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WORLD ASSOCIATION OF BASKETBALL COACHES

COACHING MANUAL

LEVEL 3

LEVEL 3

COACH

ROLES AND VALUES

CHAPTER 1

ROLES AND VALUES

1.1   LEADERSHIP

1.1.1   LEADING THE TEAM

"The measure of a leader is not what they have done but what they inspire others to do."

MICHAEL HAYNES

"Leadership is the ability to lead by example and create an environment that allows others to perform at their optimum."

NATHAN BUCKLEY

There is a considerable amount of material available on the topic of leadership and many models for evaluating and developing leadership skills.

This chapter reproduces work from the Fuqua/coach K Centre on Leadership and Ethics. Coach Mike Krzyzewski needs no introduction within basketball and is undoubtedly one of the best coaches that game has had. His Duke University teams have won national championships and he has also won Olympic and World Cup gold medals with the USA Men's Basketball team. Much of his success derives from his "leadership" and he is highly sought after in business for this experience.

THE SIX DOMAINS OF LEADERSHIP[1]

In our roles at the Fuqua/coach K Center on Leadership & Ethics (COLE), we have the opportunity to interact with a wide variety of executives and students. Some are sceptics and others are hopeful. The sceptics ask us, How can you teach leadership? Isn't leadership innate – either you have it or you don't? The optimists ask us, How can we become better leaders?

To the sceptics, we respond that leaders are both born and made. Everyone is endowed with distinctive strengths and weaknesses that affect their capacity for leadership. However, most fall short of fully maximizing their leadership potential. Our role as educators is to help our students to better leverage their capabilities.

To the optimists, we say that leadership is about behaviours and not traits or personalities. There is no one "leadership type". Everyone has seen great leaders who are quietly inspiring and others who possess larger-than-life personalities. Leadership is ultimately about what you do and how that affects the perception of who you are. For example, if people understand what you stand for as a person and perceive you as caring about them, they will respond with loyalty and trust. Leaders can be made and improved upon if they can analyse their behaviours within a framework, understand the types and interactions of behaviours that result in effective leadership, and modify their behaviours based on that understanding.

SO, WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

Leadership is not about prestige, power or status; it is about influence and persuasion. It is not based on position, nor is it solely a matter of hierarchical relationships – it is as much about leading one's superiors and one's peers as it is about leading one's direct reports. You can have an organisation in which everyone is a leader and exhibits leadership behaviour.

Leadership focuses on creating organisations, changing organisations, and sustaining organisations as they confront internal and external obstacles. In this way, we view leadership as being distinctive from management, with leadership focusing

1 This article is by Sim B. Sitkin, E. Allan Lind and Sanyin Siang and is reproduced in its entirety with their kind permission. The authors work at the Fuqua/coach K Center on Leadership & Ethics (COLE). For further information see http://cole.fuqua.duke.edu

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more on people and creating value and management focusing more on systems, implementation, and processes. One is not more important than the other, and both have key roles to play in any organisation.

SIX DOMAINS OF LEADERSHIP

Several years ago, two of us (Sitkin and Lind) undertook the development of a leadership framework based on strong theory and a broad base of scholarship, but we sought also to develop a model that would work well in the everyday world of leadership action. We reviewed leadership research and theory in organizational behaviour as well as related topics such as work on trust, fairness, and control, and we examined what social, political, and cognitive psychology and sociology and political science had to say about leadership. In our research, six distinct clusters of leadership behaviours emerged, each with its own distinct effects on followers. These six domains-personal leadership, relationship leadership, contextual leadership, inspirational leadership, supportive leadership, and ethical leadership-together create a comprehensive and dynamic model of leadership activities as illustrated by:
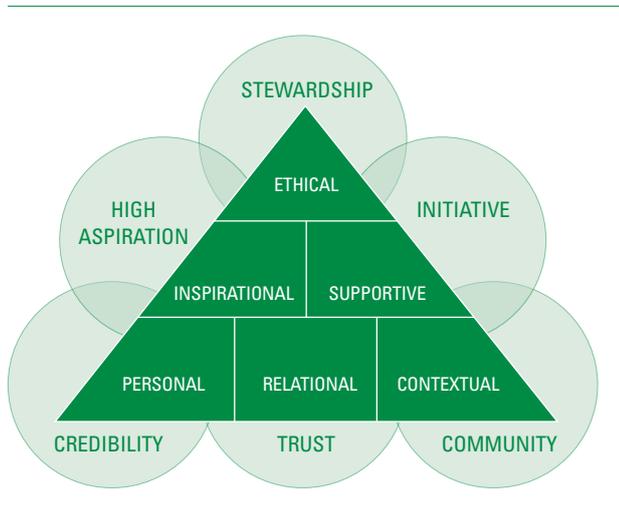
LEADERSHIP DOMAINS AND EFFECTS

The placement of the domains in the framework shows their relationship to each other and the effects they produce, as indicated by the surrounding circles. For example, the relational domain is in the center because leadership is ultimately about the leader-follower dynamic, and its effect of trust is an element that percolates through all types of leadership situations. The three foundational domains become the building blocks for the next tier of domains – inspirational and supportive leadership. For ethical leadership at the pinnacle to be most effective, all five supporting domains must be in place.

This view of leadership behaviours as encompassed by the six domains includes not only intellectual aspects of leadership but also emotional and reflective aspects that encompass individual leaders, their relationship with others, and their ties to a larger community. This allows the model to speak to leaders and students of leadership at multiple levels.

On an individual level, it motivates people to explore their own leadership potential.

On a team level, it encourages team members and team leaders to reflect on interpersonal relationships, including their skills in developing emotional connections with others and their willingness to both support and challenge others as needed.

On an organizational level, it provides leaders with a contextual platform to accept the responsibilities of being a leader capable of inspiring a sense of communal pride. The framework is also noteworthy for its focus on behaviours, its integrative and dynamic conceptualization of leadership, and its grounding in a diverse range of scholarly disciplines.

We will provide a brief overview of the six domains, the behaviours associated with each, and the effects that they create in the follower.

"A leader is best when people barely know they exist; when the work is done, the aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves."

LAO TZU

FOUNDATIONAL DOMAINS – PERSONAL, RELATIONAL AND CONTEXTUAL LEADERSHIP

Personal leadership:

Leaders need to be seen as personally capable of leading, as authentic, and as dedicated to their team. Each leader needs to establish credibility in terms of vision and experience. In the eyes of the followers, is this person qualified to lead them? Does this leader have an idea of where the team or organization should be heading and how to get them there? Is that goal ultimately what's good for the overall organization and consistent with the values espoused by the members of the team? In preparing for this, did the leader take the time to understand the environment and the challenges associated with a particular goal?

At the end of the day, people want to be led by a real person and not by a title or role. In the personal leadership domain, leaders must develop and exhibit an authentic leadership style that projects who they are and what they stand for. Followers also need to see their leaders demonstrate passion and commitment to the organization – does the leader have skin in the game, so to speak. In this domain, leaders need to have their words backed up by their actions. We've heard stories of senior executives in organizations that try to effect a change – only to fail because they themselves were not perceived as embracing the change they championed. At the end of the day, it helps when a leader's actions are consistent and predictable.

When a potential leader shows good personal leadership by demonstrating capability, authenticity, and dedication, the consequence is credibility.

Relational leadership:

If personal leadership is about the ability to project one's self and one's values to create a leadership persona, relational leadership is about the ability of the leader to demonstrate understanding and respect for the follower and care for that individual's welfare. Does the leader view the followers as real people with distinct strengths and weaknesses and emotions or just as a means to an end? To show an understanding and appreciation of others, the leader must be able to engage the team and give them a voice for their perspectives – and then listen to that sharing of ideas and demonstrate its real value going forward.

Just as people need to be led by someone real, they also desire to be understood, respected, and cared about. Does the leader show genuine concern for the followers? This kind of concern can be illustrated by something as simple as a thank-you note or as complex as establishing a job search support strategy for every displaced employee after a major lay-off.

In becoming a strong relational leader, one must also be able to talk honestly with individuals on the team and with the team as a whole. This may involve transparency in making a decision or providing honest feedback about an individual's performance. When strong relational leadership is present, the leader and followers will have built trust.

Contextual leadership:

Today, more than ever, people's identities are linked strongly to their organization. More and more, people derive their sense of self from their work, and good contextual leaders foster and harness this sense of identity for the good of the team and its goals. In the contextual leadership domain, leaders create a sense of communal identity for the team by helping the members see what the team's values and mission are and what the teams stands for as a whole.

"A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."

ROSALYNN CARTER

Furthermore, the strong contextual leader is able to create a sense of coherence and effective coordination by clarifying for the members the structures, procedures, norms, and practices that are in place. Why do these systems and procedures exist and how do they fit into our organization and mission? More important, what is my role as a member of this team, where do I fit, and where do others fit? In achieving this, the contextual leader can centre the team members and generate a sense of shared identity, pride, and belonging in the team. The effect of strong contextual leadership is a strong community.

MIDDLE TIER DOMAINS – INSPIRATIONAL AND SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP

The placement of the domains in the framework shows their relationship to each other. For example, the relational domain is in the center because leadership is ultimately ability about the leader-follower dynamic and its effect of trust is an element that percolates through all types of leadership situations. The three foundational domains become the building blocks for the next tier of domains-inspirational and supportive leadership.

Inspirational leadership:

Jack Welch said that when you leave people to set goals for themselves, the goals that they set are usually higher than the ones the leader would have set for them. Inspirational leadership, then, is not about imposing standard but about creating a climate of expectation of excellence, generating the will to reach higher, and infusing the team with the enthusiasm and optimism for getting there.

When people think about leadership, the notion of the inspirational leader usually comes to mind. However, it is important to remember the inspirational domain is not about charisma or charm – rather, it is about behaviour that helps create change in others. Inspirational leaders help people imagine things as they can be, and then fuel the followers' desire to pursue that vision. People want to

invest in something that they see as being bigger than themselves, and the inspirational leader is able to help them understand why the vision is worthy of their best efforts and that the vision is achievable. Ultimately, the inspirational leader creates a culture of passion that results in high aspirations among the team members.

An entrepreneurial organization in which resources are limited but goals are grand, a leading organization that needs to make sure that its people continue to innovate instead of becoming complacent, an organization in crisis in which morale is low – all require inspirational leadership. All these situations call for followers to step outside their comfort zones to achieve the seemingly impossible, and it is the leader's job to help them to make that step.

The inspirational leadership domain rests on the personal and relational domains. It is built on the authenticity and the level of commitment of the leader and requires a perception of credibility from the followers. The followers would want to win for the leader as well as for the team. Asking people to step outside their comfort zones also requires a high degree of trust – trust in the leader to set a vision that is for the good of the overall team, trust in the leader to be there for the group, and trust that the leader understands what they are truly capable of. This trust can only come from a foundation of good relational leadership.

Supportive leadership:

If inspirational leadership is about showing people they can fly, supportive leadership is about giving them a landing strip, a plan, a map, and good flight instructions. Supportive leadership is about providing a sense of security to the team so that members will take intelligent risks and continue to grow in their roles. It is conditional security, however, one that rests alongside the challenge of inspirational leadership, providing cover for the adventurous – not shelter for the lazy.

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A number of behaviours help establish that sense of security. One is the leader's ability to provide internal support. Does the leader help team members get the resources and tools they need in order to reach the goal? For example, are the rules and systems in place and is additional training provided if needed? This involves the leader understanding the limitations of the team and what it is capable and incapable of. Team members derive security from knowing that the leader understands their strengths and weaknesses, and hence will not push them beyond the limits of their abilities. In leading subordinates, a supportive leader creates a safety net for the team to take intelligent risks. In leading up, a supportive leader engages their superiors in understanding the situation and the required resources needed to accomplish the goals of the organization. Hence supportive leadership rests on the relational leadership domain and its associated trust effect, and on the clarification and understanding of different roles and functions within the team that is part of good contextual leadership.

A second aspect of supportive leadership involves providing a buffer against external forces that can distract or hamper the team, reducing its effectiveness. The supportive leader deals with politics external to the team and limits the potential intervention from external bureaucracy, creating space for the team that allows team members to focus on the goals at hand.

Finally, a sense of security can be derived from creating a culture of learning and shifting away from a culture of blame. The tendency to blame when things go wrong is natural and instinctive, but blame is poison for team spirit. The supportive leader focuses the team members on honestly acknowledging and addressing the issues at hand instead of pointing fingers. The leader may engage the team in an after-action debrief to celebrate successes as well as identify areas for improvement. A recent BusinessWeek cover story ("How Failure Breeds Success", July 10, 2006) illustrated the innovations that resulted from lessons learned in the aftermath of great failures. In the article, several celebrated leaders tell how they have learned from failure. These leaders are where they are today because of supportive leaders along the way who gave them the room to make those mistakes and learn from them.

This security leads to a collective confidence in the team's abilities and in each team member's intentions. It gives room for the team members to develop as leaders themselves and mentor others in their leadership development. The effect of good supportive leadership is to make it possible for team members to take the initiative to make intelligent decisions and to undertake informed independent action. The team becomes sustainable without the need for the constant presence of the current leader at the top.

PINNACLE DOMAIN – ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

While the other five domains focus on what makes one an effective leader, the ethical domain looks at what makes one not just an effective leader but a good leader. When one is a leader, one's actions and decisions affect the lives of others. Leaders have an obligation to think in terms of what is profitable, but they also need to balance that against what is good for the team, organization, and larger society. They are called to balance the long-term and short-term goals in terms of what is good for everyone involved. Creating a work-life balance falls under this notion.

Ethical leaders are role models for their organization and they develop others into role models as well. They personify the organization, and through their action, they show by example how to integrate the values espoused by the organization in a way that is true to their own values.

Ethical leaders also engage followers in shaping organizational values and holding each other accountable to those values. They foster a sense of ownership in the fate of the organization. Part of this involves engaging the team in making the difficult trade-offs that the organization may have to face. For example, should the organization participate in the practice of bribery when doing business in countries in which bribery is the norm or risk losing to competitors? Should the organization expend its resources to purchase goods that are costlier but more environmentally friendly?

When strong ethical leadership exists, people derive a great sense of pride from the organization and take ownership of the organization's actions. The effect of the ethical domain is stewardship in which every follower sees the organization as "my house".

CONCLUSION

Some perceive leadership as an art rather than a science. To be sure, leadership results from a complex mix of instinct, conscious decision, and action based on the situation, the people involved, the goals, and the experience of the individual leader. However, it is more accessible than trying to imagine the next work of an artist's intuition and creativity. Six distinct domains of behaviour interact with one another to create a sense of loyalty, trust, community, high aspirations, independent judgment, and stewardship among the followers. In learning about and reflecting upon one's own behaviours, in engaging others, and in being open about their perceptions of those behaviours in the context of these six domains, one can learn to be a better and more effective leader.

1.1.2 CASE STUDY

We have reproduced extracts from an interview with coach Mike Krzyzewski, who gave detailed insights into his leadership style and the challenges that he has faced within his programme at Duke University. The article is reproduced with the kind permission of the copyright holders.

DEVELOPING TEAM LEADERSHIP: AN INTERVIEW WITH COACH MIKE KRZYZEWSKI [2]

Teams increasingly are being relied upon to accomplish work both in corporations and a wide variety of other kinds of organizations. The quality of team leadership, whether from formal leaders or from other team members, is becoming increasingly important. Thus, the question "What does it take to foster and develop superb team leadership?" is a critically important one.

Coach Mike Krzyzewski has coached the Duke Men's Basketball team since 1980 and has also been the head coach of the United States National Men's Basketball Team. He is one of only three coaches in NCAA history to have won at least four National Men's Division 1 basketball titles. He has also coached the USA Men's team to both World Cup and Olympic Gold medals. The interview with coach Krzyzewski was structured around three questions:

1 How do you recruit and develop team leaders?

2 How do you create a context for team success?

3 How do you develop and sustain your own team leadership capacity?

The questions are written in italic and coach's K's answers follow immediately after the question.

RECRUITING AND DEVELOPING TEAM LEADERS

You have had players who are quite different from each other, and one of your trademarks is how you adjust your system and strategy to the composition of your team each year. How do you go about that?

Let me illustrate with an example. In our most recent team, we had senior co-captains who were supposed to be our leaders. They had two different personalities. One, Kyle Singler, was not a verbal leader; he led through example, and I never asked him to do much more than that. I said, "You play hard and you practice hard all the time. But every once in a while, just say something to a teammate like 'That's good' or in a huddle, say 'Let's go'". If I asked him to do too much more verbally, I think it would have messed him up. In contrast, Nolan Smith was effervescent. He led us well on the road or in the locker room and on the court. But it was really difficult for him to confront somebody. So I also turned to the point guard and said, "During the game, you are okay to confront somebody." And then, as a staff, we had to do more confrontation because the two guys we had, it didn't fit their wheelhouse. I try to adjust my leadership based on who I have to help me lead the team.

You've said that each team leader should be asked to do different things depending on what their capabilities are. And you may be able to develop them, but you are not going to change who they are. How do you walk the fine line between encouraging them to develop new capabilities as a leader and accepting their liabilities?

I tried to meet twice a month with Kyle and Nolan, just empathizing with them, not trying to get them to be anybody different. I was concerned about insisting "You need to be this leader or that leader". I wanted them to be a player too, and I didn't want leading to conflict with their natural playing abilities. I think that is important. Like in a business, when somebody is promoted to a certain position, you say "I now need you to lead." Well, the reason they are up there is because they've got certain abilities, whether they're with sales, or whatever it is they do. We want them to keep their strengths while working on their leadership. I have had other guys who just led the whole team, and being a leader helped them become better players. But that is not always the case. I will tell you, it's tough to find a lot of leaders.

HELPING BUDDING LEADERS REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL

Sometimes the best leaders are the youngest or newest team members. How do you encourage them to step forward while still showing respect for the more seasoned members of the team?

Leadership is plural, not singular, so there can be a number of leaders. You want to make sure that as you are developing your senior leaders, you don't stifle a freshman who has great leadership qualities. You give them opportunities to help the older leader and then by the time they do get to be that older person, they are even better at what they do.

I think it's important, before they even join the team, that I have seen them on their high school teams. So I already know this kid has leadership ability, he has good communication skills, he is somebody who could lead by example or verbally. And then I try to encourage those who I think would be potential leaders to help out even as freshmen. What I try to do is not assume that just because the oldest person is the oldest that he is the leader. You hope that they are because they have the most experience, but not everybody on a team is a leader or wants to be a leader.

Individuals do not always realise how others are looking to them for leadership. They don't always realize how much power and influence they have, or that they have the ability to lead others. How do you help them see what they have to offer?

One of my best leaders by far of all time is Shane Battier, who went on to play in the NBA. In the first practice of his senior year, the team had finished stretching, and I'm getting ready to talk to them to give them a bit of motivation – just a little 1-minute talk. Before I start, Shane gets them together and he says some things to the team. I said, "That's pretty good. I don't think I can top that." I told Shane after the workout, "That was good. If you want to do that every day, you can." He said "I'll do it every day." I never again spoke to the team before practice for the rest of that year.

Here is another example. One of our standards is to show a strong face. When we watch tape, it's not just watching how you shoot or defend. If I see a sequence where a player shows this magnificent face that's strong, I'll stop and say something about it. With the USA Men's team I stopped the tape as Kevin Durant, a great young player who I wanted to emerge, was coming down the court. He looks magnificent; he's just so strong. So I asked his teammate, Russell Westbrook, "When Kevin looks like that, how do you feel?" And he says "coach, when he looks like that, I feel like we're going to win." So I turned to Kevin and said, "Kevin, I want you to understand the power you have. Even before you shoot or defend, you can create an atmosphere where the people around you feel like they can win. How good is that, man?"

As you become more secure as a leader, it gets easier to share leadership, to empower others. Thank goodness I have had great leaders on the court for me. One of them is coaching at Harvard now, Tommy Amaker, a point guard who was a natural leader right from his freshman year, and then we had Quinn Snyder who also was a great leader. The more I got guys like that, the more I realized that I needed to give them more opportunities. It comes with experience.

FINDING LEADERSHIP IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

Among your players, you have uneven talent, motivation, and need for glory. Yet you need to ensure that the team functions effectively as a team. How do you draw on the full range of talent in your team given the wide variety of players' skill and motivations?

