

Defense- Aubrey Beaumont Rocky Mountain College

What part of the body plays the ball??

Types of balls to defend:

1. Straight down ball- Blockers
2. Hit- defense, right at you?
3. Tip- defense, run throughs

Defensive progression(for hard driven balls):

Player on knees(10 foot line) partner a step off the net in front of partner on the knees shoot platform.

- a. Tosser has ball with both hands above the head- toss down and in front of partner
- b. Tossing with pace- limits the defender's urge to swing at the ball
- c. Defender is in a good position- on knees, shoulder width apart, elbows in front of ribs, chest down parallel to the ground
- d. Defender sees the ball and goes directly to it by "shooting the platform out"
- e. Defender does not swing but holds and lets that ball bounce
- f. Ball should bounce back in the direction of the tosser
- g. If ball is farther away from defender defenders body should follow in line with the hands and arms to the ball, hips and body should follow

Work on all angles- forward, left and right (just slightly to the sides, should still be in front of the defender)

Standing but in the same position, working on arms going straight out to the ball not dropping down first then out, (can put an arm or an antenna under players hands to enforce "reach over" and go straight out to the ball)

- a. Forward tosses
- b. Tosses left and right
- c. Can work on balls that are at the head level by shooting hands up under the ball
- d. Can also work "extreme" angles, tosses high and diagonal to defender
 - i. Can just angle behind the ball
 - ii. Can open step to angle behind the ball
 - iii. May even need to open and step if tosser tosses far
- e. When balls are too far forward go into a Tripod-
 - i. Always freezing on contact
 - ii. May have to move forward "through the ball", to get under it
 - iii. Controlling the body the defender, plays ball then TRIPOD
 - iv. Catching themselves is an easy way for sprained wrists
 - v. Tripod is the two feet, hips up and behind, with the hands together on the ground

Further Away Digging-

Tosser either throws with one arm(hitting warmup) or hits the ball

Defender is back 4 feet in front of end line

Defender goes with platform only- no steps

Tossers goal is to get the ball within arms distance

Defenders goal is to be in a good balanced position and go straight to the ball
Body will Follow!!

Slow it down working on hard driven balls outside of immediate reach.

Stretch them out- Tosser in the same spot a step from the net, defender moves back to start in a good defensive stance about 4 feet behind the 10 foot line.

Tosser underhand tosses so defender can work on getting the arms out first.

Defender shoots platform out. THEN steps(can do both legs).

- a. Slowing it down for quality reps, arms THEN step
- b. Freezing on contact and letting the ball bounce
- c. Head should be lower at time of contact than when it started
- d. Hips may come up higher

Add stretching to the floor/going through

- a. Hands stay together
- b. Knee does not fall/hit the ground
- c. Finish dig before doing ANYTHING
- d. To reach a ball that is further the leg that took the step, pushes body/arms forward

*Could Add rolling out onto side. Knee tucks in, pushing off with your stepping leg. Keeping platform together

Further Away Digging- (with step or dive)

Tosser either throws with one arm(hitting warmup) or hits the ball

Defender is back 4 feet in front of end line

Defender goes with platform FIRST, then the body may step or dive to get to the ball

Tossers goal is to challenge defender, a step or two away from defender

Defenders goal is to be in a good balanced position and go straight to the ball

Body will Follow!!

Drills:

Scramble 3s:

3 players on one side, noone on the other(queens side)

Coach slaps the ball and the 3 players go to the other side(queens side) where you enter ANY kind of ball and they have to play it out to the other side where three new people enter into the court. Then they play it out as a regular 3 on 3.

Coach always enters a new ball to (queens) side every time. Winners stay, losers shag, and are off.

Coach- ANY kind of ball, EX. Off the ceiling, off the wall, hit at them, tip it, throw it into the net) Get wild and don't be scared to go fast! It's called scramble for a reason.

One arm digging:

Tennis ball Drop- partner stands 5-6 feet from defender. Holds tennis ball directly parallel to floor (out to the sides), drops one.

Defender must go with arm and step on that same side to the ball. Try to catch it off of one bounce.

Upgrade to using a volleyball after some reps and instead of catch the ball play the ball up.

Continuous hitting:

One player is the hitter the other is the defender. Hit the ball at the defender, they play it up. You hit at them again(get feet there). If it's not a good enough up for you, just pass it, set it to yourself then hit again. Defender stays low the entire time. No false moves

Alternative continuous hitting. When the ball is dug up the hitter then acts as a blocker and tips or "block" deflects the ball downward. Defender stays low then simulates covering. Moves back to dig. (To help with this drill it is best to set to self after the defender "covers" the ball)

Reps:

Run throughs- Start low, run low, play low, stay low. Alternate partner every time

Reverse Run throughs- Start low, run low, play low, stay low. Alternate partner every time

Classic W:

Defender starts in left back corner. Person at the net hits a ball at them, They run up for a tip ball in the 3/4 court. Throw a ball back to the 6 court, hit to middle of the court, tip again to the 2/3 court. Defender transitions "line" on the right back then digs another ball. (can vary where hitter is and the types of balls given)

Hitters vs. defense:

Hitting line on one side, defense on the other.

Hitters are trying to get to 5 pts before the defense gets to 3 pts.

Defense only gets a point for a ball that's blocked or played up, then hit over and in. It's a wash if the ball is controlled up but is not hit over the net and in. Hitters get a Point for every kill/tool.