look at the front and back rows](#)

[Covering blocked balls](#)

[Turning broken plays to your advantage](#)

[Chapter 14: Bolstering the Defense](#)

[Polishing Advanced Defensive Techniques](#)

[Multiple blocking](#)

[Pancake digs](#)

[Shoulder roll](#)

[Determining Your Defense](#)

[Player back setup](#)

[Player up alignment](#)

[Chapter 15: Stepping Up the Offense](#)

[Exploring Different Offensive Systems](#)

[Implementing the 6-2](#)

[Attacking with the 5-1](#)

[Using the 4-2](#)

[Analyzing Serve-Receive and Passing Formations](#)

[Going with the four-player formation](#)

[Dissecting the three-player formation](#)

[Using the two-player formation](#)

[Sizing Up Setting Systems](#)

[Playing with the frontcourt setter](#)

[Working with the backcourt setter](#)

[Chapter 16: Tightening the Defense](#)

[Derailing Different Attacks](#)

[Going up against the back row attack](#)

[Defeating an off-speed attack](#)

[Eyeing Special Defenses](#)

[Switching in transition](#)

[Facing a free ball](#)

[Using a rotation defense](#)

[Employing a perimeter defense](#)

[Part V: The Extra Points](#)

[Chapter 17: Keeping Your Players Healthy and Injury Free](#)

[Following a Healthy Diet](#)

[Understanding the fuels needed](#)

[Fueling up before the match](#)

[Filling up after the match and practice](#)

[Staying hydrated](#)

[Stretch It Out: Getting Your Players' Muscles Ready for Action](#)

[Getting players' hearts pumping](#)

[Covering the basics of stretching](#)

[Diving into more advanced stretching](#)

[Cooling down in practices and games](#)

[Pump It Up: Conditioning Your Team](#)

[Bruises to Sprains: Recognizing and Treating Injuries](#)

[Stocking your first-aid kit](#)

[Tending to common volleyball injuries](#)

[Handling an emergency situation](#)

[Chapter 18: Dealing with Common Coaching Challenges](#)

[Addressing Problem Parents](#)

[Win-at-all-cost parents](#)

[Parents who use you as a babysitter](#)

[Parents who question playing time](#)

[Disruptive parents](#)

[Perpetually late parents](#)

[Handling Problem Coaches](#)

[Opposing coaches who encourage unsafe play](#)

[Opposing coaches who display poor sportsmanship](#)

[Dissenting assistants on your team](#)

[Dealing with Discipline Problems on Your Own Team](#)

[Using the three-strike technique](#)

[Using other techniques](#)

[Dealing with the nonlistener](#)

[Addressing the nonstop talker](#)

[Snuffing Out Problem Spectators](#)

[Chapter 19: Coaching a Club Team](#)

[Getting Familiar with Club Teams](#)

[Assembling Your Club Team](#)

[Holding a tryout](#)

[Selecting players](#)

[Breaking the good and bad news to players](#)

[Handling Player Problems on the Road](#)

[Addressing safety issues](#)

[Tackling behavior issues](#)

[Enjoying the Season](#)

[Warding off burnout](#)

[Keeping everyone interested](#)

[Part VI: The Part of Tens](#)

[Chapter 20: Ten Ways to Make the Season Memorable](#)

[Encourage Laughter](#)

[Solicit Player Feedback](#)

[Make Every Child Feel Special](#)

[Share Your Own Experiences](#)

[Set Up a Coaches-Players Tournament](#)

[Run Silly Scrimmages](#)

[Present Team Awards](#)

[Involve the Parents in Practice](#)

[Present Team Photo Albums](#)

[Keep the Season in Perspective](#)

[Chapter 21: Ten Ways to Help Players Take Their Game to the Next Level](#)

[Visualize Success](#)

[Nullify the Nerves](#)

[Meet with Players to Discuss Their Goals](#)

[Give 'Em Drills to Perform at Home](#)

[Send 'Em Camping](#)

[Push the Right Buttons](#)

[Cue the Conditioning](#)

[Avoid Practice Perfection](#)

[Bring In Guest Speakers](#)

[Master the Art of Conversing — With Yourself](#)

Coaching Volleyball For Dummies®

National Alliance for Youth Sports with Greg Bach



Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Coaching Volleyball For Dummies

Published by

Wiley Publishing, Inc.

