

Team Culture and Mental Toughness

Erika Gustavsen
Gallatin High School

2025

General Info

- Volleyball is a mental game.
- Volleyball is a relationship game.
- Every point ends on someone's mistake.
- How quickly a player responds after a mistake will determine how successful a team is.
- How a player feels will greatly affect how successful a team is.

Team Culture

- **Build relationships.**
-Bring out the best in each of them.
- **Be consistent and be honest.**
-Respect, listen, & trust.
- Have clear expectations.
- Empower your players.
- Practice what you preach.

Team Culture

- Team bonding outside the gym (1-3 times during the season).
- Volunteer in the community together.
- Team lunches & dinners.
- Take their phones :)
- Big sister/little sister.
- THE WEIGHT ROOM!

Team Culture

- Coaching staff continuity.
 - On the same page.
 - Always have open communication.
 - Team effort = consistent culture.

Team Leaders

- We don't have specific captains.
- We view every player as a leader and all are equal.
- Figure out what leadership each player has and focus on that vs. wanting/making them someone they are not.

Questionnaires

- Who are they as a person, player, and teammate?
- How do they communicate?
- How do they learn?
- What do they need from the coaches and their teammates?

Mental Toughness

- You have to train their minds.
 - No “My bad.”
 - Book Club
 - Articles
 - Daily chats at practice
 - Weekly check-ins
- Ask for their input and feedback when things are going well and when things are NOT going well.

Mental Toughness

- As the coach, you have to be the most consistent...the biggest cheerleader and the calm during the storm.
- What we preach; Believe in yourself, believe in your teammates, believe in this team, and have NO DOUBT.

Mental Toughness

- “Pressure is always present. You are either applying it or feeling it.”
- Feeling some pressure is a good thing.
- Change the mindset.

Mental Toughness

- You have to make them UNCOMFORTABLE daily through drills.
- Train pressure situations every day.
- Continue to increase their goals and your expectations; don't get stagnant.
- Reflect and learn from failure.
- Hold them accountable.

Mental Toughness

- Train them to focus on what they can control.
- Train them hard, so matches are the easy part and they feel prepared for whatever they encounter.
- You don't have to do more.

Questions/Follow Ups

Erika Gustavsen

erika.gustavsen@bsd7.org

406-240-5475