

## Indoor Volleyball Tutorial by Yulian Briantama Danusaastro

Awesome, I see everyone is getting their hands down and dirty with some bright (sarcasm intended) gym lights trying to shoot volleyball. Last year, I shot a lot of volleyball for my school's paper (Long Beach State) and got to shoot the NCAA volleyball finals. I'm done with photography (for now) and focusing on my school. I learned that it's a relatively hard sport to capture because of 1. low lights 2. Background suck and 3. Fast action to follow.

But I want to provide people here with a little help on how to maximize your volleyball "keepers." Mind you, you don't have to follow what I say. I'm just letting you all know where I usually positioned myself for which shots.

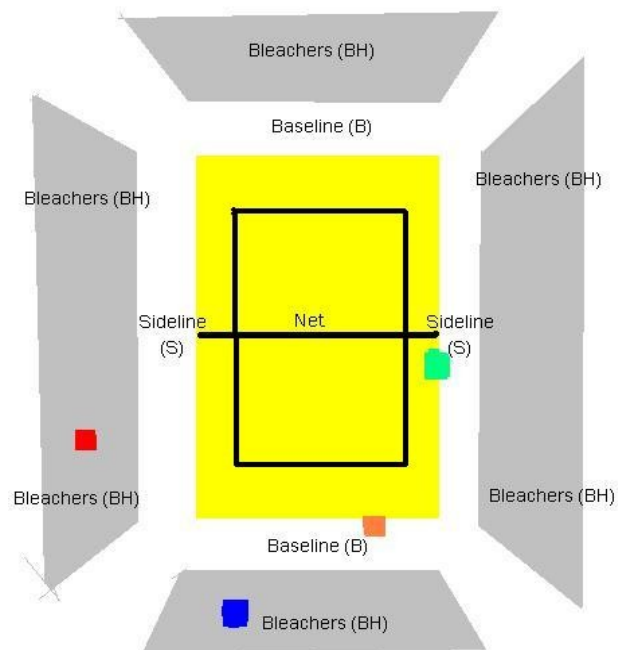
That say, I believe the lens to have for this kind of shooting is a 70-200 2.8. Primes (below 200mm) will not cut it for this sport. Its not flexible enough I think. You need the zoom capability to change your point of view. The big prime boys (200 1.8 or 2.0, 300 2.8, and 400 2.8) are an exception. I think these will get nice tight shots and up the creativity point esp. when sitting on the baseline or up in the bleachers or EVEN on the catwalk. I understand you're itching to use that 85 1.8 or the 135 2.0 or heaven forbid the 50 1.8 because of the speed in the "cave," but in my opinion any gym will suffice you. Remember ISO is relative to the shots you get. Noisy but GREAT action/jube shots will beat a noiseless but so-so shot anytime of the day.

Which brings me up to the recent thread of ball "cloning." Volleyball is a sport of timing. Get your timing right and you shall be rewarded with a ball in the photo. Practice often. Get your meter, wb, timing right and you're good to go. No messing around in PS.

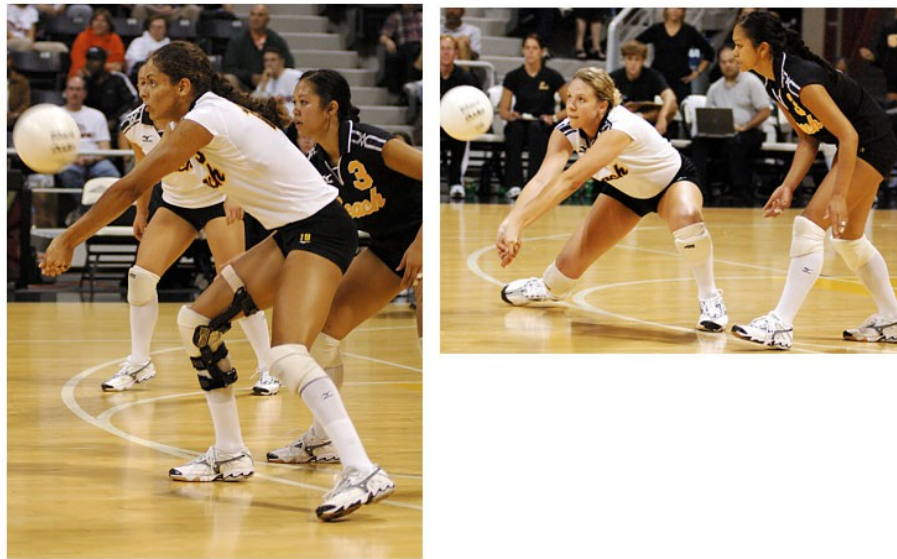
Why do I feel people need to know positions? Well because I want to be as prepared as I can before a game. I have to know how the lights are, where I will be sitting and what kind of shots I will dedicate to. If I want spike shots from baseline, I will spend all my time there until I get what I feel is enough. Do not stray from your promised shots. I can't count the number of times I move and then miss my shot. Be PREPARED when you come into a game.

