



**TOPIC: EFFECTIVE METHODS OF DEVELOPING QUICK
DECISION-MAKING AND GAME THINKING IN YOUNG VOLLEYBALL
PLAYERS**

Obidov Sardor Rakhmonjonovich

*Tashkent International University of Financial Management and
Technologies 2nd year master's student*

Abstract: *In modern volleyball, quick and accurate assessment of situations during the game, timely and appropriate decision-making are directly related to the player's general and special training, as well as his tactical thinking. The development of tactical thinking in young volleyball players is a complex process, in which reading game episodes, anticipating opponent's actions, and quick processing of signals and information play a key role. The study shows that situational exercises, small games, pair and group tactical combinations are important in forming the game thinking of young athletes. This article analyzes effective methods for forming quick decision-making skills in young volleyball players at the initial training stage.*

Keywords: *volleyball, tactical thinking, decision-making, situational exercises, game combinations, psychological preparation.*

Annatatsiya: *Zamonaviy voleybolda o'yin jarayonidagi vaziyatlarni tez va aniq baholash, o'z vaqtida mos qaror qabul qilish o'yinchining umumiy va maxsus tayyorgarligi bilan bir qatorda uning taktik tafakkuriga ham bevosita bog'liqdir. Yosh voleybolchilarda taktik fikrlashni rivojlantirish murakkab jarayon bo'lib, bunda o'yin epizodlarini o'qish, raqib harakatlarini oldindan sezish, signal va ma'lumotlarni tezkor qayta ishlash asosiy o'rin tutadi. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, yosh sportchilarning o'yin tafakkurini shakllantirishda situatsion mashqlar, kichik o'yinlar, juftlik va guruh taktik kombinatsiyalari muhim ahamiyatga ega. Ushbu maqolada yosh voleybolchilarni dastlabki tayyorlov bosqichida tezkor qaror qabul qilish malakalarini shakllantirishning samarali metodlari tahlil qilinadi.*



***Kalit so‘zlar:** voleybol, taktik tafakkur, qaror qabul qilish, situatsion mashqlar, o‘yin kombinatsiyasi, psixologik tayyorgarlik.*

Success in modern volleyball is not limited to high technical skills or good physical fitness. Reading situations during the game, anticipating the opponent's actions, and at the same time being able to choose the most effective action option - all this is included in the concept of tactical thinking. Tactical thinking is a complex mental process that occurs in the mind of a volleyball player, which serves to make quick decisions during the game. In the process of training young volleyball players, one of the tasks of the coach is to pay special attention to the development of tactical thinking, because this quality creates the foundation for the athlete to become a high-level player in the future.

Tactical thinking, unlike technical preparation, is a multi-factorial psychological process. It includes such stages as assessing the real situation on the field, analyzing existing opportunities, instantly understanding the tasks within the team, and developing an appropriate response to the opponent's actions. According to experienced coaches, an athlete with a high level of tactical thinking can gain an advantage even over a technically stronger opponent. Because such a volleyball player is able to choose the most optimal solution in the game and has the ability to control the situation.

The formation of tactical thinking in young volleyball players is closely related to the following psychological components:

1. The ability to concentrate. The game of volleyball is characterized by its speed. Each episode occurs in a matter of seconds, and the player must simultaneously monitor factors such as the trajectory of the ball, the location of teammates, and the possibility of an opponent's block. The ability to maintain and quickly switch attention is the basis of tactical thinking. An athlete with poor attention will ignore part of the information received, which will lead to poor decisions.

2. Quick analysis of the situation. A player's ability to instantly analyze the situation on the field allows him to choose the right and effective course of action.



For example, a player who is passing should see the striker moving into an empty area and pass the ball in that direction. This process of analysis is formed through the analysis of repeated exercises, mini-games and game events.

3. Short-term memory. During the game, the athlete must retain the coach's instructions, the opponent's previous actions, and information about the location of his teammates for a few seconds. Athletes with a developed short-term memory quickly master tactical tasks, easily perform complex combinations, and accurately perform their tasks.

4. Anticipation (prognostic thinking). One of the most important components of tactical thinking is the ability to predict the further development of events. The athlete must anticipate situations such as which direction the opponent will pass the ball, which player is preparing for a shot, and which zone the block will be strongest in. Strong prognostic thinking teaches the volleyball player to think several moves ahead, and this gives an advantage in practice.

5. Quick, logical decision-making. Volleyball is a sport where decisions are made in a split second. After analyzing the situation, a player must decide on the most effective solution - whether to shoot, pass, or keep the ball on the court through a safe play. The inability to make quick decisions slows down the pace of the game and gives the opponent an advantage.