111 River St.

Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774

www.wiley.com

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Published simultaneously in Canada

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Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2009927338

ISBN: 978-0-470-46469-4

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



About the Authors

National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) has been America's leading advocate for positive and safe sports for children since 1981. NAYS serves volunteer coaches, parents with children involved in organized sports, game officials, youth sports administrators, league directors, and the youngsters who participate in organized sports. More than 3,000 communities nationwide, including parks and recreation departments, Boys & Girls Clubs, Police Athletic Leagues, YMCAs and YWCAs, and various independent youth service groups, along with military installations worldwide, use NAYS's programs. For more information on the alliance's programs, which are listed below, visit <http://www.nays.org>. **National Youth Sports Coaches Association (NYSCA)** — More than 2.5 million volunteer coaches have been trained through NYSCA, which provides training, support, and continuing education. **Parents Association for Youth Sports** — Parents

gain a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in youth sports through this sportsmanship training program, which is used in more than 500 communities nationwide. Academy for Youth Sports Administrators — More than 2,000 administrators worldwide have gone through the Academy, which is a 20-hour certification program that raises the professionalism of people delivering youth sport services. A professional faculty presents the information, and participants earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs). National Youth Sports Administrators Association — This program provides training, information, and resources for volunteer administrators responsible for the planning and implementation of out-of-school sports programs. National Youth Sports Officials Association — Officials who go through this certification program gain valuable knowledge on skills, fundamentals, and the characteristics that every good official must possess. 464694-ffirs.1.indd iii 4/7/09 10:58:00 PM Start Smart Sports Development Program — This proven instructional program prepares children for the world of organized sports without the threat of competition or the fear of getting hurt. The program uses an innovative approach that promotes parent-child bonding. Hook A Kid On Golf — Thousands of children of all ages and skill levels tee up every year in the nation's most comprehensive junior golf development program, which features an array of instructional clinics and tournaments. Game On! Youth Sports — This worldwide effort introduces sports to children who otherwise would not have opportunities to participate.

Greg Bach is the vice president of communications for the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS), where he has worked since 1993. Before joining NAYS, he worked as the sports editor of the *Huron Daily Tribune* in Bad Axe,

Michigan, where he captured numerous writing awards from the Associated Press, Michigan Press Association, and Hearst Corporation. In 1989, he earned a journalism degree from Michigan State University. He's an avid sports fan and has coached a variety of youth sports. He is also the author of *Coaching Soccer For Dummies*, *Coaching Football For Dummies*, *Coaching Baseball For Dummies*, *Coaching Basketball For Dummies*, and *Coaching Lacrosse For Dummies*.

Dedication

National Alliance for Youth Sports This book is dedicated to all the volunteer volleyball coaches who give up countless hours of their free time to work with children and to ensure that they have positive, safe, and rewarding experiences in the sport. We applaud their efforts and commend them for making a difference in the lives of youngsters everywhere.

Greg Bach: For Boomer, Rocky, and Benny and all the good times we had.

Author's Acknowledgments

A lot goes into making a youth volleyball program a truly successful one that meets every child's needs. It takes a real commitment from dedicated volunteer coaches who understand the game and love teaching it to kids; it requires parents to clearly understand their roles and

