An often-overlooked factor allowing the continued sophistication of offensive strategy is the improvement in the skill level of setters. It is difficult to run any type of potent offensive system without a setter who understands the nuances of the game. In order for the hitters to be successful, the setter must deliver a good set into an area where the hitter has a chance to be effective.

The statistic that has been used to track the effectiveness of the setters is assists. An assist is awarded to the setter when a ball is directed to the hitter who scores a kill. Obviously, the ability of the setter to gain an assist is directly related to the team’s passing skills and the ability of the hitters to “put the ball away” or score a kill.

For this reason, assists have become more of a media statistic for setters rather than a true evaluation of the setter’s ability. Still, there is a high correlation with the assists per game of the team’s setter with the hitting efficiency of their team. The nation’s leading setters usually come with higher assists averages and play for teams with a powerful offense.

**Defining an Assist**
The assist category is found on the official box score. Currently, most sports governing bodies (NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, etc.) tabulate setter assists as one of the tools in the evaluation process for recognizing outstanding setters. Some governing bodies also require schools to tabulate the number of setting attempts made by players so that an
assist percentage/efficiency can be calculated. However, the official box score does not have a column for reporting assist attempts.

There are three possible outcomes for a ball that is being set:

- An assist (A), is awarded to any player who passes, sets or dig the ball to a teammate resulting in an attack for a kill. (The guidelines for awarding an assist in volleyball are much the same as those used in awarding an assist in basketball.)

- An assist error (AE) or ball handling error (BHE) is given to a player for any attempted set resulting in an illegal action called by the official. (i.e., double contact, lift)

- A zero assist (0) is given to any player who sets a ball that does not directly lead to a kill or a side-out. Documentation of a zero assist on the worksheet is only required if the statistician is calculating assist percentage.

**Assists per Game and Assist Efficiency**

These statistics give an average for the number of assists awarded to a player in each game and a statistic for assist (setting) efficiency. Assists are tallied on the AVCA or NCAA Worksheet or another appropriate form.

The assists per game may be calculated for any player, but its significance is most directly related to setters. There may be times when the coach is also interested in the assist per game for the right side player (alternate setter/opposite) in a 5-1 offense.

The assist efficiency gives the coach some indication of the quality and percentage of the sets that end in kills. Some coaches compute the efficiency without subtracting the setter errors. Compute the assist statistics with the following formulas:

**Computing assist average:**

Total number of assists (A) / total games played (GP) = assists per game (A/G)

**Computing assist efficiency:**

Total number of assists – total errors (BHE & AE) / total number of setting attempts = assist efficiency

---

**Set Selection Chart**

It is important for coaches to be able to gather setting tendencies by rotation to truly evaluate the team offense. The Set Selection Chart allows the coach to gather just this type of information. It also shows the opponents rotations so the coach knows which blockers are faced in each rotation.

The chart has an area to record the quality of the pass the setter received, the type of set they select, which player receives the set, how good the set was, and the result of the attack. Since the sets are kept in chronological order and by rotation, the coach can also note changes in tactics by the setter.

Before the game starts, the statistician should complete the rotation wheels with the rotation order for both teams. Each time the rotation changes, the statistician will move to the proper rotation to record the information about each set.

A detailed description of the types of set (terminology) used in the offense should be given to the statistician. The statistician must use their judgment about the execution of the set (how good was the set placement).

This chart can be kept on the bench by a substitute setter. In situations where it becomes necessary for the coach to insert a substitute setter into the middle of a game, this chart should arm the substitute with good information about specific rotations. It is much better than having a clueless, daydreaming setter go into a critical situation!

