

Volleyball Skills and Strategies: How to Win During Your Warm Ups

By April Chapple

By this time you've had your team prep talk right? Your coach has told you pretty much who does what on the other team. Well now that it's Before the game now that you have the time. Watch!

1. Watch and Identify who you might have to block in front of you.
2. Watch how they hit the ball.
3. Does she hit on the way down?
4. Is her armswing slow?
5. Does she have a fast or slow wrist snap in other words does her hit go down or go long in the court.
6. Does she always face cross court when she wants to hit cross court or does she hit over her shoulder to disguise her shot.

Does she always call for a high ball set or does she hit a shoot set as well? Look for clues in warm up as to what your opposing hitters do, then be already thinking about how you need to block that person or how late you need to wait in your block squat before you jump against a particular hitter.

Do the same in the serving warm up. As you are shagging your ball - keep an eye on WHERE members of the opposing starting team tend to always serve. If the left side hitter has served most of her warm up serves cross court - you can bet that she isn't going to pull too many surprises in the game and do something completely different than what you saw her do in warm up. Players love to warm up the skill that they perform the best in warm ups. If you are alert you can anticipate a lot of what a player is going to do -during the game.

If she serves 5 cross court and 1 down the line - what are you going to tell your team to look out for- that cross court serve first-right?

The last few minutes of the warm up and before you line up to start the game YOU can be talking to your teammates and share with them what your observations are. "Hey Gal Sal just hit the last 5 balls cross court whoever is blocking her be ready for that..." Why is this important?

1. This shows the coach that you are thinking...and sharing -which makes their job easier. And let's face it brownie points are Always good in that area.
2. You are also less likely to be taken by surprise during the game by what happens on the court because you've started Looking and Analyzing (aka warming up your brain) in warm-ups BEFORE the game even started.

So I'm not keeping my head down, grooving to the pre-game warm up music and concentrating on "just...doing my thing by just shagging and running back to hit" in warm-ups.

I'm aware, alert and helping my team by seeing, sharing and communicating what the opposing members of the other team are doing. This volleyball skill is preparing me mentally to anticipate what is going to happen. That's how you Win in Warm-ups!