responsibilities; and it calls for league directors and administrators who know what it takes to ensure that every child who steps on the volleyball court in their community has a safe, fun, and rewarding experience. The exciting, action-packed sport of volleyball plays an important role in the lives of millions of children — it provides them with the opportunity to learn the skills of the game and gives them the chance to develop both emotionally and physically as individuals. The National Alliance for Youth Sports extends a heartfelt thank you to every person who makes a positive difference in the life of a child through volleyball. This book is the result of countless hours of hard work from a tremendous group of people, and we can't thank all the wonderful people at Wiley enough for making it all happen. For starters, there's Stacy Kennedy, the acquisitions editor, whose efforts have led to this being the sixth book in a series for youth coaches; Chad Sievers, the project editor, whose passion for the sport, as both a fan and a longtime official, significantly upgraded the quality of every chapter; Amanda Gillum, the copy editor, whose ideas and great eye for detail made a tremendous difference in the quality of the material presented; the fabulous talents of the illustrators — Rashell Smith, Mark Pinto, Brooke Graczyk — whose work will be great references as you teach your team all the various skills and strategies of the game; and Michelle York, the former all-SEC setter from the University of Mississippi, whose wealth of volleyball knowledge and experience with the sport was a huge asset every step of the way.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our online registration form located at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

Welcome to *Coaching Volleyball For Dummies*, a book dedicated to all the wonderful volunteer coaches who commit their time and energy to helping children learn about this amazing sport and giving them a fun-filled and stress-free atmosphere to play in. We hope you find the material informative, entertaining, and — most importantly — useful in helping guide all your players to a fun and safe experience, an experience that's so rewarding they can't wait to return to the court next season!

About This Book

We wrote this book to lend a hand to first-time volleyball coaches searching for guidance before they step on the court with their new team. After all, having some preseason jitters is perfectly understandable if you're new to the sport or simply new to coaching it to a group of kids. Not to worry, the book you hold in your hands can put your mind at ease by revealing everything you need to know to help you have a positive impact on the kids and provide them with wonderful memories all season long.

We also wrote this book for those coaches who have been involved with the sport for a few seasons and who are looking for additional insight into different aspects of the game, such as how to upgrade their offensive attack, strengthen their defense, or incorporate more challenging drills into their practice sessions to help keep pace with their players' ever-changing needs. Whether you're

searching for how to use quick sets or run a 5-1 formation on offense or how to use multiple blocking schemes or defend a left-side attack with a player up alignment on defense, you can find help here.

One of the neat features of this book is that you can dig in anywhere. If you're a rookie volleyball coach, you may have questions about how to talk to the parents before the season begins or what skills you need to focus on teaching first. If you're a veteran, you may just want to know how to bolster your defense or improve your offense. Just head to the table of contents or index for the topic you're most interested in, and then read on to get the scoop on the best approaches. Each chapter is divided into sections, and each section contains information on a specific topic concerning coaching youth volleyball.

Conventions Used in This Book

To help guide you through this book, we use the following conventions:

Italic text emphasizes certain words and highlights new words or phrases that we define in the text.

Boldface text indicates key words in bulleted lists and the action parts of numbered steps.

Monofont sets apart Web addresses.

Mixed genders — *he* and *she* — are interchanged throughout this book because all the material we

present here works for coaches of both girls' and boys' volleyball teams. Also, the *we* you find throughout the book refers to the National Alliance for Youth Sports, which is America's leading advocate for positive and safe sports for kids.

What You're Not to Read

If you ask us, every single page of this book is overflowing with valuable information, and you don't want to skip over any of it. But we're realistic and understand that you're a busy person, so you really don't have to read every single word. For example, the sidebars — the shaded gray boxes that you see in some of the chapters — feature interesting information that you can skip over when you're pressed for time or are in a rush because you have a volleyball practice to get to.

Foolish Assumptions

The following are some assumptions we make about you, our reader. All or just some of these may apply to you. No matter what, we had you in mind as we wrote this book:

You know that the game is played on a court with a net; that teams send the ball back and forth across the net; and that the ball hitting the court is only good when it occurs on the opposing team's side.

You have a son or daughter who wants to play volleyball this season, but you're not sure how to teach him or her — as well as his or her teammates — the game.

You're a first-time volleyball coach, or someone who's relatively new to coaching young volleyball players, and you're looking for information on how to oversee a youth team.

You've been coaching volleyball for a few years for a club program and want to take your practices to the next level so your team can be more competitive.

You don't have your sights set on coaching a high school or college volleyball team anytime soon.

If any of these descriptions are on target, you've come to the right place.