In some organisations you only listen to talent. You've got to be talented before you can give advice or be recognised. We've tried not to have that culture. If you have a guy go from freshman to senior, sometimes the freshman that you bring in is better than the senior. It wasn't always that way; it used to be that if you're an upper classman, you should always beat out the younger guy. Now, you can bring in three freshman and they would start. So how is that senior going to be a leader when he is not the best player?

We had a walk-on who became a scholarship player and was a 5-year player, Jordan Davidson. Guys listened to him more than anybody because he had established himself. So I think some of it is credibility. If I'm having a team meeting, I might say, "Jordan, what do you think?" before asking anybody else, to accentuate my respect for him as a leader.

ALIGNING THE STARS

It is a common human tendency, at least in Western cultures, to give the credit or blame for a team performance to the designated team leader. Research on professional symphony orchestras, for example, suggests that both audiences and critics tend to hold the conductor accountable for how the orchestra plays. Moreover, guest soloists – the wonderful violinist or the extraordinary vocalist – sometimes come in and expect everyone to cater to their needs.

Players in top-ranked basketball teams, whether Duke or the Olympic teams you have coached, also are composed of high-level stars, people who are used to having the planets rotate around them. How do you deal with this? How do you help your players accept your own coaching and, ideally, the leadership that other players may be able to provide? And what do you do if it's an 18 year old kid, someone not yet fully formed, who was all-state and recruited by five colleges, who also expects to start out as a star at Duke?

You actually do things socially rather than on the basketball court. In fact, we wouldn't continue to recruit a kid who we felt would not eventually "get it", because his great talent could turn out to be destructive rather than constructive. So character is a significant part of our recruiting. Grades too, of course, but character is probably the main thing. I want to see that the kid is someone who will listen to his coach, that he has shown respect to his parents and other authorities he has dealt with, and that he is willing to learn.

It's important to look for things like that when you are recruiting someone for your team, even if he is a ridiculously good athlete. It is true that you best player can lead you to the Promised Land, but your most talented player can also lead you to the junk pile. Because that best player is going to have a lot of influence, you want to make sure before he comes in that you can have a good relationship with him.

All the players who arrive at Duke are immediately humbled in some ways because of the level of the work, the speed at which they have to play, and the fact that they are not always the best player on the court. A lot of them never had to work that hard before because they always had been the best player. You come in here and you're not – you are potentially the best player but initially you're not. Someone else is working harder than you are and someone is running the sprints faster than you can. You become fragile during that time.

I liken it to the experience I had when I went to West Point. I thought I was really a hot ticket. But when I got there I got killed, and I needed somebody to help me out. So if you're the guy who provides that help, then you develop your relationship even more – you protect them and you keep them from completely falling apart. On the day they get kicked, you want to be there or you ask someone on the team to go to them, and that helps them develop. You ask the senior who is not as good as him – but who on that particular day is better – to go to him and say "Don't worry man, you're going to become our best player."

What do players who are true stars need from their coach?

I've found that when I am coaching my Duke team, I need to be the best player's best friend. Being the best player is a lonely position. Even though you get accolades, no matter how good of a team you have, there is always some level of jealousy. Always. Because you're competitive. A little bit of it is not bad. But I want to make sure that I'm connected with that guy because in a tense moment he might produce better knowing that he's not out there alone.

With the Olympic team, Kobe Bryant told my youngest daughter an interesting thing: "Since I was in high school, nobody has tried to motivate me, they just pay me." But, he said, "Your dad and his staff try to motivate us every day, and that's so refreshing." Leadership is not just to let the star produce, but to be a friend of the star, to motivate the star. Your team is going to go a lot further if your stars push ahead, and everybody else has to work to catch up.

How about with well-established, highly experienced players? Is coaching them and developing them as leaders the same kind of thing as coaching college players, or does it require a whole different approach?

I remember when I was an assistant coach on the Olympics Dream Team that won the gold medal in Barcelona 1992. We had Michael Jordan, Larry Bird, Magic Johnson, David Robinson, Patrick Ewing, Karl Malone, Charles Barkley, Scottie Pippen. I'm at my first practice, and Jordan is the best player. He also is from North Carolina and I'm from Duke. So, in the totem pole you have Michael Jordan at the top and well down the pole is Mike Krzyzewski.

So I was a little bit nervous, I didn't want to make a mistake. After the first practice, I'm having a drink of soda and Jordan walks toward me. I knew he was going to bust my chops, you know, do some Duke/Carolina stuff. But he comes up to me and he says, "coach, I'd like to work on some individual moves for about a half hour. Would you please work with me?" And so we worked for a half hour and at the end he said "coach, thanks a lot." Of all the things that I learned on that trip, that meeting was the most important. I still get chills thinking about it. Those kinds of events are force multipliers for any team.

Jordan could have been the biggest prima donna in the world, but he wasn't. He understood that on that team there wasn't any totem pole, that everybody was important. He could have called out "Hey, Mike, get over here," and I would have run over there. And I would have felt like an idiot, but I would have done that job, and I would have lost respect for myself. He didn't want that, so he said, "coach," and he said "Please," and at the end he said, "Thank you." How good is that? I think it was masterful on his part. It's a powerful thing when a person who is in Jordan's position does things like that to create an environment that's conducive to success. I don't know if he knew he was doing that, but he did it, and I respect him forever for it – and it had a big impact on my own coaching back at Duke.

Clearly, a great deal of your coaching focuses on your individual players – helping them excel, but also helping them learn how to help their teammates. What does it take to get everybody on a team to help provide leadership?

One thing I tried to do in every practice with the Olympic team was to have my assistants do a lot of technical things. I made it a point to talk to four to six guys every day, and about things other than basketball – "When is your family coming over?" or "I heard this is happening, what do you think?" That kind of thing. I got to know them as people, which helped me understand the dynamics that I had to work with on the team.

On the Olympic team I had this alpha dog in Kobe Bryant and I had another alpha dog in LeBron James. One had accomplished a lot, and the other wanted to accomplish what that other guy had accomplished already. I tried to have them interact. So I said to Kobe, "You need to be good with LeBron," and I said to LeBron, "You need to be good with Kobe." Well, LeBron has a really good sense of humour, he's an entertainer. So, when we would be in a team meeting, LeBron would imitate Kobe – he would take his warm-up pants and pull them down to here and go through a whole routine. And the team is laughing and Kobe is laughing because one of the best things about imitating you is that it means I accept you, I like you. Those two stars became, at least during that time, not competitors but just real good teammates. It set the tone for everyone else.

Another example is from the Olympic Dream Team. Arguably, Jordan was the best player, but we had two older great players on the team in Larry Bird and Magic Johnson. Head coach Chuck Daly was running a staff meeting with Lenny Wilkens, P. J. Carlesimo, and me. Jordan came in and we talked about who should be captain and he says, "I do not want to be captain, Larry and Magic should be captain. You make sure." Unbelievable, right? He did a great thing.

DEALING WITH DERAILERS

How do you handle "derailers", people who cause problems no matter what team they're on – be it in business or athletics or music or wherever. When they're there, bad things happen. Such people exhibit a lack of integrity or they are unable to see what the world looks like through any eyes other than their own, or they bring out the worst in their teammates. So imagine that somebody passed the recruiting screen and now you've got a sophomore or a junior who is a derailer and is souring the team. Do we try to save him or do we kick him off?

You save him. With the Olympic team, we would never select them because you don't have enough time to help them. It's a different mission when you're coaching a college team. A kid can get sidetracked, and he might be a derailer because of insecurity or for any of a number of reasons. Saving a kid is important, because it might just be that he lost his starting job, or he's discovered that he's not good enough no matter how hard he works. Part of it can be redefining what success is for that kid. Before, his idea of success was, "I'm going to be a pro. I'm going to be a top draft pick." And then all of a sudden, "I'm not even starting on my team. Holy mackerel, my whole life is horrible and I'm going to make it horrible for everyone else."

So I would try to counsel him, individually and doing things face to face, not yelling but saying, "Look, you're not on the team right now. I mean, it's not that you are kicked off, but you're not part of us. Why would you do these things? Tell me. I'm going to try to understand. Or do you not know why you're doing them?" You deal with it on a one-on-one basis.

TEAM LEADERSHIP AS CREATING A CONTEXT FOR SUCCESS

When you started at Duke over 30 years ago, you didn't already have a successful programme or a culture that fostered both winning and mutual respect. How did you get the right conditions in place, and how have you sustained them?

We could not have succeeded if I were not on a great team myself. By that I mean that Duke University was a great team under the leadership of Terry Sanford as president and Tom Butters as athletic director. I always felt that I was on their team and that has been true with every president and athletic director since then. I worked hard to develop a good relationship with them. Not that it has not been the other way around, expecting them to develop a good relationship with me. I knew how much I depended on them and needed their commitment while I was learning how to do this. I learned a great deal from them and the people around them.

MAINTAINING STABILITY

In today's college basketball, there is rapid turnover among the star players, just as many corporations face personnel churn among the most talented, and MBA programs also confront the problem of trying to forge a community when students are in the programme for only a short period of time. How do you create a "cocoon" that allows member leadership to develop on your teams? And how much of a problem is it that every year it's a new team with a different mix of players?

The culture of college basketball has changed. With the "one and dones", you don't know who you're going to have from year to year. There are a lot of different dynamics right now in our sport. The thing that we do know is that we're going to make sure our own culture is the same.

The question is how do you perpetuate that culture, the environment that this new group is going to come into? Where is the stability? Well, one thing is me: I've been at Duke for 31 years, and my staff also has been stable. And a huge thing is having my former players on the staff. They end up being like the seniors on the team – they know Duke, they know me, they know college basketball. Another source of stability is our managers. We have about 12 managers on our team and they are terrific kids. They do all the logistics to set up everything for us and they have equal footing with our players. They are here from freshman to senior year. We've tried to adjust to the new dynamics in college basketball, and it's worked out fairly well. But, I'd still much rather have the continuity of having a kid from freshman through senior year, with the seniors teaching the young guys.

It is also important for our national Olympic team to have stability. There is stability in leadership from Jerry Colangelo, who runs US Basketball. Colangelo said in 2006 we were going to start building a programme where we get to know our guys and there is some continuity. Before, we thought that selecting 12 people and a coach meant that you had a team, which is absurd. It has been a huge help for our Olympic team to have some stability in membership and leadership. Even though I am not with these guys during their seasons, I'll call or write them to maintain a relationship with them along the way.

How about timing? Are there particular times when you focus on different leadership activities?

> Some things can be done quickly; others take a lot of time to establish. And once you are in the game phase, when you actually start your season, there is a faster rhythm. That is when you see the results of whatever you've done in the off season to develop your team. During practices you are not judged by whether you win or lose, so I can take a little more time. For example, I might say to a player, "Look, today at practice, I'd like for you to say a couple of things. I don't care when you say them or how you say them, but we need to address this." Hopefully some of that will be used later, in the game phase. But it really is a different rhythm.

SETTING STANDARDS AND CLEARING AWAY DISTRACTIONS

You are dealing with fast-changing, fishbowl team environments. What do you do to keep all team members on the same page?

> We try to not have rules on my teams. I have what I call "standards". When I went to West Point we had a bunch of rules, all of which I didn't agree with. Usually when you're ruled, you never agree with all the rules, you just abide by them. But if you have standards and if everyone contributes to the way you're going to do things, you end up owning how you're going to do things. In my experience, the best teams have standards everyone owns.

> With the Olympic team, I met with the individual stars. I met with Jason Kidd, individually and then LeBron, Kobe, and Dwayne Wade before we had a collective meeting. I told them, "I'm going to have a meeting tonight, not about offence and defence, but about how we're going to live for the next 6 weeks. I am going to tell you two of the standards that I want. When we talk to each other, we look each other in the eye. That's one. The second one is we always tell each other the truth. If we can do those two things, trust will be developed, which will be the single most important thing for our foundation as a group." And then I said, "You don't have to tell me now, but I would like for you to contribute to the meeting and say at least one thing tonight. And whatever you say will become, if everyone agrees, one of our standards."

> We had a great meeting in which we came up with 15 standards. Each of these guys put their hand up; they took ownership. It was no longer just their talent; now it was also the things they said. LeBron said, "No excuses. You know we have the best talent. We're playing for the best country. So, no excuses." And that was our first standard. Jason Kidd said, "We shouldn't be late and we should respect one another." I said, "We should respect our opponents because they've been beating us for the last few years. So we should prepare and we should never have a bad practice." And it went on from there. We never had a guy late and we never had a bad practice. I really felt it bonded us because it wasn't just me putting on them something that I believed in. It was me asking them "What do you guys believe in?"

You said nobody was ever late, but what if somebody was? Would people have looked at you to deal with it, or would the team have taken on responsibility for enforcing the standard?

> If someone was late for the first time I probably would have taken the initiative. I would have said to a couple of the most respected players something like, "You know, Dwayne was late. Do you want me to take care of it? And then if it happened again, I would have brought it to the whole group, I would not have been hesitant to do that if the players did not take care of it themselves.

What do you do to ensure that problems get resolved and minor issues do not become big ones that distract from team goals?

I continue to pay close attention to the team's context. Sometimes I'll meet with my team or my staff and I'll say, "I want you to think about irritants. We'll have a meeting on irritants and let's try to get rid of as many irritants as possible. In other words, let's not let Duke beat Duke because every day we can't stand something." I try to make sure, even with the Olympic team, "Ok, let's have a meeting. What's bugging us right now....food, whatever? Nothing? Good. Let's go." You can lead better if everybody is not distracted.

Asking people how they feel or if there is something that is bothering them demonstrates your concern. It affirms that they are an important part of the team. And it also recognizes that they have eyes, that they can see things that you, the leader, may have missed or be blind to. You want everyone's eyes on the team and how things are working. If there's something that is keeping one of my assistants from doing the best job possible, then we need to change that.

There are two things in any bureaucracy that block good ideas. One is to think, we've never done that before, so why should we do it now? The other is that it would cost too much, we don't have the money. So, we're not going to talk about the good idea any more. I've tried to address those two blocks over the last 15 or 20 years of my career, by raising money on our own so we can put in place what we need to succeed.

CULTIVATING AND SUSTAINING YOUR OWN LEADERSHIP CAPACITY: TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Coaches also have emotions and get angry. "Did you come to play today or did you come to stop by?" Now that's a really cutting thing to say, but the coach is angry and shows it. How do you keep yourself in balance, not faking your own emotions, but also not going too far in expressing them?

On a day-to-day basis you do have to have balance and be clear headed. So you need to make sure you have your personal stuff together so that when you encounter these obstacles you don't fly off the handle. I like to deal with everything face to face, right away. It is a big thing for me to stay fresh and balanced. I try not to have irritants in my own life so that when I come to my business life, I'm not bringing my life into the business. I've found that maintaining a fairly active health life, faith life, and family life are pillars that help me to become a better leader. I don't know how it works for everyone else. But I start every day fairly fresh and with a pretty clear conscience. That creates my own atmosphere conducive for success, and then I try to bring that atmosphere to the team.

That's visible to the players even though you probably don't advertise it. It's a kind of leadership around issues of character and health and general well-being that they can see. No doubt at least some of your players are saying to themselves, "Gee, I'd kind of like to have that kind of resilience, too." That has to be helpful to them as they are learning to grow up.

You still can fly off the handle occasionally. But when you do, I think it has more impact than if you're flying off the handle all the time. I've learned over time that to lead you have to be able to listen and see and feel. And if you create obstacles for yourself – whether you don't allow yourself to see other people's vision, or you don't ever talk to anybody, or you're not keeping in good health – eventually you're going to have more bad situations than you would if you keep those avenues open.

LEARNING CONTINUOUSLY

You have been coaching for a long time. What do you do to make sure you keep on developing as a leader?

I've learned so much from getting outside of my area. I think you need to get involved – whether it be a charity, a hospital, or working with a kid's group – to keep actively learning. If you look, you'll see natural leadership happening around you all the time. I'm used to leading, going against other college basketball coaches. Now, internationally, I'm going against the best coaches internationally. They think differently. One's not right and one's not wrong. They think differently and it forces you to think differently. I believe that you have to do that if you want to constantly get better in leadership.

You can learn about being a better leader from everybody. You can go and study an orchestra. You can go study a basketball team, a business, or whatever. That's why I love talking about leadership. There is so much you can do to develop it. And that's why I've loved my association with the Fuqua School of Business. It gets me out of my area and I say, "You know what, that was really a better way of putting it" or "I never thought of it that way." I think people who want to understand leadership have to have that approach. It's exciting.

In developing leadership, you're not just helping a young kid on your team become a better leader. By attempting to teach that person, you're developing your own leadership. I learn from every speech I give. We have our own radio show where instead of being interviewed, I interview and I take notes all the time. That's how I look at it. It's not going to happen all at once. It's not "Okay, I got it. I'm the leader," because then you just forfeited your right to be one.

BEING YOURSELF

One of the things that you see sometimes among students who anticipate a career in management or aspire to leadership positions is that they will read a book or hear a speech, and they'll say, "Oh, I want to be like that." You frequently refer to others from whom you have learned. Do you have any advice for the rest of us who see in you or in some other leader a model for ourselves?

I was lucky that I got coached by one of the great coaches of all time, Bob Knight. Through him I met two other great coaches, Henry Iba and Pete Newell. And I'd just listen to them. A couple of times when coach Knight went away, both Iba and Newell said, "I know you've learned a lot from coach and he's great. But you have to be yourself. If there's something that you want to talk about with your teams, figure out what you want to teach and then use your own personality and your values to do it. Don't ever try to be like one of us." They were three of the great coaches of all time, right there in one setting. And what they said made a lot of sense to me.

I tell the guys who work for me: "don't ever try to be like me." I tell players that same thing. "I don't want you to be this guy. I want you to be you. Let's figure out who you are, what kind of a leader you are, and what we can do to keep making you better." That's why I'm not someone who will read an autobiography and say I want to be exactly like that person. Come on, you can't be exactly like that person, that's ridiculous. What you can do is learn about the experiences of other leaders and then take some of the lessons that they have learned and incorporate them into your own mix of skills. That's what I try to do with my players, and I think the same approach would work just as well in other kinds of teams and organisations.

1.1.3 SELECTION OF SUPPORT STAFF

There are many roles within a team in addition to coaching and playing, although the coach may be required to carry out some of them.

Some of the important roles within a team are:

- Administration – arranging travel, uniforms, meals, transport, training venues and accommodation;
- Management – arranging drinks during games, attending to minor injuries (e.g. blood rule), managing access to the changing room, arranging "recovery food";
- Physical training – game warm-up, fitness training, strength training, flexibility and maintenance of "game fitness"(especially for players that play few minutes);
- Medical – injury assessment, management and rehabilitation;
- Physiotherapy – injury treatment and rehabilitation, strapping (e.g. taping ankles), stretching and massage;
- Equipment – source and maintain equipment, set up for training and games;
- Mindset – relaxation, visualisation, emotional control and goal setting;
- Financial – budgets, payments and receipts;
- Media – managing media commitments (especially interviews) and direction regarding use of social media.

Depending upon the particular team, the coach may be required to do some of these tasks, there may be people appointed by the club or the coach may have authority to recruit appropriately qualified people.

In terms of physical training, medical and physiotherapy services there may be professionals associated with the team or (particularly with junior teams) it may be up to each athlete to seek treatment.

The coach needs to be clear as to their expectations of the role a member of the support staff is to perform and this includes the coach being aware of any policies or procedures that the administrators of the team may have.

When selecting staff, it is important that the extent of commitment required is clear so that candidates can evaluate whether or not they are able to give that commitment. It is worthwhile for the coach to hold at least some meetings with all staff present so that each gets a holistic view of the commitments that the players have.

The coach should seek input from support staff and in their areas of influence they should be given responsibility and accountability to make decisions. Often those decisions will impact other areas and continued discussion between the coach and all support staff is important.

For example, a team manager may be responsible for arranging team meals during a tournament. At a meeting of support staff parameters may be set:

- the coach wants to have the players arrive at the stadium 2 hours before the game and have a team meeting 45 minutes before the game;
- the physiotherapist may want to see athletes 30 minutes before leaving the accommodation to do any taping;
- the media manager may require players to be available for interviews for 45 minutes after the game;
- the physical trainer wants players to have some carbohydrate intake (approximately 30 grams) straight after the game.

