



JVA Training Curriculum

14U

Overview

This is the Commitment Stage, when players work on developing individual skills, individual tactics and team tactics. The overall goals for this age are to build a strong base, develop individual skills under the pressure of time, space, and an opponent, and increase the tempo of the player's skill development and training regimen.

During this stage, adult standards and formal rules become applicable. The pace of development quickens at this time due to the acceleration of physical and mental maturation. The demands of skill training as well as training loads increase, thus provoking improvement in mental toughness, concentration and diligence. Awareness of tactics within the game becomes an important facet of the learning process as well. Players tend to be self-critical and rebellious, but show a strong commitment to the team.

Coach Description, Requirements and Role

An ideal 14U Coach is an experienced teacher and coach with a strong personality and a wealth of knowledge. A 14U Coach should have the ability to demonstrate or utilize someone who can paint a good picture (older player, assistant coach). A 14U Coach must be patient, but demanding and fair. It is important to have someone who knows when it's time to work and when it's time to play, and to be able to create a fun and competitive environment for the athletes. During this year of development, the coach needs to be able to teach the athletes HOW to compete to prepare them for the 15s level.

Skill Development

Serving

The focus for the players should be mostly on mastering the standing float and jump float serve. Jump top spin serving can be introduced as a learning tool for those athletes who are ready.

- Technique- Standing Float
 - Posture
 - right handed servers = left foot slightly in front of right
 - left handed servers = right foot slightly in front of left
 - lead foot pointed towards target, back foot positioned around 45% angle out
 - Toss
 - able to toss ball consistently in front of your hitting shoulder
 - Arm Swing
 - Prior to the toss, start with a high hand drawn straight back with the elbow back by ear.
 - Hand Contact
 - contact the ball with the **palm** of the hand so there is a pop on the ball to create the float serve. If there is pop on the ball there is good contact with the palm. Strong fingertip to elbow. Avoid a loose wrist.
 - Weight Transfer
 - understand how to take one step and rotate hip quickly through the ball to generate speed and power
 - Sequence
 - Toss, step, then transfer

- Technique - Jump Float
 - Footwork
 - 3 step footwork (step hop). First step is with left foot then right left hop
 - Broad jump into the court
 - Toss
 - Start with a two hand toss
 - Release ball right after first step and before the hop
 - Toss just above reach while jumping softly off the ground
 - Arm Swing
 - Hitting arm/elbow needs to stay high after the two hand toss
 - If arm/elbow is dropping, consider moving to a one hand toss with opposite hand.
 - Hand Contact
 - contact the ball with the **palm** of the hand so there is a pop on the ball to create the float serve. If there is pop on the ball there is good contact

with the palm. Strong fingertip to elbow. Avoid a loose wrist.

- Technique - Introduce Jump Top Spin
 - Footwork and Toss
 - Begin at least 10 feet behind end line
 - Toss a high ball (15 feet) toward the end line with hitting hand
 - Take 3 step approach immediately after releasing the toss
 - Jump off of two feet with slight broad jump
 - Hitting shoulder should be directly under the ball when jumping
- Mentality
 - Must understand short zone, mid-zone and deep zone serves.
 - Have a purpose/goal every time you step behind the line - ace your opponent!
 - The goal is to disrupt the offense of the opponent and get them out of system
 - Consider introducing team goals for serving- keep the other team under a certain pass percentage
- Result
 - Serve must be consistently below the top of the antenna.
 - Consistently jump float and be able to hit all deep zones
 - Able to serve a standing float and jump float below a serving cord (between top of the antenna and the top of net tape)
 - 35-37 mph speed

Serve Receive/Passing

Players should perfect proper body position (posture), movement patterns (chest to floor), platform (quiet), and passing technique.

- Technique:
 - Posture
 - Ready Position
 - Face where the ball is coming from
 - Hands up and out, feet shoulder width apart
 - Train the ability to move to the point of contact without dropping your hands below your knees



- Passing Position
 - Platform together and out in front of body
 - Weight FORWARD towards target
 - Pass with as little movement as possible.
- Footwork
 - Keep weight off of the heels, weight forward
 - Shuffle Step to ball
 - Beat the ball to the point of contact
 - Take the time to train footwork and movement while keeping hands/platform up and out
- Platform
 - Platform is formed as you arrive to contact the ball
 - You must learn to shuffle step to the ball without DROPPING your platform. (This is to help you avoid SWINGING at the ball and losing control)
- Redirecting Ball to the Target (Tilting)
 - The difference between TILTING and TWISTING the platform.
 - TILTING - Dropping your shoulder to the target.
 - Tilting must be done early prior to ball contact.
 - As you tilt - weight to target
- Overhand Passing
 - Players should learn and coaches must stress proper body position and posture, hand position and follow through (ball goes up...not out).
 - Players should be using hands to pass free/down balls
- Reading
 - Recognize the ball early, before it reaches the net (speed, height, direction and type of ball being served or entered)
 - Move as the serve gets to the net
 - This is a skill that is developed through experience and repetition
- Mentality
 - Confident passer: have the mindset that you WANT the ball and you CAN pass every ball
 - Recognize whose ball is whose
 - Recognize a heavier serve and have the confidence to pass it well enough for your team to start a rally with
- Results
 - Forearm Passing: Players should be able to demonstrate running through a ball. Players should be able to demonstrate proper platform adjustment (tilt) for