Volleyball is similar to any sports photography. Shoot TIGHT, then shoot even TIGHTER, then on the computer crop even TIGHTER. No one likes a loose photo.

Ok so basically this is what the blueprint looks like



1) The first position people first assume to take is the sideline (green dot on map). I sort of like sort of don't like this position because it's hard to get eye/face contact. You often see the side of the players. Second, I really don't care for sets unless the paper wants that certain player. Third, background is hard to avoid here. Four, I don't like spike shots from down here because it's awkward looking and once again hard to get facial expression. Here are some examples however. These are all taken from the sideline.



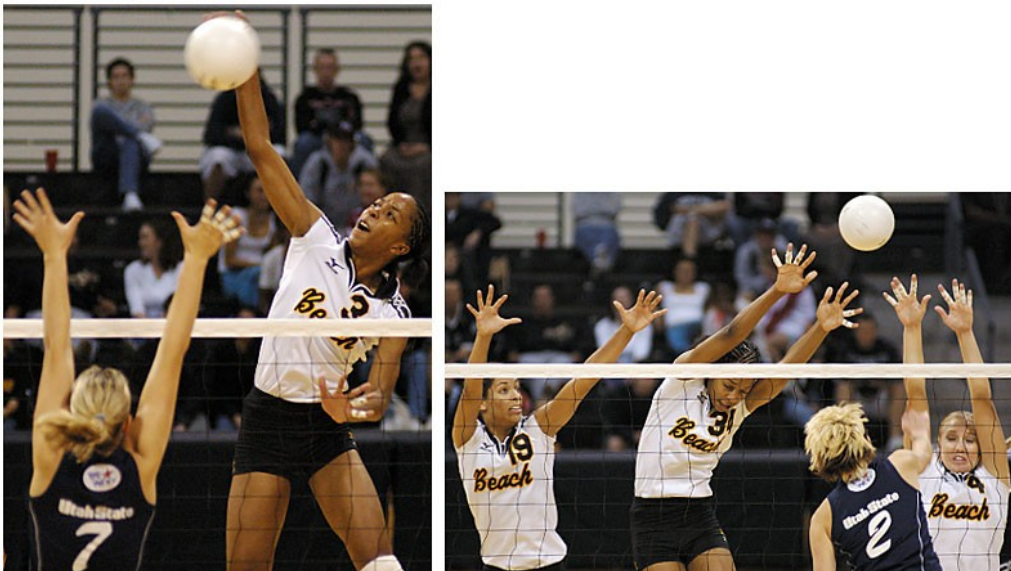
2) Second position is my favorite. I'm sitting on the baseline (orange dot on map). BTW, you should be sitting in out of bounds safety zone as to not interfere with the players or the refs. I love the head on photos this position make. This is where the 85mm will be too short. Here are examples.



3) Third position is my second favorite. This position gives you the spike shots. Sitting on the baseline (orange dot on map) but now focusing on the net action. I usually use max 200mm on these shots. A 300mm will be even nicer and tighter.



4) Fourth position is the bleachers behind baseline (blue dot on map). This will be again for spike shots and cleaner backgrounds I believe. This IS a GREAT POSITION to get the "wall" photo where you have 2 or 3 blockers trying to block a spike. Examples.



5) I always use a 70-200. I wish I had something longer though to be more creative. Some more positions with long glass are way up top behind the bleachers. Another one is catwalk. These are awesome photos I think. Ask Jimmy Gekas here for those shots. He has plenty good ones.

6) Be creative and move around (ONLY after you have your safe shot). This shot I took from sitting on the left bleachers (red dot on map)



And be crazy. Use slow shutter speed for those pan shots. Remember your subject must be tack sharp in pan shots.



7) Oh of course, bring your wide angle zoom for jube. JUBE people, it's very important. How did I get them? I didn't chimp (well not that often). Chimping is bad bad bad plus it wastes battery. Here are some jubes.



8. Oh yeah... don't forget the obligatory cheerleader shots to make them feel special.



Ok, I feel so happy to see so many people venturing to this sport. Man I wish I can click a shutter one more time. It was like a rush to me. Maybe in the future ill get back to photography, heck who knows. But for know, good luck shooting in that "cave" of yours.

Thanks for the replies. I just want people to see that this is a fun and rewarding experience if you know what you are doing. Remember to always respect the players, refs and audiences when you are clicking away.

PS: I'd like to dedicate this post to the man who got me started: James Rulison. JAIIIIIMMMMES!