The team manager can then arrange meals for the team (including post-game "recovery" food) taking into account these parameters.

1.1.4 INFLUENCING A BROADER NETWORK OF COACHES

All senior coaches, whether within a club, a region or a national team, should be willing to contribute to the development of other coaches, even if those coaches may coach against them in a competition.

WHY INFLUENCE A BROADER NETWORK?

In addition to generally raising the standard of coaching, which benefits the game of basketball, being involved in the development of coaches will also:

• Generate support for your team and programme amongst those coaches;

• Assist with the identification of assistant coaches in your programme and in the overall succession plan for coaching within the club;

• Assist in the identification of players and development of players, particularly creating a progression of skills teaching as the players move through the teams within the club;

• In a regional or national team, your players will spend more time within their club environment than in your programme. The more supportive the club (and club coach) is of what is being done in your programme the less conflict the player may experience between the two environments.

In terms of the development of coaches that may be opponents in some competitions, the better their teams are prepared, the better your teams must be prepared, which again assists with the overall development of basketball.

HOW TO INFLUENCE A BROADER NETWORK OF COACHES?

This is mostly about developing relationships with the coaches and may be done through participating in coaching clinics, making your practices open for other coaches to attend or creating a newsletter that you provide to coaches.

For regional or national team coaches (selecting athletes from clubs) meeting with each of the club coaches to discuss your programme and the players/coaches involved in it can be very effective.

In working with the coaches some key things are:

LISTEN

Take the time to find out what the coach is doing, what challenges they are facing and, perhaps most importantly, what they are interested in learning. This is obviously harder in a clinic situation, but whenever you have the opportunity spend time listening to the coaches that are in your broader network.

These coaches may know your players better than you do and may be spending more time with the athletes than the athlete does in your programme. Accordingly, these coaches may have insights into the players that will be helpful to you, whether that is an insight into how to motivate the player or their ability to play a different role.

SHARE

To get the support of a network of coaches you need to share with them. Give them access to your practice sessions and your planning processes. Gaining access to the "inner sanctum" or to experiences that others do not get, can be exciting and motivating for coaches.

Explaining or sharing some of the difficulties that you are facing (e.g. in regards to the timing of camps) may result in the coach attempting to help rather than hinder the programme. One of the first things that you should share is your programme calendar.

BE OPEN

Part of sharing is also being open with the coaches. If mistakes have been made (e.g. if regional team commitments conflicted with club commitments), admit them and be open to taking action to correct them or, at least, to avoid them in the future. If you are not sure of the answer, then say that.

Whether it is a technical question (e.g. how would you defend this situation) or a more general question, saying that you are not sure and then discussing how you would go about making a decision is a valuable response. It lets the coaches understand some of the process that you go through to make decisions and will enable them to reflect upon their own process.

CONCEPTS, NOT PLAYS

Your team may have a particular structure in how you play and you will no doubt get questions about that. Answer them as freely as you can, but also give some insight into why that is your structure – is it because it suits your particular players or is effective against likely opponents?

It is important that coaches understand the reasons why, so that they can then determine whether or not it would be suitable with their own team. Many coaches will attend a clinic and then try to implement everything from the clinic with their own team, without consideration of whether it is suitable for their team. You can't stop coaches from doing that, but you can:

- Let them know the factors behind why your team uses a particular structure;
- Discuss the fundamental skills that are required to effectively use the structure that your team has;
- Demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of your structure;
- Discuss what variations you could make and the factors that would influence that decision.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Reflect upon who has been the best leader that you have been involved with. What made them a good leader?

2. Read a biography or autobiography of a leader (whether or not from sport). What attributes do you think made them a good leader?

3. Discuss with a coaching colleague how you would deal with a player that was continually late for training? Would you involve any players or just do it yourself?

4. What coaches have had an influence in your development? Are you still in touch with those coaches?

5. What coaching networks are there in your area? Do you actively participate in them?

6. How can you influence a network of coaches? How would you identify coaches in that network?

7. Do you know coaches from another sport? Do they have a network that you could participate in?

1.2 WORKING WITH OFFICIALS

1.2.1 OFFICIATING POINTS OF EMPHASIS

In most leagues and tournaments, the referees receive direction and coaching and it is important that coaches of teams take opportunities to identify these trends.

For example, referees may be instructed to be strict in relation to player and coach behaviour, which may result in them calling technical fouls quicker than the teams may expect.

Accordingly, coaches should "scout" the tendencies of referees, taking notice of trends in how the game is being called. For example, are they strict or lenient in relation to "hand checking", movement by screeners or contact with cutters off the ball. In addition to games that they watch or play, coaches can speak with other coaches about the tendencies of referees.

A better source of information though is the referees themselves and coaches should in particular use the "pre-game" meeting with referees to discuss any particular emphasis that they might have.

In a league season, the coach may be able to invite referees to a practice session (particularly in the pre-season) to referee a scrimmage, which again gives players and coaches the opportunity to observe how the referees are calling the game.

Finally, the coach can speak to whomever is in charge of the referees to discuss any trends in how the game is being officiated.

1.3 SPORT INTEGRITY COMPLIANCE

1.3.1 SPORTS BETTING

THE IMPACT OF SPORTS BETTING

Betting on sports is one of the biggest businesses in the world, and has particularly grown as more and more betting agencies have established themselves on the internet. It has been estimated that in 2012, 74.3 billion US dollars was wagered on sports world-wide.[3] This had increased from 23.9 billion US dollars in 2004, a 210% increase![4]

Many countries regulate sports betting and there are some estimates that between $700 billion and $1 trillion US dollars is bet each year, including both illegal and legal markets.[5]

WHAT BETS ARE PLACED ON BASKETBALL?

Betting on various basketball leagues throughout the world is very common and it is not just on the major professional leagues. Betting is common even on regional leagues in some countries and is usually outside of the control of the league organisers.

Basketball is seen as an uncomplicated game to bet on, with the most common types of betting involving:

POINT SPREAD

This is an example of a "handicap" system in betting. For example, in a game, one team will be the favourite. For example, the Spurs may be favoured to win a game against the 76ers. The betting agency (or "bookmaker") assess the Spurs as a "10 point" favourite.

This means that a person that bets on the Spurs only wins if the Spurs win by 11 or more points.

Conversely, a person betting on the 76ers wins if the 76ers win the game or if they lose the game by 9 points or less.

TOTALS

In this type of betting bettors wager on what the combined score of the two teams will be. For example, the betting agency may assess that the Spurs v 76ers game is an "over/under" of 188.

Bettors may then bet "over" (and will win if the combined score exceeds 188) or "under" (and will win if the combined score is 187 points or less).

MONEY LINE WAGERS

This is simply betting on who will win (or lose) the game. Betting agencies will offer differing odds depending upon which team is expected to win.

RESTRICTIONS ON BETTING

In many competitions coaches, officials and players are not permitted to wager on any games in the competition. This restriction is regardless of what bet they placed. For example, a coach or player is restricted from betting even if they were betting that their team would win.

The reason for such restrictions is to remove any possible perception that a coach, player or official may have an interest in affecting the result other than the normal athletic contest.

3   http://www.statista.com/statistics/270261/amount-wagered-and-won-in-global-online-sports-betting/
4   Ibid
5   Football Betting – the global gambling industry worth billions, BBC, http://www.bbc.com/sport/0/football/24354124

PRESSURE FROM THE "BETTING INDUSTRY"

There have been a number of examples in the last 100 years or so, where a betting scheme has impacted upon sport. On most occasions it is not the direct outcome which is compromised; instead, players, coaches or officials have been pressured to:

- provide "inside information" on the health of players, weather conditions (in regards to outdoor sports), team composition;
- affect the "points spread" in a game (i.e. not to have the team lose the game but instead to manipulate the margin by which they won);
- manipulate tactical situations.[12]

Being involved in such a scheme can be a criminal offence as well as subject to sanctions from the sporting league.

These betting schemes will often be "justified" to players and coaches because they are not being asked to affect the overall result. Nevertheless, being involved is a particularly serious matter.

Players and coaches must also be conscious of not inadvertently disclosing "betting sensitive" information. For example, the fact that a particular player is carrying an injury is "betting sensitive". This information is relevant both to which team might win the game, but also, for example, the number of points that person may score in a game, which can be the subject of a wager.

The safest course is not to disclose information unless it is already in the "public domain".[13]

WHAT TO DO IF APPROACHED?

Players or coaches should report to their club or league any contact they receive asking for what could be "inside" or "betting sensitive" information.

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12 For example, in a rugby league game, a player was asked to commit fouls in a position where the opponent would be able to score a penalty kick. Bettors where then to place bets on the first score being by field goal.

13 For example, a footballer was sanctioned by their league for disclosing information to their mother about team selections, prior to the teams being announced publicly.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Do you know whether or not licensed betting agencies take bets on the competitions in which your team competes?

2. What would you do if you were approached by someone for information about whether or not your athletes are injured? Discuss your answer with a coaching colleague? Whom should such an incident be reported to?

COACH

KNOW-HOW

CHAPTER 2

KNOW-HOW

2.1 STRATEGIC VISION

2.1.1 DEVELOPING STRATEGIC VISION FOR A TEAM

Often, professional coaches will be asked to present to the club a "strategic vision" for the team and if this forms part of the interview process it can determine whether or not the coach is appointed to the team.

This does not require a "strategic plan" similar to what a business, or even the club, might have although it does have some similar elements. The strategic vision should set out:

- A timeframe (often 3-5 years);
- A clear vision for what the team is to achieve within that timeframe (ultimate objective);
- The team's values (principles that guide all actions of the team);
- The important elements to achieve success (e.g. selection of players, medical support, conditioning etc);
- Key outcomes to measure success during the timeframe. These are typically smaller steps that progress toward the ultimate objective.

In preparing the strategic vision for the team, the coach also needs to make some assessment of the current situation that the team is in, which can be very difficult when not involved with the team. To inform themselves, the coach may:

- Review the performance of the team in the last 3-5 years;
- Review the profile of the players (if the players are aging, can the team continue to sustain its results?);
- Speak with players or coaches that have been involved with the team (it may not be possible to speak to current players or coaches).

There are a number of factors that may impact upon the coach's ability to achieve success with the programme and whilst the coach may have little influence over these factors, they do need to be taken into account:

- Player contracts – it is unlikely that in their first year the coach will have their best possible team because it may take a season or two to move players;
- Attitude and culture – any cultural change takes time and if a coach identifies that a change is necessary it is realistic to believe that will take at least 1-2 years;
- Club resources – the resources available to a team vary widely between clubs. The club may simply not be able to devote the resources that the coach would ideally like
- Injury – any team can have its performance affected by injury. Teams may be able to reduce the likelihood of some injuries but this is largely out of the coach's control. The coach may wish to enable the team to cope with injuries through having players that can play across a number of positions or game styles.

COACHING MANUAL

Taking into account where the coach assesses the team to currently be and the factors that can affect performance, the coach selects a realistic strategic vision. Whilst it may be tempting (when aspiring to be appointed) to simply forecast winning the championship in the near future, the strategic vision that the coach sets will also form the basis of assessment of their performance.

The coach alone cannot realise the strategic vision and they need to have the team, the club and stakeholders strive toward the vision. The vision acts like a jigsaw, setting out the "pieces" that need to fit together. The coach needs to communicate the vision and should:

- Define roles;
- Hold individuals accountable for performing their role - the clearer roles are, the more individuals within the team (including support staff) will hold each other accountable;
- Acknowledge good performance, not simply evaluate success by number of games won.

Winning or losing particular games is an indicator that most people use to assess the performance of a team and its coach.

The coach must review team performance using metrics that are more meaningful toward achieving the ultimate objective within the timeframe set.

The coach's vision for the team should be relatively unchanged, although strategies and timeframe certainly may vary as circumstances arise. Young players may develop quicker than expected, or serious injuries may impact upon performances in a given year.

2.2   PLANNING

2.2.1   PLANNING FOR THE YEAR

Most sports people think of an "annual plan", or a "periodised plan" as being used to develop and improve an individual athlete's strength and conditioning.

As valuable as such a plan can be for the development of athletes[6], coaches should not forget:

- An annual plan for their own development;
- An annual plan for the team.

Coaches may not always be with a team for a year and, in particular, with junior teams a season may only be 6 months long and the following season may involve many different players as older players move up and younger players come into the age group. Whatever the relevant period though, coaches should have a plan for each team they coach that covers the period that they will be coaching.

CONTENTS OF THE PLAN

Anyone that has travelled with children will be familiar with the question "are we there yet?" This is a question that can only be answered if you know where "there" is. Coaching a team is no different – the coach's plan should define where "there" is for the team, namely what are the objectives for the year?

Without a clear identification of objectives for the year (or season), there can be no assessment of whether the year has been successful. In any competition only one team can win the championship, but that does not mean that other teams have not had any success.

In setting the objectives for the year, the coach also needs to identify where the team currently is (in regards to skill level). It is the progression from where they are to "there" that defines success!

Particularly with junior athletes, part of the coach's role is developing the skills of the players so that the coach's success in this regard may only be measured many years later.
For example, the Argentinian team that competed in the 22 and Under World Championships of 1997 did not win the tournament. However, the nucleus of that team (5 players) went on to win the 2004 Olympic Tournament and three (Fabricio Oberto, Luis Scola and Manu Ginobili) went on to have established NBA careers – perhaps in this context Argentina's 1997 programme was very successful, even more so than the team that won (Australia) but which has not gone on to win an Olympic medal!

The coach's plan for a team therefore should not be limited to simply participating (and hopefully winning) their relevant competition. Instead, the plan should include:

- The overall intention of the programme – which will reflect both the coach's philosophy and also the expectations of the club;
- Key objectives for the team to achieve;
- The key steps toward achieving those objectives.

As discussed below, there is certainly other information in the plan and other information needed to prepare the plan. The plan does not necessarily have to be a lengthy document, indeed it may be summarized in a page. In many ways it

6 see Chapter 25, Preparing Players Physically for Basketball

is not the plan that is important but the process undertaken to prepare the plan.

A plan should not be static and it must be reviewed and, almost certainly, will need to be changed during the period. The plan, and planning, must be dynamic in responding to things that the coach has some control over (e.g. the rate at which the players are developing) and also responding to external factors over which the coach has little or no control (e.g. a practice venue being unavailable or a change to the competition schedule).

DYNAMIC PLANNING

They key steps in the dynamic planning process are:

- Setting the calendar;
- Organising (knowing) the available resources;
- Assessing the team;
- Developing the objectives & establish priorities;
- Communicating the plan;
- Implementing the plan;
- Changing the plan;
- Reflecting upon the plan;

SETTING THE CALENDAR

The calendar should be one of the first things that a coach reaches for in preparing their plan as the amount of time available obviously impacts upon what can be realistically achieved. Apart from obvious matters such as timeframe for selection of the team, availability of training venue and competition dates, a coach of junior athletes should also consider:

- School term dates;
- Dates for school exams (depending upon age of players);
- Dates for other programs that players may be involved in (e.g. regional or national teams, talented athlete development programs);
- Cultural or religious factors that may affect player availability (e.g. some players may be unavailable on particular days of the week).

Once the coach has set the calendar, they will know the amount of time they will have with the team, which has a direct impact upon what can realistically be achieved.

ORGANISING (KNOWING) THE AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Very few coaches will have all the resources that they want and the resources that are available to them may be out of their control, whether that is money, equipment or people. The coach should plan to use those available resources as efficiently as possible.

One resource that may be available is an assistant coach and/or a team manager. The more clarity the coach has about what they want those people to do, the more value they will get out of having them involved.

ASSESSING THE TEAM

Crucial to the success of any plan is to accurately assess the starting point. There is little point in a coach planning to run complex offensive structures, if the team do not yet understand the basic concepts of spacing and movement.

There is likely to be a wide variety of skills amongst the players and the coach will need to develop the skills of all players. This can be the most challenging part of coaching, and the coach should regularly review throughout the season whether they are sufficiently challenging the more skilled athletes whilst also ensuring that they are not ignoring the less skilled athletes.

The assessment of the team will form the basis for measuring the overall success of the team – which will be the improvement that the team makes. As John Wooden reminds us "success comes from knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming".

DEVELOPING THE OBJECTIVES & ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES

The objectives in the plan should be SMART:

Specific:
    target specific areas (e.g. defence or offence) not just "wins and losses"

Measurable:
    set out how the objective will be measured, which can also help to see progress along the way

Achievable:
    the goals should be challenging so that they provide motivation

Realistic:
    this is where the calendar is so important – the amount of time the coach has with the team will impact what is realistically achievable in that time frame

Timely:
    it is also important to indicate when objectives should be achieved as this will help to track progress throughout the duration of the plan

The plan may set out goals that have a long, medium or short-term focus. Long-term goals may go beyond the current season and there may be many "short-term" goals that are constantly updated as achievement is made. For example, in relation to team defence:

SKILL: TEAM DEFENCE			
CURRENT SKILL LEVEL	**ACHIEVE BY WEEK 4**	**ACHIEVE BY END OF SEASON**	**ACHIEVE NEXT SEASON**
• Understand 1x1 responsibilities • No "Help" concept	• Understand basic positioning • Sprint to split line • Jump to the ball	• "Help and Recover" to pressure dribblers • Rotation to stop penetration • "Help the Helper" rotation	• Double-team in post and corners • Extend defence to trap first pass across half way

In planning for the progression of skills, the coach should not progress to a more complex concept if an earlier concept is not yet understood. However, they may progress to the more complex concept if the team is simply not yet "perfect" at the execution of the earlier concept. They may continue to practice both concepts as they refine one and learn the other.

It is a common mistake made by coaches not to introduce the more complex concept early enough and the result of this can be getting to the end of the season and not having covered the material they wanted to cover. Having clearly identified timeframes in the plan can help the coach avoid this mistake.

Coaches should remember the various stages of learning and tailor activities accordingly. On a more basic concept, the team may be "unconsciously competent" and yet be "unconsciously incompetent" on a more advanced concept. Both concepts can be practiced, however the activities used would be different.

Not all objectives are equally important and the coach should identify the priority of each, and then spend most time on those identified as essential. Again though, it can be a mistake to devote too much time to these as it will be at the expense of other priorities in the plan.

COMMUNICATING THE PLAN

A coach's plan will not succeed unless the players "buy in" to its success – believing that is achievable and taking the steps necessary to achieve the objectives the plan sets out. Accordingly, the coach must not only develop the plan but must communicate the plan.

This can be done through various means such as:

- meeting with players/parents to discuss the plan;
- meeting with club administrators to discuss the plan and identify what the coach needs from them;
- stating the "objectives" of every practice session and linking them to the overall objectives in the plan.

There is no universal secret of how to best communicate the plan, however without communicating the plan it is doomed to fail.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

How much a coach of a team needs to do can sometimes seem overwhelming and it can be hard to identify where to start. There is no better way to get started than to start!

CHANGING THE PLAN

The coach should review their plan regularly. Each practice and game provides an opportunity to review how the team is progressing toward the objectives in the plan. It can also be useful to have a colleague watch a practice or game and give their opinion on where the team is progressing.

Such reviews may indicate that the team is progressing faster, or slower, than the coach had initially anticipated and this may require changing the plan. Similarly, there may be external factors that require a change to the plan. For example, the team may face zone defences in their first few games and the coach may not have planned to introduce offensive principles against a zone defence until later in the season but may now introduce some of them earlier.

The coach should also review the plan at the conclusion of the season to identify the successes of the team and areas for improvement. With junior teams, it may be that the coach does not coach the team for the following competition, or the players in the team may change, however the plan can be the foundation for the following year and the review can extend or "roll over" the plan, with a new starting point and new objectives.

Coaches within a club should share this information about teams and players to help achieve long-term development goals.

REFLECTING UPON THE PLAN

In addition to reviewing the specifics of the plan, the coach should take the opportunity at the end of the season to reflect both upon the plan and the planning process. In doing this, they should consider:

- How accurate was their assessment of the team? Were the objectives for the team too challenging, or not challenging enough?
- Were the resources they had sufficient? What other resources might they like and how could they be obtained? Was sufficient direction provided to assistant coaches and managers?
- Were there factors not considered in preparing the plan but which should be considered for the next plan?
- Was the plan well supported – did the players "buy in"? Could the coach have communicated the plan better?

