

Why Triple Ball?

Triple Ball is a modified game of volleyball designed to help developing athletes experience success, accelerate their skill development and have fun.

Many countries around the world have recognized the benefits of modified volleyball games for young athletes. Some federations have opted to only serve underhand while others have reduced the court size and number of players on the floor. Currently the FIVB is even experimenting with a rule that would only allow the first attack to come from the back row. These modifications are all intended to increase the number of rallies and help players develop a wider range of fundamental skills. In 2009, Alberta Volleyball piloted a game which they called Triple Ball which will continue to be their competition format for the upcoming season. This variation of volleyball incorporates a coach introduced free ball, no specialization and mandatory substitutions.

The main benefit to Triple-Ball is the increased probability of a second contact or a rally. We believe that successful rallies are an integral part of enjoying the game and learning basic skills. An Alberta study indicated that when a 14U athlete initiates the rally with a serve there is only a 44% chance of a second contact. The remaining 56% of rallies are ended by either an ace or missed serve.

Additionally, the average number of contacts per rally more than double when a coach or competent volunteer initiate the rally with a free ball. Not allowing players to switch positions allows every athlete to experience the challenges of each position and helps them develop a broader range of abilities. Compulsory substitutions make it possible for every athlete to participate equally in every match. We feel that this is a very important concept as research from a variety of late developing sports like volleyball indicates that there is little to no correlation between top performers in older age groups with top performers in younger age groups. In other words, it is critical that every player be given the opportunity to develop early in their career because any one of them, regardless of their ability, could be a future national player.