- on-line and off-line passes. Players should be able to demonstrate efficient movement on the court (shuffle/step-cross-hop).
- Goals: Players should be able to consistently pass free balls to target (80-90%), and serve receive to target (60-65%). Players should be able to use their hands to serve receive to target (50-60%). Players should also be able to demonstrate cushioning (quiet platform) topspin or hard float serve. Note: these goals can be adjusted based on the level of your team and your competition

Setting

Coaches must stress proper body position, hand position, and hand motion from ready position to follow through. Setters should be able to demonstrate proper footwork patterns including from base to the net, net to the 10 foot line in various directions, then back to base, serve receive to the net), as well as court and net awareness.

- Technique: Setters should be able to set 2nd and 3rd tempo sets, and begin to understand and perform 1st tempo middle setting. Setters should demonstrate the ability to transition to their base following the serve when the pass is taking place. Setter base is at the net $\frac{1}{3}$ of the net width between zone 2 and zone 3. Setters should be able to jump set, but it is not necessary to require them to jump set.
 - Footwork
 - Feet balanced with right foot slightly in front of left, weight balanced but finish on right foot when releasing the ball
 - Jump set by taking a directional step and then pre hopping underneath the ball then jumping straight up
 - Run quickly to the net to save a quick and/or tight pass, stopping momentum to avoid falling into the net
 - If fundamentals are solid and the athlete is ready, introduce running and spinning off of one foot to set a ball off of the net
 - Hand Shape and Wrists
 - Start with big hands and finish with big hands
 - Set or jump set with hands drawn consistently in a neutral position above hairline to make it difficult for the blocker on the other side to read
 - Speed up the tempo of the set by releasing hands from neutral position to a lower finish while flicking wrists quickly
 - Out of System
 - Players should all be able to deliver and understand out of system sets (HIGH, 5ft inside the court & 5ft off of the net).
 - Setters have right of way until they call for help

- Setter Dump/Attack on the second contact
 - Take the ball above the head with hands drawn as if setting the ball
 - Jump off of two feet with hips squared to the outside attacker
 - Use left hand to dump the ball in zone 3 and 2
 - Use right hand to dump the ball in zone 4
 - Introduce deep corners
 - Introduce two hand dump (set) to zone 3 when off of the net
- Mentality/Decision Making
 - Setters should be aware of the blockers on the other side of the net and should communicate with the defenders when the opponent's setter is front row.
 - Decision making considerations:
 - Hot hitter - feed the bear
 - Force the middle in transition versus in serve receive
 - Set towards the smaller block or the single block
 - Understand that setting different players at certain times will create different opportunities for your team.
 - A setter needs to understand that precision and location of the set determines what the hitters are able to do.
 - Setters should feel confident and comfortable communicating with the attackers, taking constructive feedback and responding right away
- Results:
 - Setters should demonstrate consistency in height above, depth from and area of the net. Players should be able to set 5 & 5 balls to target (80%).
 - Setters should make jump setting a priority on in-system passes on the net
 - Create one on one situations for attackers and be aware of when that is happening
 - Establish the middle early to create a split block for the outside hitter

Attacking

Players should have mastered proper three step footwork off of a set or third tempo toss utilizing a proper arm swing. Players should also begin to understand pass to attack theory and technique. (Note: Hitters should learn to play all net positions)

- Technique
 - Approach Footwork
 - 3 step approach (4 step for serve receive or free ball, etc)
 - Order of the footwork - make sure the second step gets you to the location of the ball so you can jump straight up on 2 & 3

- Short to long / Slow to quick
 - Plant with feet shoulder width apart / Ready to lift or jump
 - When planting, open the window to the setter
 - Balanced feet, bend at knees and at ankles
- Armswing
 - When jumping out of the plant, both arms come up the front of the body QUICKLY
 - Framing
 - Non hitting arm- up towards ceiling
 - Hitting arm- pull elbow back, shoulder high
 - Thump to ponytail
 - Swing
 - Swing originates by torso rotation to the ball, use your core to power your swing
 - Throw elbow at the ball achieving full arm extension
 - Make full contact with the hand / Vicious and quick wrist snap
 - Complete follow through down the same side of the body
- Mentality
 - Do not expect a perfect set
 - Attackers need to have the mindset to want the ball no matter the situation
 - Jump hard every single attempt and work hard
 - The goal is to find a way to score and create lanes and angles
 - Be aware of the block
- Results:
 - Demonstrate a three-step approach off a set.
 - Demonstrate floor based attacks.
 - Successfully downball attack to 10' x 10' corners 40% while showing proper arm swing and wrist snap.
 - Learn how to properly attack an out of system ball.
 - Know every tool (cut shot, deep line, roll shot, tip, hard driven cross, deep corner, tool off of hands)
 - Demonstrate transition from a defensive position/ pass to attack position.