Again, seeking feedback from players, parents or colleagues can help with this reflection. Most importantly, in undertaking the reflection the coach should take time to identify what went well and what success the team had!

2.2.2 DESIGNING OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE SCHEMES

"…sometimes we let other teams dictate the pace of the game – whether it's going to be fast or slow, up or down…I think for us to be successful we need to do what the best teams in this league do and dictate how the game is played…before we start getting results we have to learn to dictate tempo."[7]

HARRY SHIPP

"Introducing a defensive scheme should empower your athletes to have the confidence that they can influence and control the tempo of the game."[6]

JOANNE P MCCALLIE

The game of basketball continues to evolve as the athleticism and skill level of players changes and coaches devise strategies to take advantage of, and also to negate, the changing skills of the game.

WHAT IS AN OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSIVE SCHEME?

Coaches need to determine how they want their team to play the game. Offensive and defensive schemes simply represent the overall tactics and philosophies by which the team will play.

Many junior teams, particularly young teams, will have a singular and uncomplicated approach to the game (e.g. play "man to man" defence) and it is only when a team's preparation involves a number of separate tactics (e.g. offensive set against "man to man" defence, offensive set against a "1 guard front zone", offensive set against a "2 guard front zone" etc.) that we refer to it as a scheme.

YOUR PHILOSOPHY "VERSUS" YOUR TEAM

Many coaches get a reputation for being particularly adept at particular parts of the game (e.g. "he is a great defensive coach", "she is a great shooting coach") or become associated with particular patterns of play (e.g. John Wooden's "UCLA Offence", Pete Carril's "Princeton Offence") or styles of play (e.g. Paul Westhead and "Fast Break Basketball").

Indeed, coaches should develop their philosophy on how the game should be played. For example, FIBA very much encourage coaches of young players to focus on teaching the fundamental offensive and defensive skills of the game before moving to particular patterns or "set" plays.

6   Coach Joanne P McCallie, Duke University Women's
    Basketball Head coach
7   Harry Shipp, midfielder with the Chicago Fire,
    in the USA's Major League Soccer

When coaches have more experienced and skilled players the opportunities to devise more complete schemes for a team to implement increase. In doing this though, coaches should be conscious of the attributes that the players in their team have. There is little point running a system that requires players to have certain attributes, if the players in your team do not have those attributes!

Of course, through well-directed practice, players can develop skills that they don't have and accordingly the coach must decide:

(a) what attributes and skills are needed to run the coach's preferred game style;

(b) to what extent do the players on the team have those attributes and skills already;

(c) to what extent can players on the team acquire those attributes and skills.

It is only when the coach believes that the players have, or can acquire, the attributes and skills needed for a particular style that the coach should implement that game style with that team. In making this decision, the coach must also consider how much preparation time they have with the team and be realistic in an assessment of how much can be introduced.

Many junior coaches have limited scope for recruiting specific players (or types of players) to their team and as such may find themselves in a position where they cannot play their preferred style of game with a particular team because they lack the skill, experience or physical attributes required or do not have sufficient time for preparation.

BENEFITS OF INTRODUCING A SCHEME

An offensive or defensive scheme is simply preparing a team to be able to play more than one "set" or structure. For example a defensive scheme may include:

- full court pressure defence;
- transition defence rules;
- half court man to man rules;
  - guarding post players
  - guarding perimeter players
- half court zone rules.

And within the half court "man to man" and zones structures there may be high pressure options (which can often quicken the tempo of the game) and options that may slow the game.

There are a number of direct benefits from having an offensive or defensive scheme rather than a single style of play:

(a) being hard to "scout";

(b) being able to change the tempo at which the game is being played;

(c) being able to adjust during the course of the game to the strategies of your opponent;

(d) giving your players confidence that they can adjust and that they can withstand different tactics from opponents;

(e) being able to adjust quickly between games, which can be particularly beneficial during tournaments and finals series.

Often one element of a scheme builds on the foundation of another part of the scheme, such as the 1-1-3 match up zone discussed earlier that is also the foundation for introducing a "Box and 1" and the 1-3-1 match up zone.

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DESIGNING AN OFFENSIVE SCHEME

Neither an offensive or defensive scheme needs to be overly complicated. Many coaches, for example, will use the same basic offence against both man to man and zone defences and within that offence have particular emphasis depending upon the defence:

- screening angles and positions may change – e.g. against a zone, screens to the "outside" of the zone may be utilised;

- the relative advantage that a team has may be different depending upon the opponent – e.g. a team may be "relatively" big compared to one opponent but have strength in perimeter positions compared to another opponent.

In considering aspects to introduce into an offensive scheme, coaches should consider:

- creating options for post play and perimeter play;

- create elements that tend to "quicken" the offence as well as those that "take the air out of the ball" and slow the tempo;

- the team knowing from where they want to take most shots and who should be taking those shots;

- avoiding designing a scheme that relies exclusively on one or two players. Whilst they may execute better than other players, they may also be injured or in foul trouble and not able to play;

- where possible, having rules that are consistent within elements of the scheme;

- how to measure the effectiveness of each element of the scheme both within a particular game, and also throughout the season.

Most importantly, the coach needs to consider how much time they have with their team because ultimately that will determine how effectively they can put in an offensive scheme.

DESIGNING A DEFENSIVE SCHEME

A defensive scheme can provide a team with the ability to vary how they are playing as opponents, and game situations, change. It is more than changing from playing half court man to man, to full court man to man, and the scheme should give the team confidence that they can play different styles as necessary to counter their opponents' strengths.

In designing the scheme, the coach should consider:

- what is the "standard" defence the team should play;

- what defence will they play if they wish to increase pressure;

- what defence will they play when they are behind and need to "catch up" (increasing tempo);

- how will they defend a team with dominant post players;

- how will they defend a team with dominant perimeter players?

Important to any defensive scheme is the players' ability to execute fundamental skills. For example:

- players are taught various techniques to defend an on ball screen, "over", "under", "double", "switch" or "push" (away from the screen);

- in a pressure defence they may "double";

- against a good perimeter shooting team they may go "over" or "switch";

- against a good post team they may use "push".

A scheme does not necessarily need to have a large number of options and, like an offensive scheme, what can be implemented with the team will very much reflect how much preparation time the team has.

IMPLEMENTING AN OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSIVE SCHEME

Many coaches use keywords or visual cues to define particular elements of a scheme:

- "Red" may be a pressure defence, particularly double-teaming the ball handler;
- The ball handler tapping their singlet may signify a particular offensive play.

The use of such cues can make it easier for the coach to relay instructions to players and certainly, when scouting an opponent, coaches look for these cues so that they can pre-empt what the opponent intends to do during a game.

Whatever cues are to be used, should be used at practice as well, so that players get used to both looking for and recognizing the cues just as much as they develop familiarity with the elements of the scheme.

MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHEME

In developing a scheme of play, coaches should also establish how they will measure its effectiveness. Whilst the ultimate aim of basketball is to outscore an opponent, watching the score is not necessarily a reliable indicator of how effective the team is being.

For example, if a coach chooses to play a 1-1-3 zone defence to force the opponent to shoot from outside, the fact that the opponent may make some of those shots is not necessarily an indication that the move to zone has been unsuccessful. In this situation, the coach may assess the effectiveness of the defence by:

- Tracking from where the opponent is shooting;
- Number of "post touches" the opponent gets;
- Number of times the ball penetrates into the key;
- When (in reference to the 24 second shot clock) is the opponent shooting?

Similarly, a coach might assess the effectiveness of their offence by reference to:

- Where shots are taken;
- Who is taking their shots;
- Whether the team is penetrating by dribble or by pass;
- How often is the team scoring because of specific elements of their offensive scheme?

FIBA Hall of Fame coach Lindsay Gaze used the expression "the operation was successful, but the patient died" to describe situations where a team creates the shot they want to, but the shot is missed. The coach, and team, must have the confidence to persist and not abandon a tactic simply because they didn't score.

To measure the effectiveness of a scheme, the coach should have specific metrics (that may be different to official statistics) and it can often be useful for an assistant coach to be given the task of tracking those metrics. For example:

OFFENSIVE / DEFENSIVE TACTIC	METRIC
DEFENCE – TRAPPING FULL COURT	• Time left on shot clock when offence progress into front court • Ball not with point guard when opponent's offence starts • Deflected passes • Opponent's offence starting on non-preferred side of court
DEFENCE – "PACK LINE" HALF COURT [8]	• Number of times offence "reverse" the ball (pass from one side to the other) • Number of times opponent penetrates/the ball enters the key • Number of times penetration is stopped by a rotating defender • % of shots taken from outside key
DEFENCE – DOUBLE-TEAM LOW POST	• Number of times the low post player passes the ball (% of touches)

In determining metrics, the coach should also consider what the opponent's response might be. For example, double teaming the post may result in more open outside shots for the opponent. Full court pressure, may result in open lay-ups if the opponent "breaks" the press.

By having a clear metric, the coach can avoid an impulse decision that can occur if they simply look at whether or not the opponent scored. For example, the opponent may get 2 open lay-ups, but if they had six possessions where they took a pressured shot the full court defence may be regarded as successful.

8 "Pack line" defence is a sagging man-to-man defence, which is designed stop the ball penetrating into the key, particularly to stop any dribble penetration.

2.3   COMMUNICATION

2.3.1   MANAGING THE MEDIA

For some teams (particularly in professional leagues) the media can be a constant presence and can be a distraction for both players and coaches.

In other teams (e.g. junior teams) the media may be relatively uninvolved and the coach's role may be to seek out media coverage.

Important considerations when dealing with the media are:

• Clear lines of authority – who can comment upon matters? If anyone outside of that is asked about a topic their response should simply be "no comment";

• Key messages – having a position on an issue and re-iterating that message in all dealings with the media;

• Briefing – it is important for the club (and it may not be the responsibility of the coach) to ensure that people that may be asked questions by the media are briefed about issues;

• Access – at times, coaches may be tempted to stop players interacting with the media, particularly if it is seen as a distraction to players. In making that decision, the coach must understand what obligations the club or the league has regarding player availability. Excluding the media can also create greater interest from the media;

• Solidarity – coaches and players should not use the media to air grievances within the team, although the media will certainly invite such comments;

• Respect – anything said to the media will come to the attention of opponents, and coaches (and players) should avoid saying anything that may be disrespectful about opponents. Opponents are likely to use such comments as motivation;

• Reflection – coaches will often be asked to answer questions immediately after a game (or even during a game) which can be a time of high emotion. Coaches can be candid in such interviews (e.g. "we did not play well today", "we were out-rebounded and we need to address that" etc). However, coaches should be careful about making any personal criticism or drawing conclusions regarding the performance, instead leaving that for review within the team.

Coaches should practice interview technique if it is likely that they will be contacted by the media. Rather than avoid media commitments (for themselves and players) the coach should consider designating times when the media can contact them.

COACHING MANUAL

Alternatively, if the team is not in a league that attracts media, the coach may need to play a role in getting interest from the media. Often this can be enhanced by:

- Providing a written summary to the media after games (which can form the basis of a story). This should not just focus on their own team but should also acknowledge good performances by opponents;
- Provide photo (or even edited video) for use by the media;
- Provide stories beyond simply game results – for example, performance by local players at regional or national level is often of interest to local media;
- Provide information consistently, regardless of whether or not the team performed well.

FOLLOW-UP

1. What is your vision for the team? Do you think that others in the team know what your vision is and do they share it? Discuss with them.

2. Discuss with a coaching colleague how they prepare an annual plan and discuss any differences in approach between you and them.

3. If you were the coach of an U18 team within your club, how could influencing other junior coaches within your club (at the younger age group) help to implement an overall offensive and defensive scheme for the club?

4. Would you implement a defensive scheme before your offensive scheme?
Discuss your view with a colleague.

CHAPTER 3

DEVELOPMENT

3.1 UNDERSTANDING THE GAME

3.1.1 INTEGRATING AND RESPONDING TO INTERNATIONAL TRENDS

Coaches will commonly incorporate in their offensive or defensive systems aspects that they have seen from other teams – either teams that they play against or other games that they watch.

However, there are a number of cautionary notes which coaches should keep in mind:

1. Focus on the execution of skills, not the pattern of play

Many coaches make the mistake of having teams run particular "patterns" of play without focusing on the players' ability to make good decisions and execute the skills of the game. For example, the "Zipper" play is used by the San Antonio Spurs and is a relatively simple pattern of play.

What makes it effective for the Spurs is not where the cut is made or where the screen is set. Instead, it is effective because of the players' ability to read what defenders are doing and to then act to take advantage.

Coaches must ensure that they focus on those skills and then use a pattern of play as a framework. The "Zipper" involves screening action. The first time the cutter may curl (because the defender trails behind them) but if the defender changes tactic (e.g. they go under the screen), the cutter needs to react to that (e.g. they may flare cut).

2. Does it suit your team?

Each team has its strengths and weaknesses. Before deciding to implement a pattern of play, the coach must consider whether or not it suits the players that they have. Many teams use ball screens in their offence, which requires players that are adept at using a penetrating dribble. If your team doesn't have that, you may prefer different pattern of play.

3. Was it a play or a "read"?

This is related to point 1 and particularly if a coach is introducing a pattern of play based upon scouting or watching another team. In this situation, the coach may have observed a general framework and particular "reads" that players make.

While observing the pattern of play the coach should also observe what the opponent is doing. If watching an offensive pattern of play, the coach should also observe:

- What defence is being played (e.g. man to man or zone, trapping or sagging etc);
- The positioning of particular defenders (e.g. a player setting a ball screen may "slip" the screen when the defenders move into position to double-team) – does the movement change if defenders act differently?
- Any verbal or visual cue from the defence (e.g. some teams call "red" to signal a double-team);
- When in the shot clock was the play run? Does movement change if there is more or less time left on the clock?

4. Understand what makes the main action work!

Again, this is about watching a whole team, not just a particular part of the play. For example, a team may front the post and a coach may wish to introduce that in their own tactics. Before introducing it though, they also need to understand the position of other defenders (e.g. help line behind the post player), the principles of defensive rotation that the team uses etc.

Coaches must also be able to respond to trends amongst the teams that they are playing against as part of their preparation. Rather than introduce something specific to counter a specific play, the coach may emphasise principles of play (e.g. trapping a ball screen). The coach's response must also consider what the opponent is likely to do.

For example, when trapping a ball screen, the screener may cut to the basket and the coach will accordingly need to determine a rotation to defend that cutter.

3.2 COACHING STYLE AND PHILOSOPHY

3.2.1 LTAD - UNDERSTANDING THE LTAD MODEL

The Long-Term Athlete Development Model (LTAD) is a physiological framework proposed to manage the focus, volume and type of training applied to athletes as they develop through adolescence into adulthood.

Coaches should have a long-term view in regards to developing their athletes, which is why every player should be given the opportunity to play in all positions. Indeed, a primary purpose of a coach of junior athletes is to develop their love of the game of basketball so that they continue to play in the long-term.

STAGES WITHIN BASIC LTAD MODEL

The overall aim of the LTAD framework is to:

1. Allow participants to find fun, fitness, social interaction and self-fulfillment through an all-inclusive sport environment; and

2. Provide competitive pathways that are developmentally appropriate and lead players to the highest possible levels of achievement.

Broadly there are seven stages within the basic LTAD approach:[9]

- Stage 1: Active Start (0-6 years)
- Stage 2: FUNdamentals (girls 6-8 years, boys 6-9)
- Stage 3: Learn to Train (girls 8-11, boys 9-12)
- Stage 4: Train to Train (girls 11-15, boys 12-16)
- Stage 5: Train to Compete (girls 15-21, boys 16-23)
- Stage 6: Train to Win (girls 18+, boys 19+)
- Stage 7: Active for Life (any age of participant).

The aim of stages 1-3 is to develop physical literacy before puberty so that children have the basic skills to be active for life. This physical literacy includes the wide variety of movement (running, jumping etc) as well as the basic sport skills (such as throwing, catching etc).

During these stages the children also make choices to engage in physical activity, sport or recreation activities and clearly if their involvement in sport is not enjoyable, they are less likely to make the choice to be physically active.

The stages also provide the foundation for those who wish to pursue "elite" training in a particular sport.

Importantly, physical literacy is influenced by the individual's age but also factors such as maturation and capacity. Coaches should not simply divide players by age but should also look to "match" them taking into account physical maturation and social factors (e.g. playing with friends).

9   This section is drawn from Long-Term Athlete Development 2.0 published by Canadian Sport for Life (for further iformation see www.LTAD.ca or www.canadiansportforlife.ca)

Stages 4-6 represent the "elite" specialization which allows athletes to reach their highest level. Basketball is a relatively late-spcialization sport as the skills of the game do not need to be acquired prior to puberty.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL PLAYERS

"Talent Identification" is a very inexact science. For every "rule" that exists (e.g. "players must be tall and athletic to succeed in basketball") there are exceptions (Muggsy Bogues and Spud Webb both played in the NBA and were both shorter than 6 foot! (183cm)).

Whilst science loves averages and "typical" patterns, few players are actually average or typical. Coaches should provide opportunities for as many players as possible to participate in the sport.

Each national federation will have a pathway for athletes, and coaches should understand what that pathway is. Information can be obtained by speaking to other coaches or contacting the federation. Coaches should encourage players to participate in such programs.

Coaches of junior players should also be conscious of the "relative age" effect, which is simply that players physically mature at different rates and coaches may confuse physical maturity with ability. Players that are physically stronger will often have success at a junior level because of that physical difference, however as other players develop both physically and mentally they may become better than those players that initially dominated.

Coaches should consider the following guidelines in selecting players and in coaching those players:

1. Develop all players equally. Whilst they have different talents and skill levels, the coach should give all players the opportunity to develop all aspects of the game.

2. Don't select players based upon last year. It can be difficult to make the decision on who will be in your team, particularly at a selection trial with many players vying for the team. There is likely to be a mix of players the coach is familiar with (perhaps having coached them before or having watched them play) and there may be some players who have previously trialled but who the coach did not select as well as some players the coach has not seen. Spend most of your time observing the players that you didn't select last year and have never seen, so that you can get an "up to date" view on their ability.

3. Select players based upon what you think you can teach them to do, not what they can currently do.

4. When you don't select a player, give them some practical feedback on areas that they can improve. Missing out on selection will often motivate players to "work on their game".

Coaches may wish to use a "traffic light" approach to selections, particularly if they have more than one session.

In this approach coaches initially rank each player as either:

- green light (definitely progress to next stage of selection);
- red light (not up to standard for selection);
- amber light (unsure).

After this initial assessment, the coach should spend more time assessing the "amber" players.

Be demanding of your athletes but make your demands appropriate to their level of physical maturity. If in doubt as to what they can do, seek advice.

3.3 OWN COACHING DEVELOPMENT

3.3.1 CREATING A COACH'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Whether coaching junior or senior players, there will be an expectation that the coach remains "contemporary" in what they are teaching and how they are teaching.

All coaches should invest in their own development, which may require some financial outlay and will certainly involve time.

Before considering specific development activities, the coach should consider what their values are as a coach as this can help to evaluate specific opportunities that may arise.

The starting point of any development plan is to assess the coach's strengths and weaknesses.

The coach may identify areas that they wish to improve, such as a technical aspect of the game, how they teach aspects of the game or topics that are not basketball-specific (e.g. leadership, budgeting, time-management, principles of coaching etc).

In trying to identify areas for their own improvement a coach should consider:

- Players that have left their programme – was there something specific that the player was seeking and did not get in the programme?
- Does the coach normally get through everything that was included in their practice plan – could they plan more effectively?
- Players with whom the coach has not had a good relationship – what was their player's personality, did the coach try any different approach to connect with that athlete?
- Team concepts which the team are not performing well – could they be taught another way?

- Is the coach happy with the culture and work ethic of the team and of individual players – how could the coach improve this amongst the team?
- Are assistant coaches actively involved in the planning and delivery of practice – could they be more involved?

From this reflection the coach may identify areas for development and could then discuss with other coaching colleagues how they might be able to increase their knowledge and understanding in these areas.

The coach may also wish to speak with coaches that they have worked with or their former players to get their impressions on how effective or enjoyable practice sessions were and what they thought were the coach's strengths.

