

Dedication

Doing Sports God's Way with Rachel Schwartz

With a record of 21-1 (12-1 Big 12 Conference) it's apparent that the second-ranked Nebraska volleyball team has brought its A Game whenever and wherever it hits the court. Senior Rachel Schwartz has been an integral part of the Huskers' success—especially on the defensive end of the court. She is one of NU's primary defensive players, averaging a career-high 3.66 digs. She has totaled double figures in digs 17 times, including a career-best 21 digs against Missouri.

Q: How does your faith impact volleyball?

A: Whenever I go back to serve during a volleyball game, I remind myself that my efforts are dedicated to the Lord. It's all for Him.

Q: What is the Gospel?

A: God is so amazing! When I think about what He did by sending His son, Jesus, to suffer and die on a cross for my sin—I'm so thankful. Because of this sacrifice, I no longer face the wrath of God. When I hear songs about Jesus' sacrifice, it humbles me. I think it's extremely important for Christian athletes to be humbled by what God has done for us. Each game, I offer my talents and effort to Him because of the mercy He has shown me. While I often fall short of "doing sports God's way"—it gives me confidence on the court to know the focus is on pleasing Him rather than pleasing my own selfish desires.



Q: How does your faith help you face setbacks?

A: Though there are games that I play poorly and feel overwhelmed at times, Jesus is the one person that I can talk with that understands what I'm going through. Whenever I face setbacks, I know that I need to pray and lean on His strength the most. I simply confess to Him that I don't know what to do and I ask him for guidance. Even when things aren't going my way, I thank the Lord for the blessing in my life.

Q: How do you prepare for a game?

A: I go to find a quiet place and pray. I usually ask for the Lord to bless our team and help us love one another on the court. I'm also praying that I keep my focus on bringing Him the glory throughout the competition. As a team, right before we take the court, either myself or one of my teammates, lead a team prayer. That's one final reminder to keep Him the focus during the game. When the Lord is not our focus that's when we begin placing the focus on ourselves which often leads to fear.

WARMUP

1. Watch the internet interview with Rachel Schwartz. Go to www.youtube.com and search for "Cross Training with Rachel Schwartz"

WORKOUT

1. What does it mean to dedicate everything to the Lord? Explain. Read 1 Peter 3:15.
2. First Peter 3:15, teaches that we are "to sanctify" ourselves. Read the definition below and discuss how this can be Applied to your sport.

"To sanctify" speaks of adoring, exalting, magnifying, and giving primary place to. The believer who sanctifies Christ exalts Him as the object of his love and loyalty. The believer recognizes His perfection, magnifies His glory, and extols His greatness. He submits himself to God's will. To live that way is to "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect" (Titus 2:10).

3. Name an athlete or coach that you think best fits this type of dedication?

WRAPUP

This week, memorize...

"but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect," 1 Peter 3:15. (ESV)

PRAYER

Lord, I desire to dedicate myself to bring you the glory. Help me to...

GOSPEL FOCUS

The death of Jesus Christ was the most remarkable event in all history. Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, took upon Himself a human nature and died a horrible death on our behalf. That is the reason for the cross. He suffered what we should have suffered. He died in our place to pay the penalty for our sins.
— Jerry Bridges

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