

PLATOONING

I'm going to show you what I call a "Platooning" system of making volleyball line-ups. This system will give almost every player the same amount of playing time within their playing position. *Platooning* works very well for club teams but I have used it with 7th, 8th, JV, and Varsity teams. When you get to a tournament and know what players are present, make a list of your players' number by position. If a player is able, and wants to play more than one position, I'll list her for other positions at the next tournament.

Setters			Middles			Lefts	
Kelly	13		Katie	22		Jena	21
Megan	10		Alyssa	17		Chelsea	4
Crystal	27	Jumper	Natasha	12	Jumper	Heather	88
						Christy	5

When you have 3 players playing one type of position, decide which players will be the "jumper." The jumper simply starts in the front row on one of her starts and then in the back row on her next start. Only moving the jumper front row to back row on her starts will give the line-ups some stability.

When you have 4 players playing one type of position, as we do with our lefts, find a reason to team them up in two pairs. One good reason on club teams would be that they are from the same school. **Jena #21** and **Chelsea #4** are from the same school. Starting each pair in the same front row or back row position will also give the line-up some stability.

You'll need to know the serving order system used by the team you're making the line-ups for. There are only two types of serving order systems, (**setter, left, middle**) or (**setter, middle, left**).

Court Positions

4	3	2
5	6	1

Serving Order Systems

S	L	M
M	L	S

S	M	L
L	M	S

Next you'll need to make a grid for your line-ups system. I usually make a 10 game grid. You shouldn't need more but if you do it's easy to just make your grid larger. Remember this is a line-up for each game not each match.

Practice Grid

		Game #									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Setter										
2	Left										
3	Middle										
4	Setter										
5	Left										
6	Middle										

Make a copy of the practice grid and do the following steps.

1. In game 1: write in the numbers of the first two setters in positions – 1 and position – 4 (**#13** and **#10**).
2. In game 2: write in the number of the jumper setter in position –1 (**#27**), and leave the position – 4 setter (**#10**) in for a second game.
3. In game 3: write in the number of the jumper setter in position –4 (**#27**), and bring back the setter that was out in position – 1 (**#13**).

Now you have a 3 game position pattern that repeats every 3 games. The 3 game pattern for position – 1 is (**#13, #27, #13**); and the 3 game pattern for position – 4 is (**#10, #10, #27**).

4. Do the same steps 1, 2, 3 with your middles in positions –3 and position –6. Your middles are **#22** and **#17** and your jumper is **#12**. You should end up with a 3 game pattern for position –3 of (**#22, #12, #22**) and position –6 should be (**#17, #17, #12**). Anytime you have 3 players playing one type of position, you'll get a 3 game pattern after making 3 line-ups. Everyone ends up playing two games and sitting out one game.

5. When you have 4 players at a tournament playing one type of position, as we do with our lefts team them up in two pairs. Players (**#21** and **#4**) will be the first pair to play, and players (**#88** and **#5**) will be the second pair to play. In game 1 use the first pair of players (**#21** and **#4**). Write one left player in position – 2 (**#21**) and the other left in position – 5 (**#4**). In game 2 use the second pair of players (**#88** and **#5**). Write one left player in position – 2 (**#88**) and the other left in position – 5 (**#5**).

Now you have a two game position pattern, which repeats every 2 games. The 2 game pattern for position – 2 is (**#21, #88**) and the 2 game pattern for position –5 is (**#4, #5**). Anytime you have 4 players playing one type of position you get a pattern after making 2 line-ups. Everyone ends up playing one game and than sitting out one game.

This should be exactly how your 10 game grid looks.

		Game #									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Setter	13	27	13	13	27	13	13	27	13	13
2	Left	21	88	21	88	21	88	21	88	21	88
3	Middle	22	12	22	22	12	22	22	12	22	22
4	Setter	10	10	27	10	10	27	10	10	27	10
5	Left	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	5
6	Middle	17	17	12	17	17	12	17	17	12	17

I never anticipated all the benefits that came out of *Platooning*. I just wanted a way to get everyone some playing time. Some of these benefits include:

1. The players on the bench were always cheering for the players on the floor.
2. You'll also find the parents cheering players and supporting you (the coach) more.
3. Every player improved sooner.
4. All the players got to feel like starters in some matches.
5. Winning, or at least trying to win the next game, became important after a lost.
6. You get to coach each player by position with them sitting on the bench next to you watching what the other players do (right or wrong) during a game.
7. All the players learned to play volleyball with anyone that was on the floor with them.
8. The line-ups are made for the whole day.
9. You could start the next game at the next tournament with the players that sat out the last game of the previous tournament.
10. You can keep track of the rotations and serving order by using a diagonal line to cross out each serving player's number in the line-up for the first rotation, complete the X for

the second rotation, use a vertical line for the third rotation, and a horizontal line for the forth rotation if necessary.

11. It's very easy to back up the serving order one position and turn in the line-up that you want in order to get the first server you want.
12. Maybe the biggest benefit of all was that every player knew when they were in the game and so did their parents. Parents do not want to travel 60 miles or more just to watch their player play for 3 points in one game.

There are some problems when teams are larger but you could create two teams with "*Platooning*" line-ups and alternate line-ups between teams. I do not sub during the games unless I have to. I do not use a libero, however you could, and I don't like to play people only in the front row or back row. I want my club players to play all the way around. They may have to play all the way around for their own school

All the coaches in the EAST OHIO Volleyball Club use "*Platooning*" to do their line-ups. The only time they can change is if they need one more game to get into the play-offs at a tournament. But, Most of them still use the system to the benefit of all the players to feel the pressure when a win is needed.

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