In addition to personal reflection, it can be very beneficial for the coach to seek input from colleagues or mentors about areas in which they need to improve. This may reaffirm what the coach had identified or it may raise things that the coach had not identified. The coach must be open to receiving this feedback and should speak with people who will give an honest opinion, not simply repeat the coach's own thoughts.

The range of activities that the coach can consider including in their development plan is virtually endless and once the coach has identified what they want to gain they can evaluate various activities by the ability to deliver that benefit. Some types of activities that can be considered are:

- Formal study at a university or college;

- Attending a coach accreditation course or a clinic;

- Working with or observing another coach (whether or not involved in basketball);

- Having a coach mentor observe them and provide feedback;

- Working with or observing a respected practitioner in another area (e.g. spending time with a business leader to observe how they lead their team);

- Reading books or articles;

- Visiting other programs, particularly if they are likely to take a different approach (e.g. a programme in another region);

- Participate in forums or discussion groups.

Perhaps the most important aspect of a development plan is to both write it down and also talk to people about what you are doing and why? In a busy life it is easy to put off development activities or simply not find the time to do them, and the coach should put in place strategies to help to hold themselves accountable for implementing the plan.

FOLLOW-UP

1. How do you currently try to keep up with international trends in how basketball is played? Discuss with a coaching colleague what they do.

2. What do you think is the most significant trend at the moment in international basketball? Discuss your answers with a coaching colleague. What would your response be to this trend? (E.g. if it is an offensive trend, how would you defend it?)

3. Are you involved in the talent development programs in your region? How could you get more involved?

4. Reflect upon a junior team you selected. Did you select players based upon their skills at that time or the potential you thought that they had?

5. Discuss with a coaching colleague the criteria that you can look for when estimating the potential that an athlete has. Are there any guidelines available from your club / region / federation that could assist?

CHAPTER 4

MANAGEMENT

CHAPTER 4

MANAGEMENT

4.1 HELPING ATHLETES MANAGE THEMSELVES

4.1.1 PLAYER AGENTS

FIBA requires that any sports agent that represents a basketball player must be certified by FIBA and any coach approached by a player agent should first ask for details of their certification.

PLAYER AGENTS

A coach can also verify whether or not an agent is certified through FIBA's website **(www.fiba.com).**

A coach should be careful not to give advice to players in regards to any negotiations that they may be having with a club other than strongly recommending to the player that they do get advice!

FIBA has a standard player contract and the coach should advise any player that they can obtain a copy of that, as well as other information, through the FIBA website. In addition to the standard contract, FIBA has details of what a player contract should contain. Players and clubs do not have to use the standard contract, however players are well advised to ensure that any contract includes the various details recommended by FIBA.

A player having discussions with a player agent may be distracted – it can be an exciting time for the player but it can also take their focus away from the team. Particularly during tournaments the coach should ask that agents not contact players and ask the players to postpone any discussions until after the tournament.

FIBA has also prepared the following information for players regarding Player Agents, which coaches may provide to players that are considering retaining an agent:

HOW CAN AN AGENT HELP?

As your career grows, you may experience greater demands on your time. More competitions, media appearances, speaking engagements and travel requirements can leave you with less time to develop and maintain your skills on-the-court.

An agent can help maximise your time by representing you in the following ways:

- Understanding your value in the Basketball market and negotiating with team management to pay you what you are worth

- Understanding your needs and goals to negotiate the length of your contract, salary and extra incentives that may be available to you

- Identifying, pursuing and securing additional sources of income through endorsements, appearances, speaking events, etc.

Some agents can also provide legal and/or financial counselling, but there are some important things to consider before giving too much influence to one person.

WHEN DO YOU NEED AN AGENT?

The first step is to consider whether or not you actually need an agent's services. As outlined above, agents can help negotiate on your behalf and identify additional sources of income, thereby giving you more time to focus on your on-court performance.

But if your career is not at a level where sponsorship deals and complex contract negotiations are interfering with your performance, then you may prefer not to make the financial investment of an agent's services.

To help identify your needs, ask yourself the following questions – if you answer yes to all or most of them, then working with an agent may be a good choice:

- Could I use help negotiating my contract/salary with my current team (or am I looking for a new team)?
- Do off-court commitments (e.g. public appearances, travel, etc.) put demands on my time for training, practice, and developing my on-court performance?
- Do I have (or am I looking to gain) sponsorship agreements?
- Do I have an interest in additional sources of income related to my career (e.g. endorsements, speaking tours, etc.)?
- Is my career at a level where I need help managing all the details that come with making more money, having more opportunities, and being contacted for various off-court engagements?

There is a complete handbook which you may like to download (for free) from the FIBA website **(www.fiba.com).**

4.1.2   COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY SCOUTS

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY SCOUTS

There are many opportunities for players to play basketball at colleges & universities, particularly in North America (USA and Canada). Many college coaches attend junior tournaments to observe players and they will often speak with coaches to find out about the player. The college regulatory bodies (e.g. NCAA) have very specific rules regarding when they can have contact with players.

There are also many organisations that offer services to players to help them to find a place with a college programme and these organisations often charge significant fees. Again, coaches should ask that college coaches and scouts not contact players during tournaments.

The rules relating to eligibility to go to a college/university, and the specific eligibility conditions to play in college/university (particularly in Divisions 1 and 2, NCAA), are complex and change frequently. Coaches should not attempt to provide advice to their players and should advise them to make careful investigations. Colleges/universities have compliance and admissions officers that work with the athletic department to assist prospective student-athletes in the process.

Before a player makes any decision to play at a college, they need to be clear about what pathways exist within their own national federation and the coach may help them to get further information about that.

Below are some tips that coaches may pass onto players considering playing at a US college or university.
It is very important to find the right fit for the student-athlete and the college/university. This includes the ability for the student-athlete to be successful in the classroom and on the court.

WHAT SHOULD A PLAYER FIND OUT ABOUT THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY?

Particularly for players that do not live in the USA, studying at a US institution is a life experience – it is living in a different country! And as much as you may have seen of America on TV, actually living there is a different thing. Many US colleges are in towns that revolve around the college itself. Some are in big cities, whilst others are in small country towns. Before you decide to attend the college or university there are things that you need to find out about the college or university itself.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

- How many students are at the college/university?
- How many international students are at the college/university?
- What is the socio-economic mix of students at the college/university?
- Is the college/university associated with any organisations or religious institutions?
- Is the college/university a private or public institution?

ABOUT THE CITY WHERE THE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY IS

- What is the average temperature?
- How far away is the nearest "big" city?
- What are the largest cultural groups in the city?
- What are the main economic industries in the city?

ABOUT STUDYING AT THE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

- Does the college/university offer a course that you want to study?
- Is the qualification from the college/university recognized in your country?
- What academic support programs are available to student-athletes?
- How many credit hours do players take in season and out of season? And how long will it take for them to graduate?
- Is summer school available? If a player needs to take summer school will it be paid for by the college/university? (It is common because of the demands of training for athletes to have to take some summer school units.)
- Is the college/university accredited?

ABOUT COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY LIFE

- What is the typical day for a student athlete (how many class hours, how many practice hours).
- How many students share a room in the halls of residence? (Many of the halls of residence are dormitories and you will have a roommate!)
- Are the halls of residence "co-ed" (male and female)?
- Do the halls of residence have study rooms?
- Do the halls of residence have shared bathrooms and laundry?
- Do most student-athletes live on campus?

QUESTIONS TO ASK THE COACH RECRUITING A PLAYER

Whenever you are talking to a coach who is trying to recruit you, remember that they are speaking with many athletes and they are trying to "sell" you going to their College.

You may want to consider asking them the following questions:

ABOUT PLAYING ON THE TEAM

- What is your programme philosophy?
- What positions will I play on your team?
- Will I be redshirted in my first season (i.e. not play)?
- What expectations do you have for training and conditioning?
- How many athletes graduate from your programme? (This will be an indicator of how much emphasis the coach places on studying.)
- Does the team use any particular system or pattern of play?
- What other players are on your roster who may be competing for the same position?
- How much playing time do you expect me to have? (Be wary of a coach that "guarantees" you a starting spot.)

ABOUT THE COACH

- How would you describe your coaching style?
- When does the head coach's contract end and how long do they intend to stay?
- If I am seriously injured while competing, who is responsible for my medical expenses?

ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP

- What sort of scholarship is being offered – full, partial, sport, academic?
- What does the scholarship include – board, tuition, meals, apparel, shoes, other?

- Who is responsible for paying for travel to and from the USA?
- How do I break the scholarship if I am homesick or unhappy at the college/university? In particular, is there any commitment to repay the scholarship?
- What academic grades (SAT/ACT scores and Grade Point Average) do I need to be admitted to the college/university?
- What Grade Point Average do I need to maintain to stay on the scholarship?
- Is the scholarship for four years or is it awarded annually?

WHAT TO DO IF A SCOUT/COACH CONTACTS ME?

It is ok to answer questions and to provide information to the coach about the teams you have played with etc. However, players should be encouraged not to make any commitment without finding out all the information that they need.

WILL A PLAYER'S BASKETBALL IMPROVE IN A COLLEGE PROGRAMME?

College or university can be a good way to develop your game. Most college and university programs involve daily training from the start date of official basketball practice (early November) to the end of the season (March).

The NCAA places restrictions on the contact coaches can have with players both during the season and in the off-season. During the off-season you may not get much coaching. The head coach of a college or university basketball programme is usually full time and are often under considerable pressure to produce winning teams. This results in some coaches not focusing on the overall development of the athletes, but instead focusing exclusively on trying to win.

Many college coaches play very strict "systems" that give players particular (and sometimes quite limited) roles. Not all coaches do this but those that do are probably not going to develop your basketball game very much.

College and university basketball rules also differ from some FIBA rules (e.g. longer shot clock (35 seconds), closer 3pt line) and it may be best for your development to play FIBA rules.

WHEN WOULD I START COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY?

The US academic year starts in August or September each year. It is possible to start "mid-year" (i.e. in January) although this is unusual.

FURTHER INFORMATION

There are a number of resources available online that can help prospective student-athletes, such as:

- NCAA – www.ncaa.org
- NCAA Eligibility Center – www.eligibilitycenter.org
- NAIA Eligibility Center – www.playnaia.org/index.php and www.naia.org
- NJCAA Eligibility Center – www.eligibilitycorner.njcaa.org/
- NCCAA – www.thenccaa.org

WORLD ASSOCIATION OF BASKETBALL COACHES

4.2   CONTRACTS

4.2.1   OVERVIEW OF CONTRACTS

Many coaches, particularly of juniors, do so on a voluntary basis, however there are certainly opportunities for coaches to be paid on a full-time basis.

When a coach is required to sign a contract they must thoroughly read the document before signing it. The contract will set the rules of the coach's relationship with the team or organisation that is hiring them.

Usually a coach will have had numerous discussions, perhaps with a range of different people, prior to the contract being prepared. It is quite likely that if the contract does not include something that had been discussed then what was discussed does not apply! Therefore, it is critical that coaches read the contract and satisfy themselves that it sets out everything that they wanted included.

Other things that the coach should consider in regards to the contract:

- Make sure you understand what the contract says. The coach should seek clarification if there is anything they are unsure about.

- Is the contract for a fixed term or is it ongoing? If it is for a fixed term, is there any option to renew and what conditions apply if an option does exist?

- Make sure that the contract is clear to whom the coach reports and upon what basis the contract can be terminated, including:

  - Required notification periods;

  - The basis upon which either the coach or the club can terminate the contract (different reasons may have different notification periods);

- Whether the contract places any restriction on the coach being able to coach after leaving the club.

- If the contract refers to any other documents (e.g. other club policies) the coach should read those documents.

- Intellectual property should be addressed and in particular the coach's rights should be well protected. This can be a complex area of law and the coach should seek specific advice, particularly if they intend to write books, run clinics or produce other resources.

- Make sure the contract is clear about what obligations the coach has "off court" (e.g. appearances for sponsors).

- The contact should set out whatever process the team or organisation will have for reviewing the performance of the coach and any specific performance indicators that the coach is meant to meet.

The coach should also make sure that it is clear what responsibilities they have, although this level of detail may not be in the contract itself and may be in a position description. Does the coach have final say on which players are recruited? Is there a selection panel or a selection process that must be followed?

FOLLOW-UP

1. Are any of the players that you coach interested in playing basketball at a professional or college level? Where are they getting their information about the opportunities that exist?

2. What advice would you give to a player who was approached by a player agent offering their services? Discuss your answer with a coaching colleague.

PLANER

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OFFENSIVE BASKETBALL SKILLS

CHAPTER 1

OFFENSIVE BASKETBALL SKILLS

1.1   PASSING

1.1.1   CREATIVE PASSING

Plato reminded us that "necessity, which is the mother of our invention" is often the spur to creating a way to achieve something.

Similarly, many of the "trademark moves" that we see in basketball have not been taught but are simply the result of a talented player finding a way to achieve success.

Coaches can create the opportunity for players to do this by:

- Using contested activities in practice whenever possible;

- Having players play against older athletes (and have girls play against boys). Often older athletes are taller, have longer arm spans etc, which makes it more difficult to make passes or take shots. Players therefore need to learn how to create space and to be effective;

- Don't stop activities when a player is "creative" and executes a skill differently to how it may be taught. Let the activity continue and allow the players to explore what is successful;

- If a player has a habit that the coach believes will not be successful in games (e.g. they perform a spin move without looking), conduct an activity that will highlight the situation where the coach believes the skill will be unsuccessful.
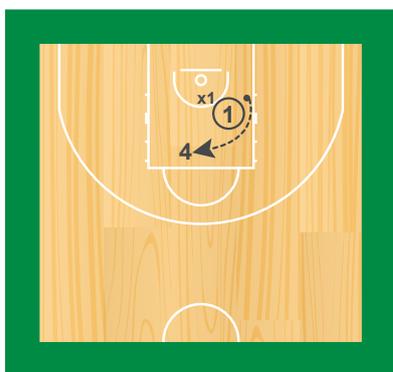
BEHIND THE BACK PASS

The key to any successful pass is understanding where the passing lane is (and creating it if necessary).

Here 1 is closely defended by x1 and has 4 "trailing". In this situation, a pass behind the back can be very effective and is quicker than stopping and pivoting.

A common mistake when players try to throw a behind the back pass is to "cup" the ball, having their hand underneath. This is often a result of not feeling in control of the ball. To make the pass successfully the player must have their hand on the side of the ball, pushing it in the direction of their teammate (if the hand is underneath the ball it will push the ball up).

Wrapping the ball around the waist as fast as possible will help players to develop a better sense of control on the ball, and will improve their ability to throw a behind the back pass.

Players also struggle at times to throw a behind the back pass to a team mate that is in front of them. To achieve this, the player must turn their upper body away from their team mate, creating the passing angle between their hand and the team mate.

POCKET PASS

A pocket pass is commonly used in "traffic" where there is little space. It is similar to simply dropping the ball to be picked up by a team mate, although it is thrown to direct it exactly where it needs to go. The Pass is thrown from the passer's hip.
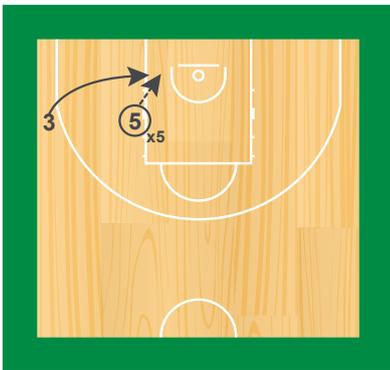
A post player will often use a "pocket pass" to a team mate that is cutting past them. It is important that they are passing to the side away from their own defender.
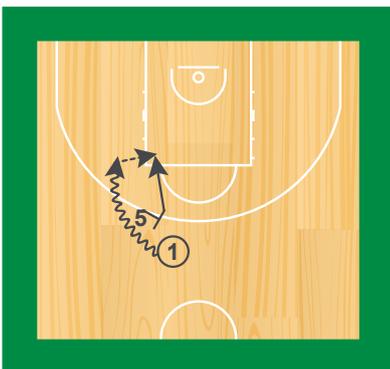
A pocket pass is also commonly used by a dribbler, particularly when they have come off a ball screen and are passing to the screener as they cut.

PASS FAKES ON THE MOVE

The importance of pass fakes to create a passing lane is highlighted in the mantra "fake a pass to make a pass". Faking a pass when on the move is difficult and is most easily done when taking steps as if to shoot a lay-up.

For example, as the player picks the ball up (landing their first foot) they may fake passing in one direction, and then as they take their second step, pass in another direction (or shoot).

The effectiveness of any pass fake is increased by turning to look in the direction of the proposed pass and/or turning the upper body to that direction as well.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Do you encourage or discourage players to be "creative"? Discuss your approach with a
   coaching colleague.

PLAYER

15

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

CHAPTER 2

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

2.1 STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING

2.1.1 INDIVIDUAL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROGRAMS

Coaches need to have an understanding of the fitness and strength requirements for basketball and may form a view of the areas in which a player needs to improve.

However, a coach should only provide specific programs for a player if they have expertise in that area. Most coaches do not have the relevant expertise.

Coaches that do not have the expertise need to seek assistance from appropriately qualified coaches in the area of strength and conditioning. The coach should meet with the expert to make sure that they have a good understanding of the game of basketball and the player's position, so that they can devise an appropriate programme.

The coach needs to work with the expert and in particular should discuss:

- The player's schedule – when the season starts/finishes and the on-court training load the player will have at the various stages of the programme;

- The player's workload – the coach may need to reduce the player's workload at peak times for strength and conditioning development;

- Incorporating strength and conditioning in practice – whether this is done by the expert coming to training or simply giving instruction to the coach;

- The minutes that the athlete will play during the season as their conditioning programme in particular may need to be varied – for example a player that plays only a few minutes each game requires a conditioning programme that keeps the "game conditioning".

Although players may have separate programs, it is often worthwhile for them to train with other team mates, as this can help with their level of motivation and can also encourage team mates to "bond". The coach should be prepared (particularly in the pre-season) to make allowance in the on-court schedule to assist players to complete the other aspects of their training.

Some particular advantages of an individualised programme are:

- It can be tailored specifically to the needs of each player, taking into account their current level of "fitness", the role they play within the team and the style of play used by the coach;

- Each player will have different flexibility and joint mobility (which will reflect their genetics or any history of injury/rehabilitation), and exercises can be selected both to improve factors as appropriate whilst taking into account those limitations;

COACHES MANUAL

- It can be incorporated into "sport specific" movements;
- It can set goals that are both set against objective "norms" (where data is available) and goals that are relative to each athlete. The latter goals will often be regarded by the athlete as more realistic and attainable;

- The plan will reflect the level of experience and competence of each athlete. For example, athletes are often best avoiding the use of weights machines until they have mastered the basic techniques and have developed the necessary strength to be able to use the machines.

2.2   NUTRITION

2.2.1   USING NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

In many countries, the use of "supplements" is common in an effort to enhance health or to boost exercise performance. Supplements can be found in pill, tablet, capsule or liquid form.

Supplements can form an important part of an athlete's preparation, although they should not be used as a substitute for training, diet and hydration. Any supplements that are used by an athlete should be complementary to their overall programme.

Athletes are ultimately responsible for all substances in their body, and some supplements may be detrimental to the athlete's health and training or may contain substances prohibited under the World Anti-Doping Code. For example, some supplements may contain ingredients that are not listed on the product's label, which may have been intentionally added or unintentionally added (e.g. residue left on equipment from other production runs).

It is also important to remember that there is no shortcut to success, and that even where products are promoted by established sport stars, supplements by themselves will not lead to success.

Informed Sport **(www.informed-sport. com)** regularly tests supplement products to determine whether they are free from substances that are prohibited under the WADA code. Athletes can seek information from this site on specific supplements that they may be considering. However, the best form of advice is for the athlete to work with a sports dietitian.

BASKETBALL PHYSIOLOGY

Basketball is a fast-paced, highly skilled and physical sport, which places considerable demands upon both anaerobic and aerobic energy systems. Accordingly, to withstand these demands and to be able to achieve high levels of energy, players need to:

• Minimize carbohydrate depletion;

• Maintain adequate hydration,

BASKETBALL "BIOCHEMISTRY"

Supplements are not magic pills. The scientific use of nutritional supplementation may improve an athlete's biochemical environment or metabolism and help them to perform better and recover faster. Nevertheless, this requires knowledge and planning. In basketball, high energy production and its proper and timely utilization are important. Concomitant to this, the reduction of lactic acid and cortisol concentrations will also boost our performance.