How This Book Is Organized

This book is divided into parts, and each part pertains to a specific aspect of coaching a youth volleyball team. The following sections give you a quick rundown.

Part I: Getting Started Coaching Volleyball

Coaching a youth volleyball team — regardless of whether it's a group of 8-year-olds who have no clue how to put on their knee pads or a 14-and-under team that has a lot of tournament experience — is a real challenge. Often, the difference between a season that surpasses the kids' expectations and one that has you reaching for

the antacid tablets is the work you do before you ever step onto the court with your team. This part addresses all those areas that often get overlooked but that are crucial for starting the season off on a positive note: creating a coaching philosophy that meets the players' needs, running an effective preseason parents meeting to get everyone focused on what's truly best for the kids, and getting a handle on all the rules and terminology of the sport so you can teach them to your players.

Part II: Building Your Team

You volunteered this season to teach your players all sorts of offensive and defensive skills. This section addresses all those questions that are stockpiling in the back of your mind early in the season, such as how to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your players, how to find roles for all the kids to succeed in, and how to coach all different types of kids, ranging from the shy and inattentive to the athletically gifted. This part also answers all your practice and game day questions, including the following:

How do I plan practices that the kids can't wait to be a part of?

How do I make sure that I'm maximizing my time with the kids during practice?

What do I say to my team before a match to help put them in the proper mindset to play their best at the same time that they enjoy the sport?

What is the best approach for motivating kids during matches, especially when they're really struggling?

What aspects of the match should I be monitoring closely to ensure that every player has a rewarding experience?

Part III: Basic Training: Teaching Volleyball Fundamentals

Teaching kids the basic elements of volleyball — serving, passing, setting, attacking, and blocking, among others — is crucial for their short-term enjoyment and long-term participation. The better your players can perform these skills, the more satisfying their experience is. In this part, we cover all the basic offensive and defensive skills your players need to be successful when game day rolls around. Plus, we provide an assortment of drills designed to help both beginning level players and those who are ready to build on the basics.

Part IV: Net Gains: Zeroing In on Advanced Volleyball Skills

After your players have a handle on the basics of the game, and are proficient at performing them, you have to keep pace with their development so that their progress doesn't stall. This part helps you do the job. Here we describe the advanced offensive and defensive techniques you can use to raise the level of the kids' play and keep their interest in volleyball going strong.

Part V: The Extra Points

We hope that your season will be an injury-free one for your players and a problem-free one for you, but injuries and behaviors are often out of your control. So, the better prepared you are to deal with unexpected injuries or behavior problems, the greater the chance is that your season will continue to run smoothly even if they do arise. In this part, we cover how to help protect your players from injuries; how to treat the minor ones if they do occur; and how to respond to the major ones. We also provide an array of information on resolving conflicts with players, parents, opposing coaches, and even your assistant coaches who may veer away from your coaching philosophy. Also, if you harbor any aspirations to coach at a more advanced volleyball level, such as a club team, we provide everything you need to know to help make your transition to this more elite level a smooth one.

Part VI: The Part of Tens

A feature of all *For Dummies* books, the Part of Tens has some great information that can help propel your team to a fun-filled season on the volleyball court. We present information on making the season memorable for every player and helping each youngster take her skills to the next level.

Icons Used in This Book

Every *For Dummies* book includes cute little pictures in the margins to help you navigate important information. Here are the icons we use in this book:



This icon signals valuable tips that can save you time, erase frustration, and upgrade your coaching skills. If you only have time to scan a chapter, you should take a moment to read these tips when you come across them. You — and your players — will be glad you did.



Coaching a youth volleyball team requires a large time commitment on your part, and having the most important facts and reminders in easy-to-find places is helpful. This icon alerts you to key information that's worth revisiting after you close this book and take the court with your team.



Pay close attention anytime you come across this icon, which highlights dangerous situations that you have to be aware of to help protect your players.

Where to Go from Here

If this season marks your first experience as a youth volleyball coach on the sidelines, you may be most comfortable diving into Chapter 1 and moving through the book from there. Please note, though, that we structured this book so that you can jump around with ease from chapter to chapter at your convenience. So, if