Defense

Players should master floor techniques (sprawl, roll, side layout, run and slide).

- Technique:

- Players should be able to demonstrate proper ready position and all floor techniques
 - Teach J stroke and run through technique to get to the ball. To create backspin teach breaking at the wrist to create backspin
 - Emphasize moving to the ball fast enough so you don't need to go to the floor on majority of balls
- Covering
 - After the first contact back row defenders (if not attacking) will slightly follow the pass toward the net and then follow the set to be in a position to play a cover ball off of the blockers' hands
 - When covering defenders should yell Cover and call a shot for the attacker based on what the defense is giving on the other side of the net, or based on the opponent's weaknesses
- Reading:
 - Start in base defensive position
 - Sequence should be: base - read - stage (transition) - cover
 - Learn to read the attacker and then adjust
- Mentality
 - Be fearless and willing to hit the floor to keep a ball from hitting it first
 - Understand the back row player's role and impact on offense when not attacking (read the defense on the other side and cover the attacker)
- Result:
 - Run down errant balls 50% of the time
 - "Center" the ball 50% of the time
 - Efficient at digging a ball high into the target zone 50% of the time
 - Read the block and call a shot for the front row attackers

Blocking

Players should learn proper footwork, body, and hand position. Begin to understand blocking strategy and theory. This skill is the least important at this age level as it effects your team's overall performance the least. Therefore it is recommended to train this skill the least, but incorporate it into your drills and live play.

- Technique:
 - Double block on the pin attackers
 - Begin to train double blocking the middle attack
 - Understand and be able to perform proper footwork (step-close, shuffle, step-cross-hop and sprint to pin blocker's hip), body position and hand position.

- Begin to understand proper eye sequencing: (Ball-Setter-Ball-Attacker). Players should be well versed in “fronting” attackers.
 - Focus is on fronting the ball and getting hands over and taking away the hitter’s direct line of approach
 - Introduce cross patterns and how the responsibility of the blocker changes with the hitter. Ex: if other team runs a 2/B(1), then the RS blocker knows they are responsible for blocking the MH on the B and the MH is responsible for blocking the 2 from the OH
 - Based on your club’s philosophy, consider introducing swing blocking at this age
- Mentality
 - Learn how to be an offensive presence as a blocker
 - Go get the ball! Be aggressive
 - A block touch can be effective, so do not only expect a stuff block
- Result: Blockers should be efficient in all movement patterns and be able to consistently front attackers and time their jump appropriately.

Team Systems Development

- Positions: Players should begin to specialize. Setters should be identified and engaged in skill specific training. Middle blockers should begin to focus on blocking tactics and techniques.
- Systems: Players should understand and excel at 5-1 and 6-2 offensive systems. Players should be versed and run a perimeter defense scheme.
- Service rotation: Players should be able to switch (specialize positions) following serve or after the first ball is returned.

During the commitment stage your primary focus is still on individual skill development using correct techniques. However, team tactics start to come into play. Strive for quality in-system volleyball. Set team goals on number of attack attempts/errors, passing percentage and serving percentage. Encourage some risk taking. Team results become more important, but should not displace technical development as number one priority.

Recommended System-

- Serve Receive: The recommended system is a three or four man reception pattern, moving away from a service “W”.
- Offense: 5-1 or 6-2

- Defense: Rotation or Perimeter Defense (Could use a modified perimeter defense. Modified in that your middle back is on the court 8 feet from the end line and your wings are 15 feet back and slightly pinched into (5 feet in from sideline) the court.

Mental Development

The game should remain FUN and ENJOYABLE. Players should be continuing to develop a passion for the game.

- Imagination/creativity
- Increase demands
- Establish training targets
- Maintain discipline
- Self reliance/inner drive
- Develop team & club culture
- Encourage players/teams to watch professional and national teams on TV.
- This is the age when you can begin to empower the athletes to hold each other accountable. Athletes will begin to standout as leaders or followers.

Strength and Agility Development

At this stage, all fitness work should be done with a ball.

- Flexibility – Player led static and dynamic stretching
- Agility - Coordination without the ball / ladder work
- Quickness – With and without a ball involved
- Strength – Arm and leg
- Speed – Arm and foot speed
- Balance – Work all of the single leg drills

How to Apply the Above Concepts into your Gym

Assignment and Evaluation of Coaches