

Using Mini Games as a Teaching Tool

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Many coaches today have varying opinions when it comes to controlled high repetition training and teaching vs. Random or game like training. We believe there is a place for both methods. In addition, through the use of “mini-games” you can make the transition from repetitive skill training to random skill execution. Games that incorporate repeated skill execution but add visual cues, adjustments and reaction in an unpredictable environment.

We will demonstrate a few examples of games that can help you as a teaching tool for the skills indicated. Use these if you like them but your challenge as a coach is to create mini games that work in your gym for the skills you need to teach.

Pepper games

2 on 2 Narrow court co-op

Three on three crosscourt.

Two hit pepper

Teaching Focus

Ball control on all three contacts

Arm swing, lineup and defensive reading skills

Arm swing, lineup, out of system hitting

Competitive games

2 on 2 Tipping warm up

22-20 Serve and receive drill

High hands pepper

Four on three crosscourt game (7 B4 3)

Middle vs. Middle

Tipples

Dump drill

Burn

How to tip deceptively and tactically

Serving / passing in a high risk environment

Hitter vision, arm swing, tactical attacking

Hitter vision, arm swing, tactical attacking

Middle attacking in transition

Work on tactical tipping, reading and defense

Preparing for and training a setter to dump

Tactical play, balance, movement and reaction

Colorado State Volleyball Drill Sheet

Drill name: **Two on Two Narrow court**

Objective: A co-operative drill to work on Ball control on all three contacts.

Drill initiation and directions: Coach or player initiates balls from the side of the court. There are two players per side on a narrow court divided by an antennae or a pool noodle. Players have three contacts (or less) with the objective of keeping the ball in play with their opponent for as long as possible. Players should try to pass set and control top spin the ball to opposing side. Blocker can add a block for a visual if you so desire.

Scoring: This drill is cooperative and is usually not scored. You could count the number of successful exchanges and have sides compete against other sides. Teams could also be allowed to hit full after four or six successful exchanges

Variations: **The tipping warm up** is played the same way only players tip rather than top spin the ball. This requires the setters to block to simulate the height needed on a tip. This can also be turned into a competitive game where the attackers vary the tips in order to fool the opposing defender.



Colorado State Volleyball Drill Sheet

Drill name: Two hit pepper

Objective: To work on Body lineup, arm swing, vision, tactical thinking, defense, reading and reacting.

Drill initiation and directions: Coach or player initiates balls from the side of the court. Two or three players per side in fixed positions. Players have two contacts (or less) to kill the ball on the other side. This game forces players to get good body position behind the ball. It also forces diggers to control the first pass to different zones. Players must also be aware of where their teammates are

Scoring: This drill is actually good as a cooperative pepper drill or a competitive drill. This drill can be played as individual games on every ball or you can do rally score mini games to five or seven points.

Variations: You can add rotating every contact however this is a really good drill to isolate positions. You can initiate with tougher balls. You can allow the same player to hit it twice in a row. This allows players to set themselves. This is a great variation.

Colorado State Volleyball Drill Sheet

Drill name: 22-20

Submitted By:

Objective: To teach Servers and passers the risk reward you need at the end of a rally score game.

Drill initiation and directions: Two evenly talented groups of three play each other. The serving team is behind 22-20. The serving team alternates servers and tries to disrupt the passing team. Once the game is over the two teams switch sides and the servers are now the passers and the passers are now the servers

Scoring: The serving team gets a point for any pass that is not deemed a “3” pass by the target. The passing team gets a point for any “3” pass or a missed serve. A target person, who must be neutral, determines the scores.

Variations: Adjust the score to match the relative talent of the servers and passers, but still keeping this as a “Game end” situation.

Colorado State Volleyball Drill Sheet

Drill name: **Middle vs Middle**

Objective: Setters forced to work with middles especially in transition

Drill initiation and directions: Coach or player initiates two balls from alternating sides. Three back court player's one setter and one middle on each side. The setters are instructed to set middle at every opportunity. If it's not there they can set one of the three defenders from the back row. The middles continue to face each other in the drill until one team wins.

Scoring: A middle kill is two points everything else (block error etc.) is one point

Variations: You can shorten the games if the players are not in good shape. This is a very physically difficult drill the better the players get. You can initiate with free balls down balls or a serve and a free ball.

Colorado State Volleyball Drill Sheet

Drill name: Tipples

Objective: To work on vision, tactical thinking, defense, reading and reacting and, of course, tip control.

Drill initiation and directions: Coach or player initiates balls from the side of the court. Three or four players per side in fixed positions. Players have three contacts (or less) to kill the ball on the other side. They may only play the ball with an open hand tip or passing from the ground. They may not leave their feet to jump unless they are tipping or blocking. Full blocking is allowed and is encouraged to make the tipping real.

Scoring: This drill can be played as individual games on every ball or you can do rally score mini games to five or seven points.

Variations: You can add rotating every contact however this is a really good drill to isolate positions. You can add overhand attacking from a standing position or allow roll shots. These tend to be harder to control though. You can initiate with tougher balls.

Colorado State Volleyball Drill Sheet

Drill name: **Dump drill**

Objective: To practice and prepare for dumping setter

Drill initiation and directions: Coach or player initiates free ball from alternating sides. Three back court player's one setter and one outside hitter on each side. The setters are instructed to either dump or set outside. They should dump often so defenders see it and have to decide when to drop from base to perimeter.

Scoring: a successful dump is two points everything else is one point. Play to 15

Variations: You can instruct setters to use certain shots to prepare. You can also add a middle attacker who hits quick's and slides.

Colorado State Volleyball Drill Sheet

Drill name: **Burn**

Objective: To work on vision, tactical thinking and is also a great defensive drill for reading and reacting

Drill initiation and directions: Coach or player initiates balls from the side of the court. Three players per side. Players have three contacts (or less) to kill the ball on the other side. They may only play the ball with an underhand pass or a set. They may not leave their feet to jump at any time. The players must rotate every time they send the ball to the other side.

Scoring: This drill can be played as individual games on every ball or you can do rally score mini games to five or seven points.

Variations: You can eliminate the rotations for novice players. You can add overhand attacking from a standing position. You can initiate with tougher balls. There are many other variations.