NUTRIENTS UTILISED IN ENERGY PRODUCTION

The increase in energy production and oxygenation combined with reduction in lactic acid and cortisol production is the formula we are looking for. In short, here are the most important nutrients to help you achieve metabolic optimization.

10 Plato, The Republic, Book II, 369c

1. B complex vitamins

These nutrients are a class of structurally different components used as enzyme co- factors in human intermediary metabolism. Thiamin (Vitamin B1), Riboflavin (Vitamin B2), Niacin (Niacinamide, nicotinic acid, vitamin B3), Pyridoxine (Vitamin B6) Cobalamin (Vitamin B12), Folate, Pantothenate (Vitamin B5). These vitamins are the bases of energy production.

2. Vitamin C (ascorbic acid)

Vitamin C is involved in a variety of metabolic reactions related to exercise. Physiologically, ascorbic acid provides electrons for important enzymatic reactions. In addition, Vitamin C enhances the flow of electrons needed to optimise aerobic energy production (2).

3. Coenzyme Q10 (ubiquinone)

CoQ10 is a compound directly involved in the production of adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the cell energy molecule. It helps transport the energy molecules within the mitochondria.

4. L- Carnitine

Carnitine is a compound primarily involved in transports of fatty acids into the mitochondria of the cell, where fat can be used as energy fuel.

5. Alpha Lipoic Acid (Thioctic acid

Lipoic acid is a dual water and fat soluble oxidation-reduction compound. It supports the Krebs cycle, which is a fundamental process in the production of energy. It also supports the production of ATP by acting as a catalyst in the production of acetyl co-enzyme A, an important molecule in the pathway of aerobic energy.

6. Creatine

Creatine phosphate is a nitrogenous organic compound that serves as a reservoir of ATP in muscle and nerve tissue. It helps regenerate ATP. Many studies show that creatine plays a pivotal role in the regulation and maintenance of muscle energy, metabolism and fatigue.

7. Ribose

D-ribose is a natural five carbon sugar that is used to make energy for muscles when a person is very active. It also helps in the recovery process, and lessens fatigue and soreness.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

General recommendations are made below, however, athletes are strongly recommended to seek advice specific to their circumstances from a sports dietitian:

1. A high dose multivitamin and mineral that will contain the necessary B vitamins and other synergistic nutrients.

2. Vitamin C	500 mg
3. CoQ10	100mg
4. L-Carnitine	2g
5. Alpha lipioc acid	300mg
6. Creatine	5g
7. Ribose	3g

This combination of nutrients together with a proper intake of complex carbohydrates, lean proteins and essential fats will enhance energy production and stamina during competition.

FOLLOW-UP

1. What advice would you give to a player that wanted to "put on weight"? Discuss your approach with another coach.

2. Do your players currently follow a weights programme? If so, who prepared it and who supervises them? If not, how could you get a programme prepared for them? Discuss with other coaches.

TEAM

DEFENSIVE TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

CHAPTER 1

DEFENSIVE TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

1.1 COMMON DEFENSIVE PATTERNS

1.1.1 PACK LINE DEFENCE

The "Pack Line" defence is a "man to man" defence, which is specifically designed to provide greater protection against dribble penetration.

Whilst the term "pack line defence" is relatively new, the concept of "sagging" defence is certainly not.

However, the "pack line defence" is not designed to be a passive or soft defence. Instead, its effectiveness relies upon:

- The player defending the ball doing so with a high degree of pressure;
- If a player has a "dead ball" (i.e. they have already dribbled and cannot dribble again) all defenders moving into position looking to steal a pass;
- Defenders being able to contain the ball and not get beaten off the dribble;

- Post defenders using a ¾ position on the high side to deny the post player the ball. Post defenders trying to move the post player so that they are not able to establish position in the post. Some coaches will front a low post player when the ball is at the wing, and in this alignment may allow them to have position "on the block".

The "Pack Line" is simply an area inside the 3 point line (approximately 16 feet / 4.9 metres) from the basket. When defending a player that does not have the ball, the defender must have both feet within the "pack line", positioned approximately half way between their direct opponent and the player with the ball.

The difference between this sagging position and defence that incorporates "denial" positioning is shown below:
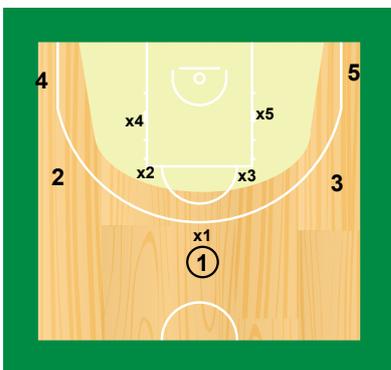
PACK LINE DEFENCE

Players that are defending players without the ball, have both feet within the "pack line". They are approximately half way between their direct opponent and the player with the ball. Keeping vision of both players is important.
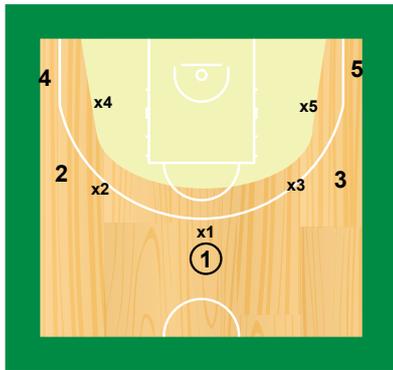
"MAN TO MAN" WITH DENIAL

Defensive position depends upon the distance an opponent is from the player with the ball. Players that are "1 pass away" are denied the ball.
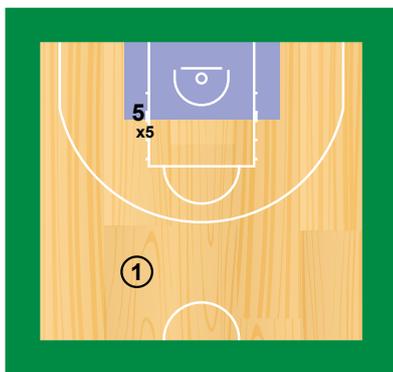
Defenders will try to stop post players establishing position in the "post box".
If the ball is at the top of the key, the defender should deny from a ¾ position on the high side.
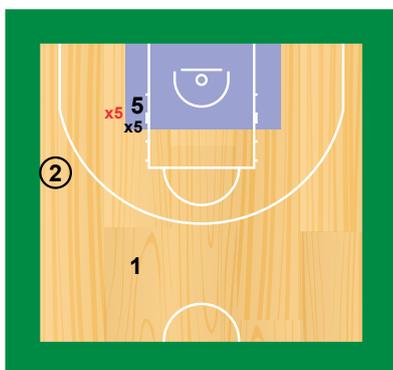
Some coaches will also "front" the low post when the ball is at the wing (shown in red), others may maintain a ¾ position (shown in black).

It is at the discretion of the coach, how to defend the low post player,
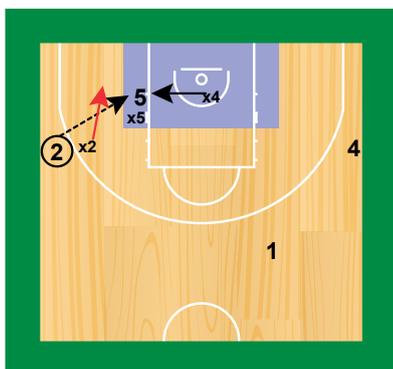
Similarly, coaches may opt to double team the post player once they receive the ball.

Coaches may choose to double the low post from the split line and/or crowd the post player from the wing defender.

ADVANTAGES OF PACK LINE DEFENCE

Key advantages of utilizing the pack line defence are:

1. It prevents dribble penetration as the sagging defenders are in a position to help, making it hard for offensive players to find a "gap" to penetrate. This should also give the on-ball defender confidence to be aggressive, knowing that there is help if they are beaten.

2. It provides protection against back door cuts and flash cuts, with sagging defenders being in a position to help.

3. An effective pack line defence is likely to cause an opponent to take more shots from the perimeter and those shots should be contested. This can result in the opponent shooting a lower percentage, particularly if the defensive team rebound well and do not allow the opponent to score "second chance" points.

WEAKNESSES OF PACK LINE DEFENCE

Relative weaknesses of the Pack Line Defence are:

1. When used with young players, on ball defenders may not develop the ability to contain the dribbler, instead relying upon the help that is inherent in the defence.

2. The defence requires defenders to constantly "close-out", which is a difficult defensive skill to master. If it is not done well, the opponent may have opportunities to penetrate creating higher percentage shots.

3. An opponent that shoots well from the perimeter may do well against the defence.

4. If there is no shot clock, the opponent may be able to run significant time off the clock before shooting.

Having regard to these weaknesses, it is not recommended that young teams use the Pack Line defence. It should not be used until all players are proficient at closing out and containing perimeter dribblers.

PRACTICING FUNDAMENTALS OF PACK LINE DEFENCE

Two key skills should be practiced regularly to implement the Pack Line Defence:

- Close-out – moving from an off ball defensive position to defending the player with the ball.

- Positioning – adjusting position every time the ball or their opponent moves.
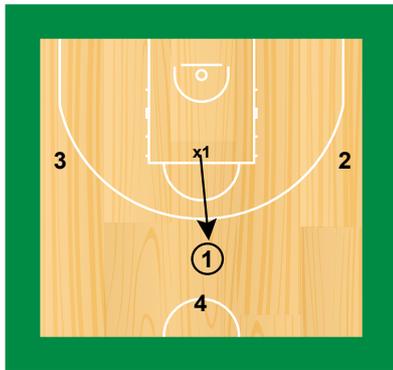
BLACKHAWK – PRACTICING CLOSE-OUTS

x1 closes out to 1, keeping both hands high to prevent any shot.
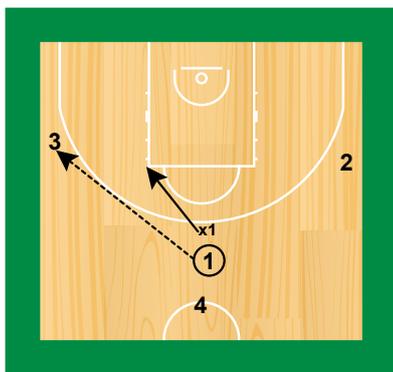
1 passes to either wing player and x1 adjust their position to be in the "dribble gap" (half way between 3 and 1)
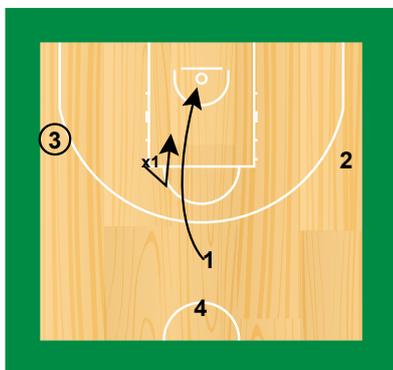
As 1 cuts to the basket, x1 must "bump" the cutter and defend them the cut to the middle of the key.
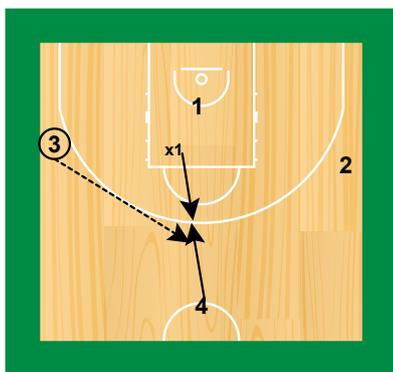
The ball is passed to the next player at the point position, and x1 again closes out.
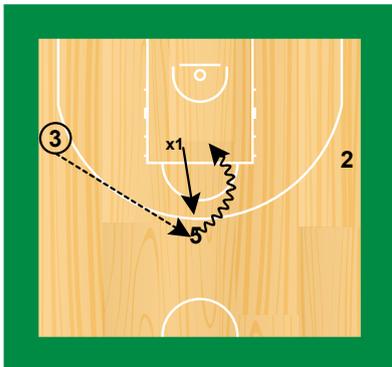
After x1 has defended 2 cuts, on a third close-out they play live 1v1. Limit the number of dribbles that the dribbler has to 2 or 3, to focus on them penetrating to the basket.
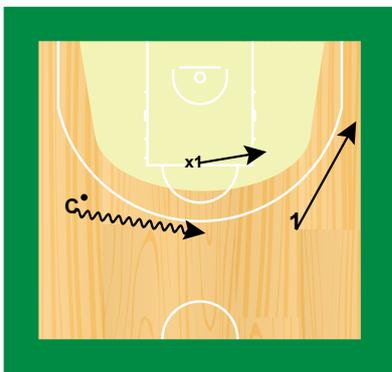
2 ON 1 POSITION

This is another activity that practices defensive position, and particularly the "gap dribble" position.

The coach moves and 1 adjust their position, x1 adjusts themselves to be in a correct position
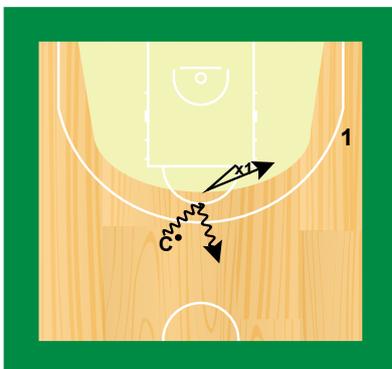
As the coach penetrates toward the key, x1 must "hedge" to stop the penetration and then recover to defensive position to defend 1.
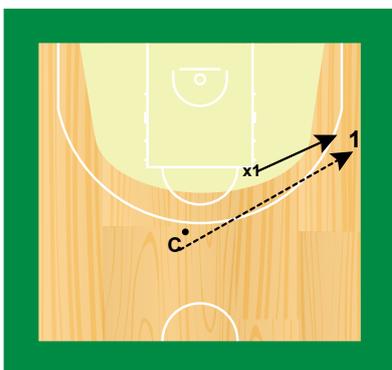
When the coach passes to 1, x1 must close-out to 1 and be in position to stop any baseline penetration
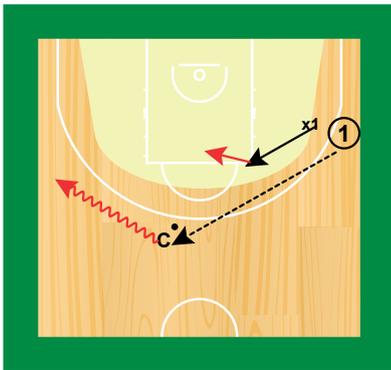
As the ball is passed back to the coach, x1 must "jump with the ball" to get into the "gap dribble" position and then continue to adjust as the coach moves.

After 30 seconds or so, the coach calls "live" and then when 1 has the ball, they attempt to score.
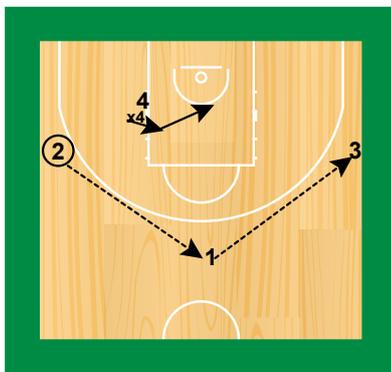
3 OUT, 1 IN, 1 DEFENDER

3 perimeter players pass the ball, and x4 adjusts position to defend the low post.

When 2 has the ball, x4 either plays ¾ or fully front, depending upon coach preference.

When the ball is at the point position (with 1) x4 must play "on the line, up the line" to deny any pass to 4.
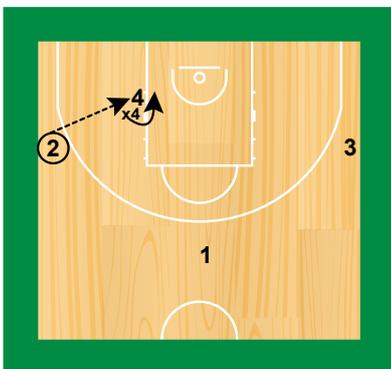
If the ball is passed to the low post, x4 must move to a position behind the post player. The defender should keep their hands high and contest a shot without jumping.
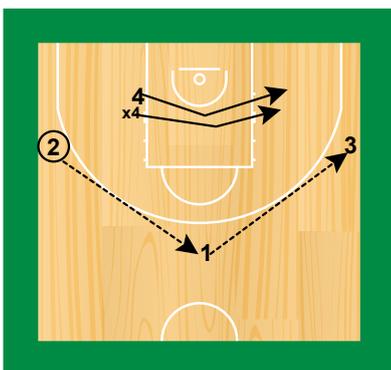
As the ball is reversed, the post player can cut to the opposite post. The defender should "bump" the cutter and then establish ¾ front position.

1.1.2   DEFENDING HORNS SET

The "Horns Set" uses two screens, typically "bigs" setting screens for a guard. Most teams do not wish to switch either screen as it would result in a mis-match.
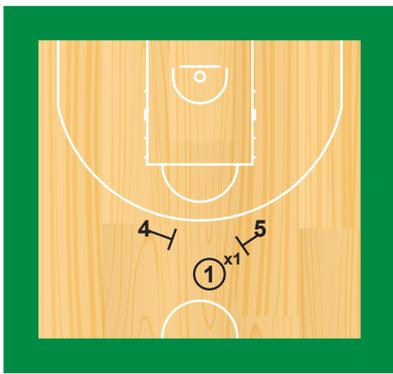
Commonly the on ball defender will force the dribbler to one side of the court and will negate their ability to use one of the screens. This allows other defenders to adjust their position based upon where the ball is likely to go.

Usually the defender will force the dribbler to their non-preferred hand although a team may also choose to force to a particular side of the court.
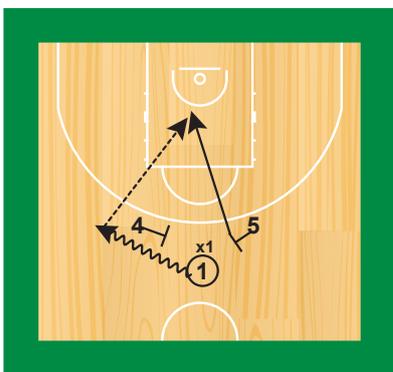
The defence should consider what the offence is trying to achieve. For example, here the offence usually dribble away from 5 so that they can pass to 5 as they dive to the basket.

In this situation x1 would force 1 away from 4's screen and make them use the screen by 5 which is their least preferred option. Tactics such as this will depend upon which players are involved in the screen action and would be identified in the "scout" prepared by the coaches.
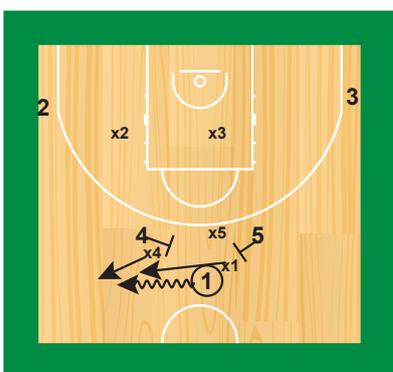
Another common tactic used by teams is to vary the defensive tactic based upon the game situation – for example, double teaming the ball screen whenever the shot clock is less than 10 seconds.

Here x3 and x5 move toward the middle of the court to be able to defend if 4 drives to the basket, or if 1 attempts to drive to the basket.
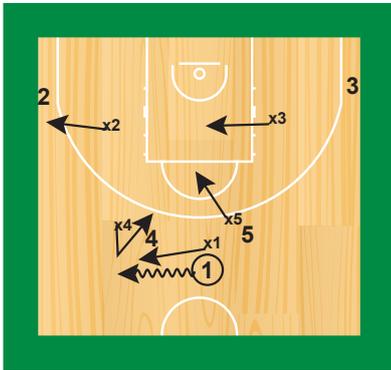
WORLD ASSOCIATION OF BASKETBALL COACHES

Other teams will have x4 "hard show" (to force 1 wide) and then have x1 move over the top of the screen to continue to force 1 toward the sideline.

x2 moves to deny any pass to 2 (the easiest pass) and x5 and x3 drop into a help position. Their primary responsibility will be to defend any cut to the basket by either 5 or 4.
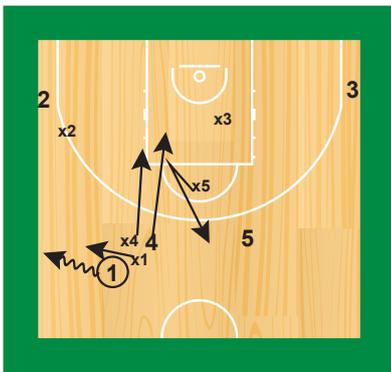
x4 recovers to follow 4's cut and x5 (who "bumped" the initial cut by 4) moves back to deny 5 (which is also an easy pass).
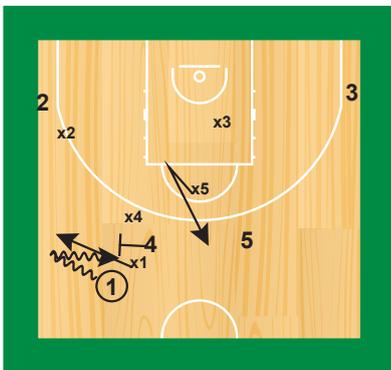
x1 must force 1 towards the sideline.