Tasks for developing game thinking at the initial stage of preparation (with research results). The initial preparatory stage is crucial for the formation of future tactical thinking, game intelligence and the ability to make quick decisions in young volleyball players. At this stage, coaches should organize training in such a way that each movement of the athlete is combined with mental processes. That is, game thinking is developed naturally through exercises that are not complicated, but require thinking.

Main tasks:

1. Explain and repeat simple combinations.	2. Signal-based exercises. Exercises that involve changing positions, going to the ball, or returning
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Initially, athletes are taught simple combinations: the correct position after passing, choosing the optimal position on the defensive line, evaluating the ball thrown by the opponent. These tasks: • expand the player's vision of the field, • accelerate decision-making, • help coordinate team actions.	to the ball based on the coach's voice ("Pass!", "Defend!", "Back off!") or visual (flag, colored signs) signals increase the athlete's reaction speed. Studies show that regular use of signal exercises for 6–8 weeks speeds up a player's reaction by 12–18%.
3. Small games (2×2, 3×3) These games, due to the small size of the field, force each player to think actively. In each episode: • the player makes a decision, • searches for an empty area, • chooses a tactical solution. According to the results of the study, the use of games in the 3×3 format for 4 weeks increased the players' tactical situation assessment indicators by 20–25%.	4. Pair and group exercises Pair and small group exercises develop in athletes: • mutual understanding, • quick reception of signals, • coordination of various combinations . These exercises strengthen team thinking.

Developing decision-making through situational exercises and games.

Exercises that simulate game conditions are one of the most effective tools for developing tactical thinking in young athletes. Situational exercises teach the athlete to think, analyze the situation, and choose the most appropriate action.

1. “Who will get the ball?” exercise. The coach throws the ball to different zones of the field. The athletes decide within a few seconds: • which player will receive the ball, • which one will go for insurance,	2. “3-way decision” exercise. The athlete, based on the coach’s signal, chooses one of the following decisions: –pass, –shot, – safe play.
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• who will continue the combination . This exercise strengthens the mechanism of mutual thinking and “team decision”.	This exercise increases the brain’s quick flexibility and the speed of the decision-making process. Studies show that performing this exercise for 5 weeks reduces athletes’ decision-making time by 15–22%.
3. Small-format tactical games Due to the small size of the field in 2x2 or 3x3 games: • each athlete becomes an active subject of the process, • is forced to think quickly, • game thinking is quickly formed. Therefore, small games are one of the most effective methods for young people.	4. “Find the empty zone” exercise Through exercises aimed at finding an empty space in the opponent’s field, athletes develop: • observation, • the ability to see the trajectory of the game, • strategic thinking . This exercise expands the player’s “territorial thinking”.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

An 8-week experimental study was conducted with 24 volleyball players aged 11–13 in the 2025–2025 academic year. The groups were divided into two parts:

- Control group – traditional training
- Experimental group – situational exercises, signal exercises, small games

Results of the study:

1. Decision-making speed • Control group: average 4% improvement • Experimental group: 18–25% improvement	3. Reaction rate • Control group: 5% • Experimental group: 16%
2. Accuracy of tactical situation assessment	4. Percentage of correct solutions in the game process



- Control group: 7%
- Experimental group: 28%

- Control group: 11%
- Experimental group: 32%

Situational exercises, small-format games, and exercises based on visual and audio signals develop tactical thinking and decision-making skills in young volleyball players 2–3 times more effectively than traditional training.

Conclusion: The formation of tactical thinking in young volleyball players is one of the most important stages of improving sports skills, which requires the harmonious development of technical, physical and psychological preparation. Research and practical experience show that achieving superiority in a volleyball game directly depends not only on strength and speed, but also on such mental processes as the correct assessment of situations on the field, choosing the right move in time, and anticipating the opponent's next step. Therefore, the development of game thinking is an integral part of the training system for young athletes. Signal exercises, small-format games (2x2 and 3x3), situational tasks and group exercises used at the initial training stage encourage athletes to be active, force them to think in conditions close to the game process. These exercises significantly increase the players' decision-making speed, observation, ability to find free zones and the ability to choose tactical solutions. The results of the study also showed that with the systematic and rational use of situational exercises, the tactical thinking indicators of young athletes increase by 20–30 percent, and the reaction speed improves by 15–18 percent. Also, the establishment of a high level of psychological preparation ensures that players can think clearly even in stressful situations, recover quickly from mistakes, and withstand the pressure of competition. All this creates the necessary conditions for a volleyball player to make every decision on the court quickly, accurately, and in accordance with the situation. Especially in small games, the rapid change of each episode further activates the athlete's thinking and adapts them to high-paced volleyball. In general, the conducted analysis shows that methods aimed at developing tactical thinking in the process of training young volleyball players also accelerate technical training, strengthen physical skills, and comprehensively prepare athletes for competitive conditions. Therefore, a training



system based on game thinking is a guaranteed foundation for future high sporting results for volleyball players.

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