The diagram below shows an abbreviated set selection chart. The complete notation for the first set is:

![Set Selection Chart Diagram](image)

In the following figure, the first set in rotation 1 comes after a pass which was rated a “3”. Under the set selection area, the notation means that the set was a “52” (to area 5 and second tempo), the set was made to player #10, and it was judged to be a good set based on the location and height. The result of the first set is a kill for the hitter.
There are other methods of charting set selection, but the important aspect is for both the coach and the player to have as much information as possible about the effectiveness of the setting strategy. This method gives specific information as the match progresses.
**Hawaii Defend-and-Set**  
*From Aggressive Volleyball*, by Pete Waite

**Purpose:** To assess ball handling and improve defensive and setting consistency. This is a great drill because players need back-to-back digs and sets. Nonsetters are put in the setter role to improve their skills.

**Goal:** To score 5 big points by earning consecutive points with high-quality plays.

**Equipment Needed:** Balls; coaching boxes.

**Explanation:**
- Two coaches on boxes at the right and left front positions alternate hits to three defenders who dig to one setter. Coaches hit both balls to the same player. The setter sets each ball to one of the two targets located at the right and left front attacking positions. A small point is scored by making a dig and set to either of the targets. Players need 2 small points in a row to score a big point. After 5 big points, new players rotate in, using three defenders and a middle blocker to set.
- Use nonsetters in the role of the setter to improve their setting skills.
- Challenge the players with off-speed shots that make them run down balls with control. Halfway through, remove the setter and have one of the defenders bump-set the ball to the outside.

---

**Setter Pressure Isolated**  
*From Volleyball Drills for Champions*, Mary Wise, Editor

**Purpose:** To teach setters to make correct choices under a “pressure” situation.

**Procedure:**
1. The setter assumes the passing target location.
2. All hitters create a numerical attack order known to the setter. Hitters are responsible for remembering who they follow in the order. The order is constant.
3. The hitters scatter to different approach position bases and may alter those positions as the drill progresses.
4. The coach tosses a series of passes as each hitter approaches while calling to the setter the desired set. There are three hitters approaching at all times. Only the hitter whose turn it is should be set.
5. The setter delivers an accurate set to each hitter.
6. A successful attack is a hard-hit shot passing completely over the net and in bounds. The setter completes the drill with 16 successful attacks.

**Key Points:**
1. Maintain composure regardless of the length of the drill or the origin of an error.
2. Continue to focus on execution and communication throughout the drill.

**Variations:**
1. To increase difficulty:
   - Faster pacing by the coach.
   - Raise the successful execution standard.
   - Require a time standard for completing the drill.
   - Specify a court area that the hitters must attack into for a successful contact.
2. To decrease difficulty:
   - Slower pacing by the coach.
   - Lower the successful execution standard.
   - Rehearse only one type of set with all hitters originating from the same base point.

**Equipment Needed:**
- Full court with net and antennae
- About 20 balls

---

*Aggressive Volleyball and Complete Conditioning for Volleyball can be purchased from the AVCA Product Store, along with many other titles from established coaches. Visit the AVCA Product Store today!* [http://www.avca.org/product-store/]
INTENSITY
In the game and in practice!

Bring the same intensity you get in games to practice.

Use the best stat keeping tool, Volleyball ACE, for matches to determine what you need to work on in practice. Then use the TapRecorder during practice to perfect your game. The results will be amazing.

TapRecorder Volleyball ACE

Version 2
- Now! Works on Pocket PC and Palm Handhelds
- Has Spreadsheet Interface with TapRecording Cells
- Includes Built-In Volleyball PracticeLogs Reports
- Can Create Custom Handheld Applications
- Calculates Efficiency % and More

Tap Tap Tap...
Instant Stat!

Version 6
- Fast, On-Court Stats
- Pass-Serve Ratings and Charting
- Box Scores, Points Per Rotation and More
- Runs on Palm (Zire, Tungsten) and Pocket PC (PAQ, Axim)
- Uploads data for NAIA and NCAA stats reporting

Now available for Pocket PC and Palm handhelds!

We are passionate about Volleyball!
ORDER YOUR SOFTWARE TODAY!
www.ace4vb.com
Call: Toll free: (877) 223-8225 Web: www.ace4vb.com FAX: (650) 948-2616