They must keep 1 above 4's position on the floor to avoid any "re-screen" action. Similarly, x1 does not move in front of 1 as this would allow them to dribble back to the middle (and possibly a re-screen).
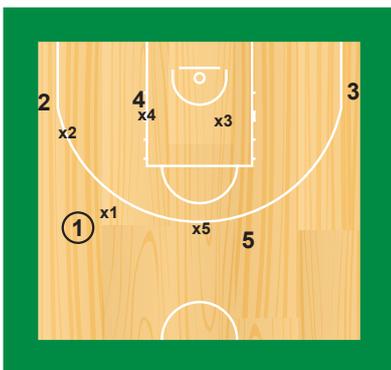
The final alignment of the defence is:
- x2 denies pass to 2
- x4 defends 4 in the low post
- x5 denies pass to 5
- x3 remains in help position
- x1 keeps pressure on 1, trying to force them to end their dribble.

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Some teams may choose to apply a higher level of pressure to mid-ball screens by double teaming the dribbler even before the screen has been set.
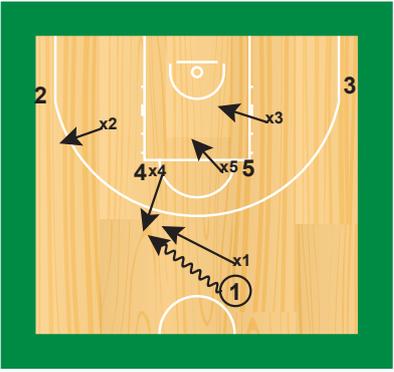
x4 sprints to trap 1, before 4 has moved into a position to screen.

x2 moves to deny the pass to 2 and x5 and x3 drop into help position in the key.
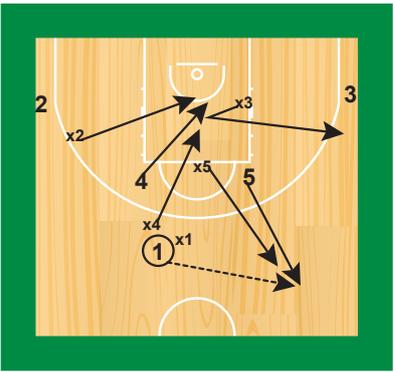
Here 1 makes the "reverse" pass and 4 dives to the basket. 5 closes out to defend 5 and x3 will move to a denial position, but first, steps in to "bump" 4 and does not move out until either x4 or x2 has established position to defend 4.
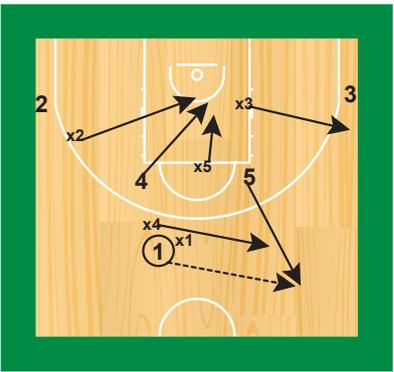
However, if the main offensive threat is 3, x3 moves immediately to deny 3 and x5 can drop to defend 4 while x4 moves to defend 5. This is particularly effective if 5 acts as a passer from the top of the key and does not look to drive or shoot.
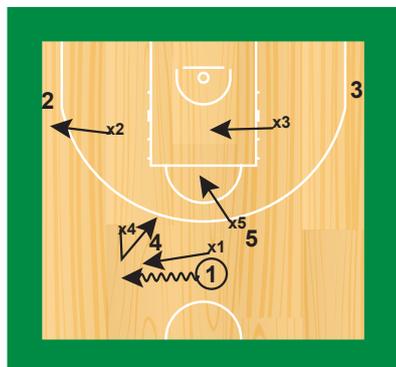
Other teams will have x4 "hard show" (to force 1 wide) and then have x1 move over the top of the screen to continue to force 1 toward the sideline.

x2 moves to deny any pass to 2 (the easiest pass) and x5 and x3 drop into help position. Their primary responsibility will be to defend any cut to the basket by either 5 or 4.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Discuss with a coaching colleague the strengths and weaknesses of the Pack Line Defence?

2. What offensive structures are common in your competition? Discuss with a coaching colleague the strengths and weaknesses of different tactics for defending those structures.

3. Consider the various defensive tactics identified in question 2.
   Do your players have the skills to effectively use each of them?

1.2 DEFENSIVE SCHEMES

1.2.1 DESIGNING STRATEGY FOR INDIVIDUAL DEFENDERS

More experienced defenders will want to know from the coach specifically how they are to defend their likely opponent, which will depend upon the coach's "scout" of the opponent.

Coach's should make sure that each of their players knows:

- Whether their opponent is right or left handed;
- Whether their opponent is a "post" or "perimeter" player;
- Whether their opponent is a "driver" or a "shooter";
- Whether their opponent prefers to move to their left or right (which is different to whether they are right or left handed);
- Whether or not they have help responsibilities (when defending a good perimeter shooter they may stay closer to their opponent and not play to the "help line");
- What role their opponent plays within the opponent's offence (e.g. screener, shooter) and any specific plays that the team uses involving them (e.g. they may cut off staggered screens or set ball screen and "pop").

Many of these attributes are tendencies only and in any given possession the opponent may act contrary to the coach's expectation. Based upon these tendencies they coach may instruct their defender to take specific action.

For example:

- Close-out "short" on a "driver" and deny their preferred side to dribble;
- Go "over" ball screens if a player is an excellent perimeter shooter but go "under" if they tend to drive;
- "Hedge" off their opponent but do not move to the "help" line if they are a strong perimeter shooter.

Whatever tactic is determined for the individual player must also fit within the overall defensive scheme. For example, if the individual player is instructed to "fully front" their opponent in the low post, this will be most efficient if both help defence behind (to intercept a lob pass) and also high pressure on the perimeter passer.

The coach must judge how much information to provide to each of their players as too much information may be confusing. With less experienced players the coach may re-inforce what they want their defender to do (e.g. deny the ball, go over screens) and not provide too much information about the opponent's tendencies. With more experienced players the coach may provide information about the opponent's tendencies but leave it to the player as to how they wish to defend. The amount of information to be provided will very much depend upon the individual player.

1. Defensive tactics & strategies
1.2 Defensive schemes
1.2.1 Designing strategy for individual defenders

COACHES MANUAL

Obviously, the tactics a coach employs with individual defenders depends upon their skill level and knowledge. It is important that the coach teach all players offensive and defensive skills on the perimeter and in the post. However, the coach can also set a challenge for their player, based upon an outcome.

For example, the coach may instruct their player to force the dribbler to their left, without giving specific teaching points, leaving it to the player as to how they will force that result. This can particularly be employed during a game in response to what an opponent is doing in that game.

1. Defensive tactics & strategies
1.2 Defensive schemes
1.2.1 Designing strategy for individual defenders

1.2.2 HAVING MULTIPLE DEFENCES AGAINST ON BALL SCREENS[11]

On Ball screens are a particularly popular offensive tactic and in some leagues more than half of the offensive possessions may be played utilising one form or another of "pick and roll" (or on ball screen).

As a general rule in order defending the "pick and roll" requires:

- Players to have good court vision, so that they are aware of where all offensive and defensive players are positioned;

- Being aggressive and decisive, often the success of the defence depends less upon the particular tactic used and more upon how well the players work in unison to force the offence to react;

- Good timing and efficient movement.

There are many ways to defend the "pick and roll" and successful teams will often defend situations differently based upon (a) where on the court it occurs, (b) the particular offensive players involved and their strengths and (c) any limitations of their own players.

Here we describe a defensive scheme that incorporates a range of different techniques for defending the pick and roll. It is not suggested that coaches implement this specific defensive scheme, rather it is included to show the level of detail that a coach may wish to include in devising their own defensive scheme.
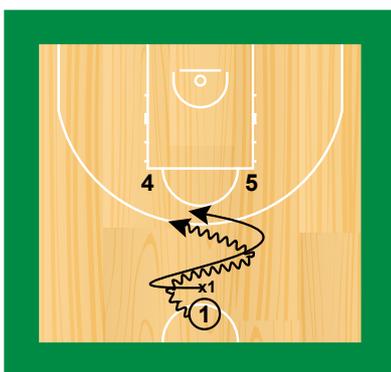
DEFENDING "HORNS"

"Horns" or an "A-Set" is a common offensive tactic, which places two high post places at the elbow (or elbow extended) who set screens for the dribbler.

In this scheme, do not force the dribbler any particular way. Instead, the ball defender is aggressive and forces the dribbler to change direction at least once (and better twice) prior to them using either screen.
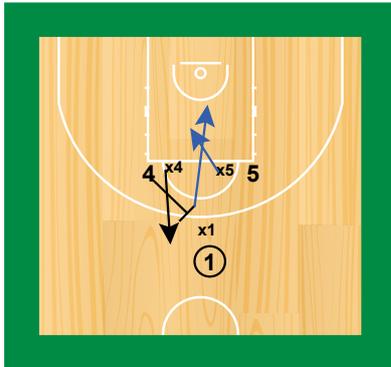
To prevent the dribbler using the screen that they wish to (e.g. they may be particularly effective moving to their left). In this situation the defender (x4) must step "vertically" from the screen so that the dribbler cannot move in that direction.

The screen defender keeps contact with the screener. This will usually force the screener (4) to cut to the basket, and they are defended by the other post player (x5). This may leave 5 open at the elbow, however that is preferable to 4 getting open at the basket.
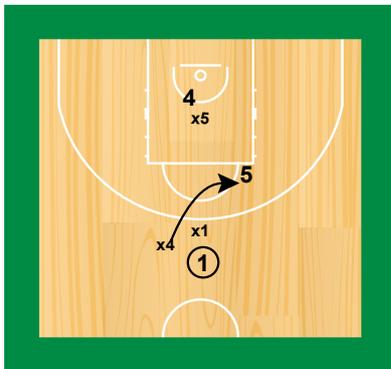
The screen defender, who stepped to stop the dribble must now sprint to recover to defend the high post. Players from the perimeter do not move to help on the high post as this will allow an open 3.
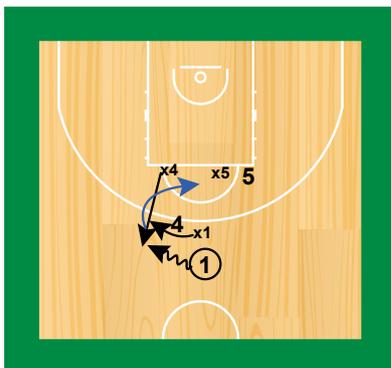
If the ball handler (1) is a good perimeter shooter, x1 will fight over the ball screen.
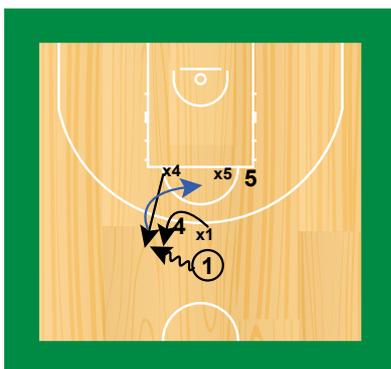
If 1 is not a good perimeter shooter, x1 will go under the screen.

DEFENDING SIDE PICK AND ROLL

Often teams will play a "side pick and roll" while also having a high post. This may occur in "Horns", when the ball is passed to the high post, who passes back to the perimeter and follows their pass to screen.
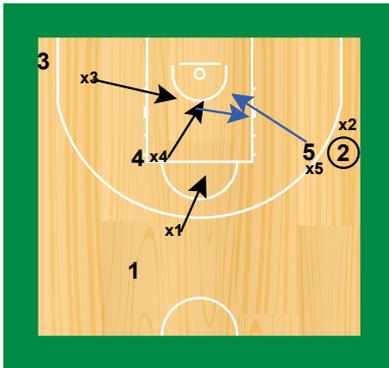
The ball defender (x2) moves to force the ball handler in the direction of the screen. They must stop the ball handler from dribbling away from the screen (baseline).

The screen defender moves "vertically" to pressure the dribbler.

The other defenders sag into the key. In particular, the high post defender moves to the "low split" and is ready to defend the screener if they cut to the basket. x1 rotates down to help pressure the high post and x3 also sags into the key.
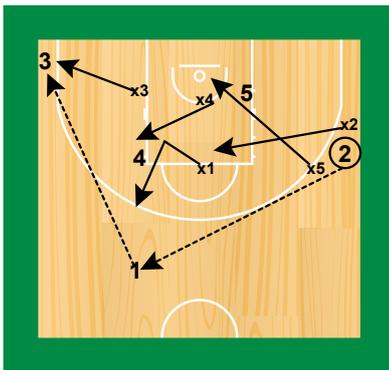
If the ball is passed from the wing, players return to their own player. x4 may hesitate at the low split, allowing time for x5 to recover.
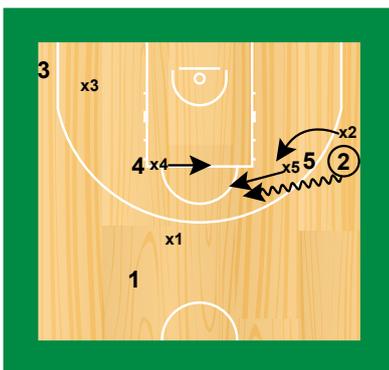
Alternatively, if x5 and x2 switch, x4 moves into the key to put additional pressure on the ball handler.
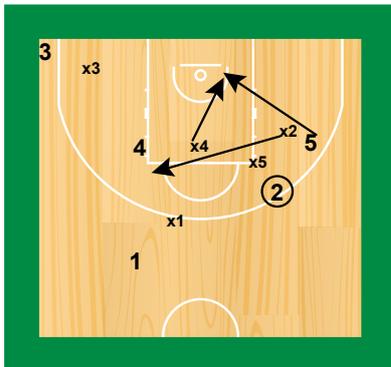
However, in this instance, if 5 cuts to the basket, x2 switches with x4 so that a "big" is defending the screener at the basket. This defence is particularly used where 4 is not a good perimeter shooter.
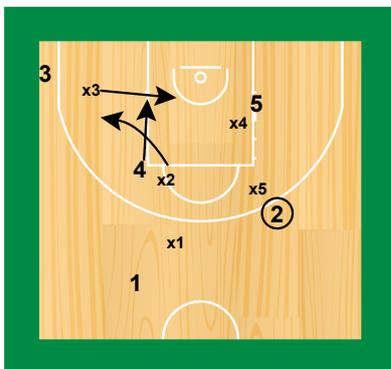
If 4 cuts to the basket (after x2 switches), x3 will step into the key to defend 4 and x2 moves to defend 3 on the perimeter. Again, avoiding having a guard defend in the post area.
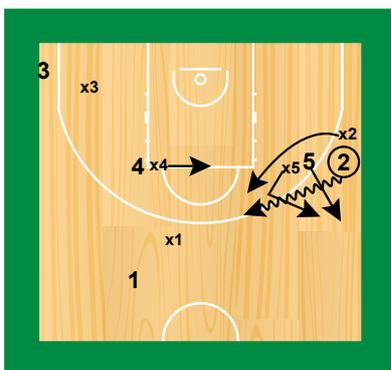
If the screen defender is unable to contain a ball handler, x2 and x5 do not switch and x2 will usually go under.
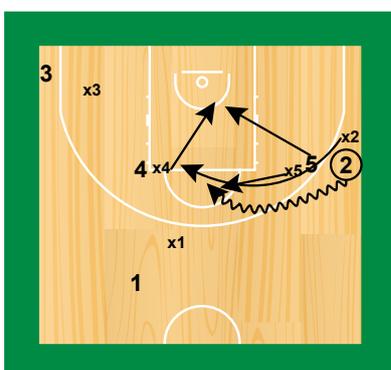
If the ball-handler is a good perimeter shooter, x2 will go over the screen.

Again, here x4 rotates to defend 5 as they cut to the basket, and x2 rotates onto the high post player, while x5 contains 2.
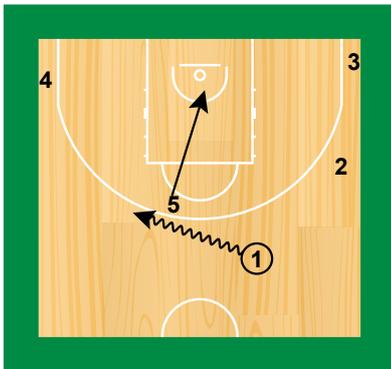
Often teams will have one screen set at the top of the key and have 4 in the corner. This is used particularly when 4 is a good perimeter shooter. On the pick and roll, 5 will cut to the basket while other players are ready on the perimeter to catch and shoot.
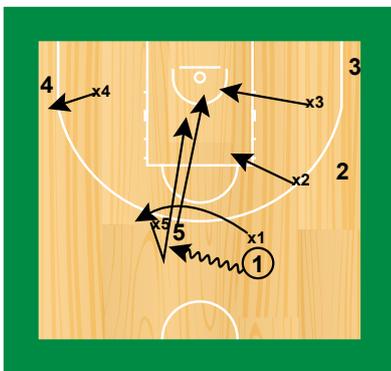
When the screen is set outside the 3 point line, x5 will show strongly and then recover to defend 5 as they cut to the basket. x3 and x2 both sag into the key, particularly x3 to help defend 5.

X4 does not help and instead continues to defend 4.
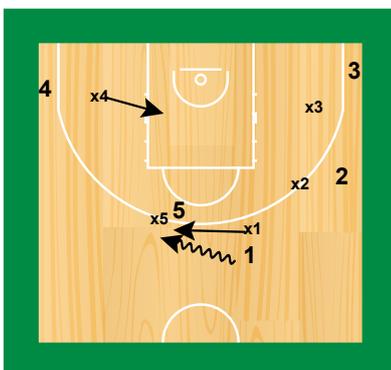
When the screen is set inside the 3 point line, x5 will again show strongly to help contain the dribbler and x1 will go over the screen if 1 is a good perimeter shooter.

Here x4 may sag into the key, as the pressure on 1 makes a quick pass to 4 difficult.
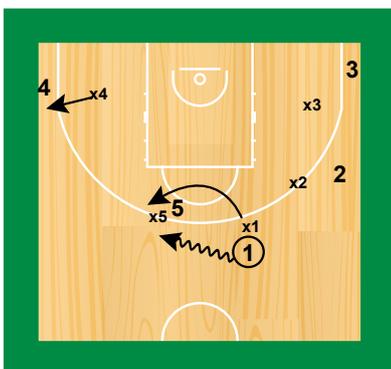
If 1 is not a good perimeter shooter, x1 will go under the screen. However, here x4 must stay on the perimeter to defend 4.
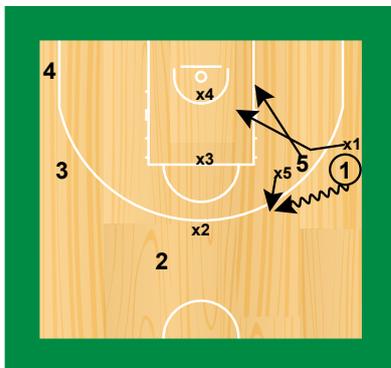
DEFENDING "4 OUT"

Where a ball screen is set and all other players are on the perimeter. If the screener is not a good shooter, defenders switch and x1 sprints to stop 5 getting low post position.
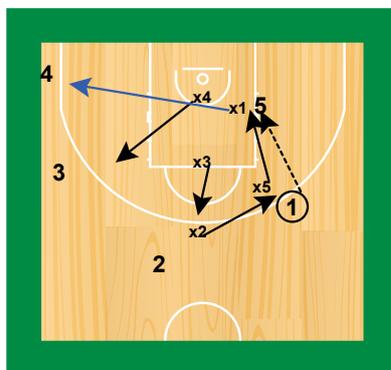
If the low post player (5) gets the ball, the defenders trap, with x5 following the pass.

x2 rotates to defend 1, x3 rotates to defend 2 and x4 initially defends both players on the weakside. Once x5 has established a good defensive position in the low post, x1 releases to defend 4.

DEFENDING THE TRAILER

It is common for the "trailer" to set a screen for the player at the wing that has the ball.
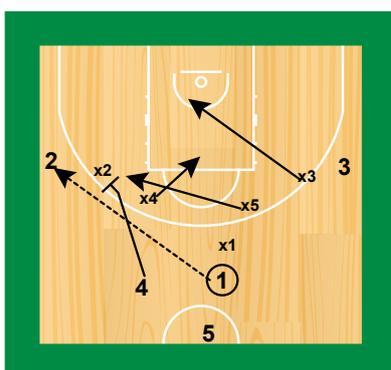
To defend this, both x4 and x5 need to have moved quickly in transition and to be inside the 3 point line.

The defender who would normally defend the screener (i.e. x4) does not do so and instead slides in to the key at the "high split". They are responsible to defend 4 if they move to the basket.

x5 moves to defend the screener.

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1.2.3 DESIGNING STRATEGY FOR TEAM DEFENCE

The coach should determine the basic defensive structure that a team is going to use and it may have a number of elements for example:

• Half court defence – "man to man", denying reversal passes;

• Full court pressure defence – 2-2-1 Zone Trap, pick up at free throw line;

• On Ball Screens – Trap or "under" with hard "show".

Within this structure the coach may teach a number of different tactics, such as different techniques defending screens or defending post players. The coach may then choose tactics based upon particular opponents and this may be changed in preparing for a game or changed during the game.

The degree of complexity that the coach can include when preparing the team will depend upon the level of experience of the players and also considerations such as how many hours the team practices each week.

With less experienced teams, preparation often focuses on re-iterating the basic defensive structure chosen for the team. With more experienced teams, preparation focuses on the strengths of the opponent and how they are best challenged.

In considering the opponent's strengths, the coach will consider:

• The tempo the opponent prefers;

• Tendencies of post players – are they passers, rebounders, scorers;

• Tendencies of perimeter players – are they scorers off the dribble or off the pass;

• Screening action commonly used.

The coach can then choose tactics that they believe will negate the opponent's strengths. For example:

• Double team particular players (e.g. a low post player) or in particular situations (e.g. ball screens);

• Deny the ball to particular players (e.g. fronting a low post player) or a particular area on the floor (e.g. deny pass to the wing but allow pass to the corner);

• Force the play to a particular side of court (e.g. deny a pass to the right hand wing but allow a pass to the left hand side);

• Playing a zone defence against a team that is a strong driving team;

• Full court pressure against a team that prefers a slow tempo (the team may also play a faster tempo on their offence in an attempt to quicken the tempo of the game);

• Playing a strong denial defence to disrupt the opponent's movement of the ball.

In selecting the team's defensive tactics the coach must also consider what the team prefers to play and what is their "natural" game style. Changing too much can result in disrupting their own team. They may also change the tactics at times during the games and then revert to their normal game style.

Within the team defensive strategy the coach may also change the individual responsibilities that player's have, choosing "match-ups" that they believe will be to the advantage of their team. This could include, for example, starting a different player than they normally do on the basis that this player is able to defend a particular opponent more effectively.

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The coach may also opt to put less pressure on some of the opposition players, effectively allowing them to shoot in order to be able to put more pressure on the player's that score the majority of the opponent's points. This may include:

- "Stepping off" a player on the perimeter that is usually a passer, in order to more aggressively deny other players'

- Setting a double team against a scorer, allowing passes, and then denying a pass back to the scorer;

- Moving to a strong help line position, allowing a pass to a player that is not a strong scorer, to place more pressure on dribble penetration;

- Not moving to help position when the ball is penetrated by a player that prefers to pass and instead remain in denial position.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Discuss with a coaching colleague how many different defensive structures or tactics they have with their team? In what order did they introduce the various tactics?

2. Do you agree that junior teams need only one defence? Discuss your position with a coaching colleague.

1.3   ZONE DEFENSES

1.3.1   1-2-2 MATCH UP DEFENCE

A "Match Up" zone combines elements of "man to man" defence (on ball) and zone defence (away from the ball) and has sometimes been described as a switching "man to man" defence.

One advantage of a match up zone defence is that it may confuse opponents about what defence your team is playing. This can be particularly effective against opponents that have one offence to play against zone defence and a separate offence to play against man to man.

There are various alignments that can be used in zones and most have options for trapping and "denial" pressure if you want to utilize them. In determining which zone defence to use you should consider:

- Your physical talent: some zones will allow you to keep "bigs" near the basket, others have a lot of interaction between perimeter and post players;

- Your opponent's shooting: some zones provide better coverage of perimeter shooters than others (e.g. a 1-3-1 provides better coverage than a 1-1-3);

- Your preparation time: the more your zone defence has rules that are consistent with your "man to man" defence, the less time it will take to teach it.

All match up zones require good "man to man" defensive skills, particularly:

- Ability to contain the ball and influence where it is dribbled or passed;

- Keeping vision of both the ball and players on the "weak side";

- "Flying with the ball": defenders moving to their next position while the ball is in the air, so that they arrive as the ball is caught.

1-2-2 MATCH UP DEFENCE

The 1-2-2 match up defence can be demonstrated, and practiced, against 7 players.
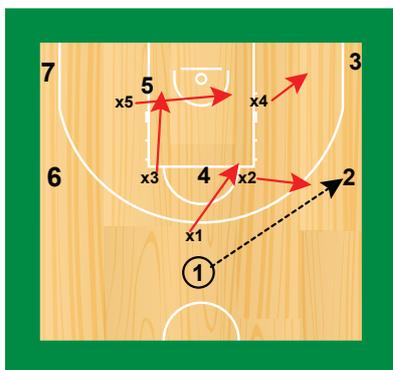
INITIAL ALIGNMENT AND SLIDES

Using seven offensive players (5 perimeter, high and low posts) will show all the coverage that is required.

Defenders start:

- x1 takes the ball;

- x2 and x3 occupy the high post area – keeping arms in front of the post player to stop any pass;

- x4 and x5 are in the low post areas.

On a pass to the wing:

- the closest guard (x2) takes the ball

- x1 drops back to guard the high post

- the closest forward (x4) steps out

- the other forward steps across

- the other guard rotates down into the front line
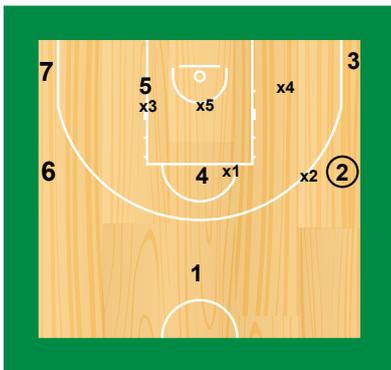
x4 is in position to guard the perimeter player in the corner if they are passed the ball. They keep their hands active to discourage any pass into the low post area behind them.
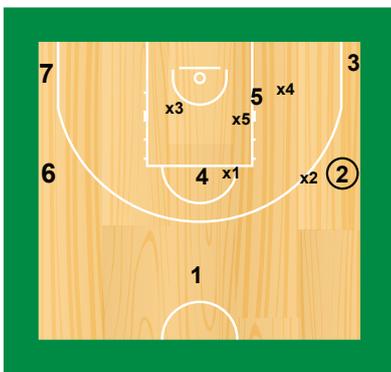
If there is a ballside low post, x4 and x5 should both have a hand in front of the post to deny any pass.
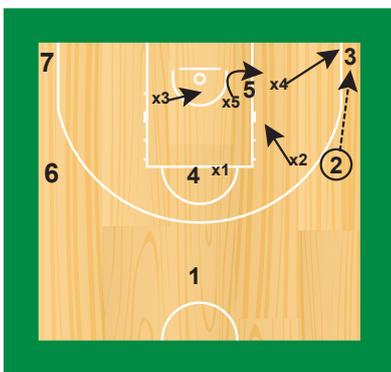
When the ball is passed to the corner, the forward (x4) steps out and must deny any drive to the baseline.

x5 moves to ¾ front the low post, from the baseline side. x2 moves close enough to deny any pass to the low post.

x1 remains at the high post area, and x3 is in a help position.
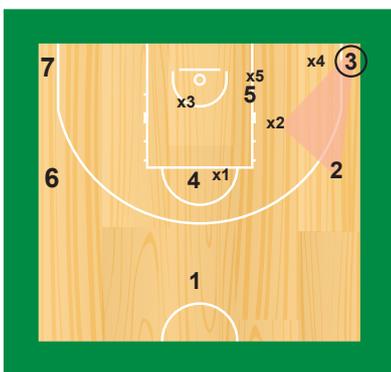
x2 must make sure that they keep vision of both the wing players and the player with the ball. They face the player with the ball to make it clear that they are ready to help, which may make it less likely that the player will drive.
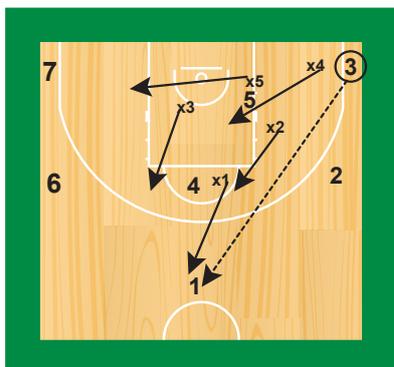
As the ball is passed out of the corner, defenders rotate their position.
If the ball was passed to the wing, x2 would take it.

If the ball is passed back to the point, defenders rotate back to the 1-2-2 alignment.
x1 may "hold" at the free throw line to deny a pass to 4, staying there until x2 or x3 recover. x4 should have their hands in front of 5 to stop a pass to the low post.
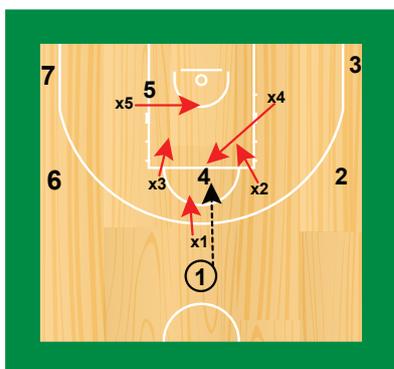
DEFENDING HIGH POST

If the ball is passed to the high post player (4), either x4 or x5 steps up to defend them, the other forward rotates toward the middle of the key.

Which defender moves to defend the high post player can be determined by:

- whoever is closest;

- where there is also a low post, as the defender on the other side of the key steps to defend the high post;

- a team rule that one defender will always be the high post defender; or

- whichever side the high post player prefers to drive, the defender from that side then moves to defend them (and is in a better position to stop any dribble).

The two wing players (x3 and x2) drop below the high post player and, in particular, help deny any pass to a low post player.
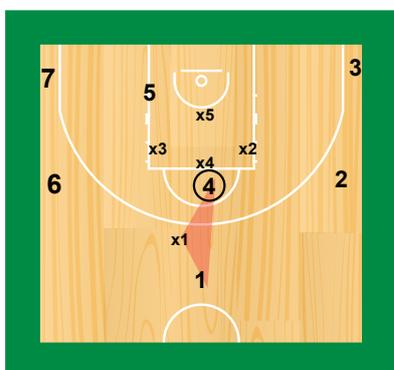
x1 also drops to pressure the high post.

Whilst x1 can pressure the high post, it is important that they keep vision of the offensive player at the top of the key.
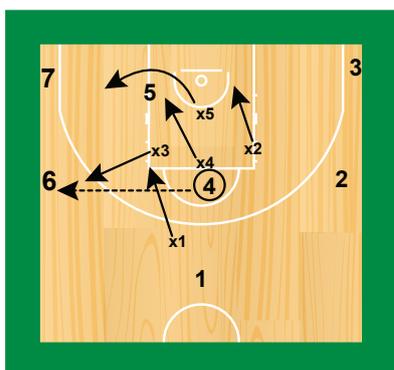
If the high post passes to the perimeter, x3 or x2 will move to take the ball.
Other players rotate into position.
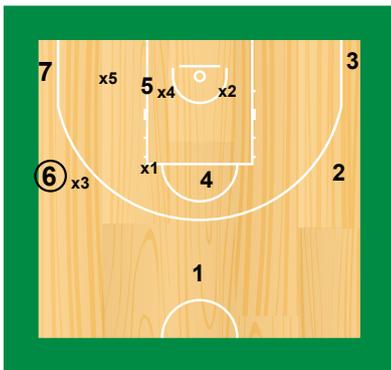
The alignment now is as if the ball was initially passed from 1 to 6.
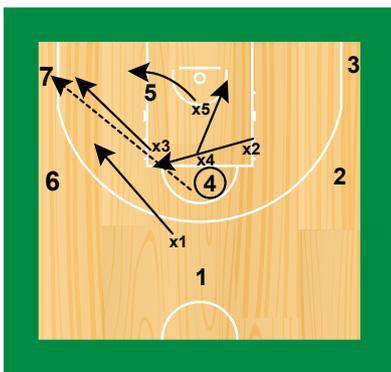
Importantly, if the ball is passed to the corner, this is taken by a guard (x3). Other players rotate so that they end up with:

- 3 players on the front line (x3, x5 and x4) – guarding the ball, low post and help position;
- 1 guard at the high post (x2);
- 1 guard at the wing, close enough to the low post to help deny any pass.
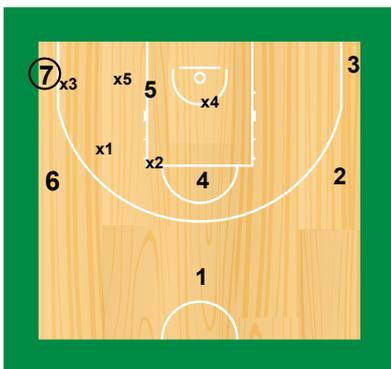
x4 does not rotate to the low post position, because they could be "sealed" easily by the post player. Post defenders should come from the baseline side to the post position.
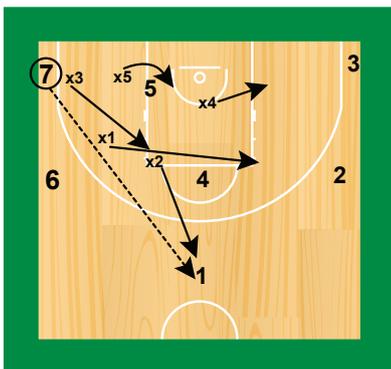
As the ball is passed from the corner to the point, x3 returns to a guard position.

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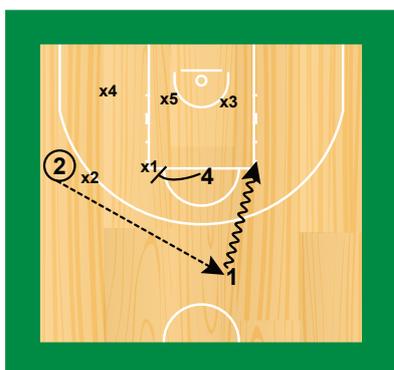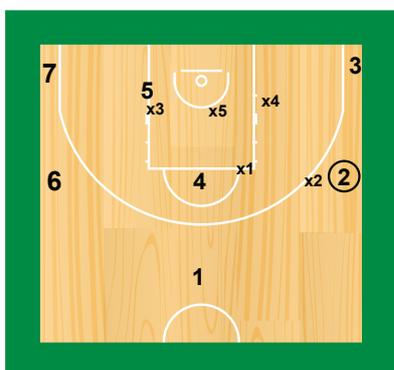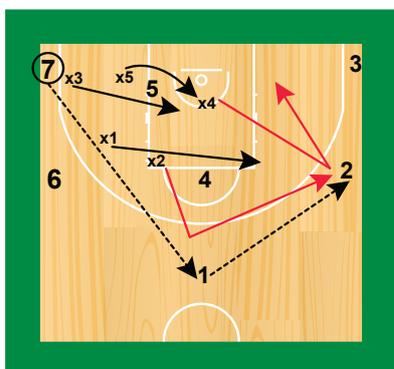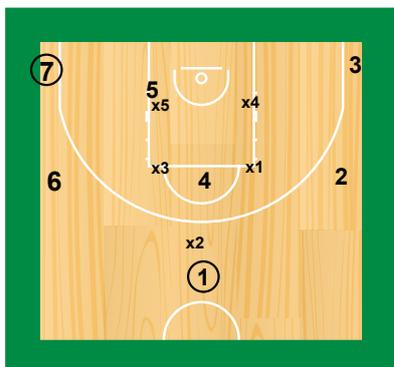
It is important that all players move while the ball is in the air.

"SCRAMBLING" ROTATIONS

The rotations on a pass from the corner return defenders to the initial alignment. However, if the ball is quickly passed to the opposite wing, the slides may need to be different:

- x4 is closest to 2 so initially closes out to guard the ball.
  However, a "rule" of the defence is that x4 and x5 do not guard on the wing;
- x2 moves to the wing as quickly as possible, allowing x4 to return to a frontline position;
- x1 moves to guard the high post, and x3 remains on the front line.

The alignment at the end is consistent with the initial slides shown. This "scramble" is an example of being "efficient" with slides and having the closest defender move to the ball.

AVOIDING SCREENS

A common tactic used against zone defences is to set screens on the "outside". Accordingly, defenders need to adjust their position to ensure that a post defender cannot set an effective screen.

Here. 4 can screen x1, providing 1 with a lane to penetrate into the keyway.
x1 needs to adjust their position so that they can move past the high post player.

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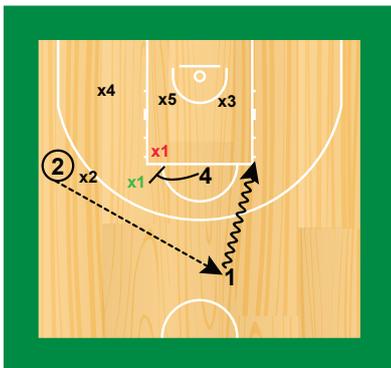
When the screen is set, the defender should adjust their position, so that they can move past the screen. They can move below (shown in green) or above (shown red) the screener.

Moving below the screen may be preferred as it gives a better angle to stop penetration by 1. However, if 1 is a very good perimeter shooter, x1 should move 4's screen. If they move below it, they may be re-screened by 4 and not be able to defend a shot.
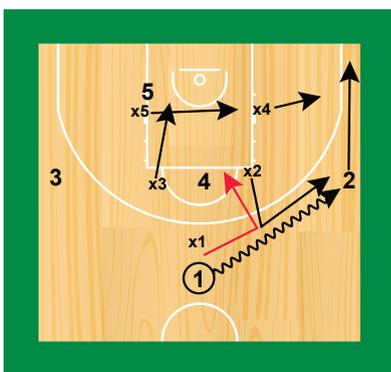
DEFENDING DRIBBLE

x1 should attempt to influence the ball to one side of the court or the other. Which side will depend upon the "scout" and whatever tendencies the opponent has. If they usually play from the right hand side, force them left!

As the ball is dribbled to the wing, x1 "hands off" the dribbler to x2, who guards them to the wing. Other players rotate the same as if the ball was passed to the wing.
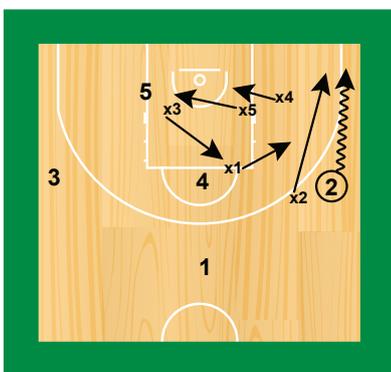
If the wing player dribbles to the corner, the guard (x2) defends this.

x4 rotates to the low post and x5 rotates to the help position – forming the three defenders on the front line. x3 moves to defend the high post and x1 steps toward the wing.
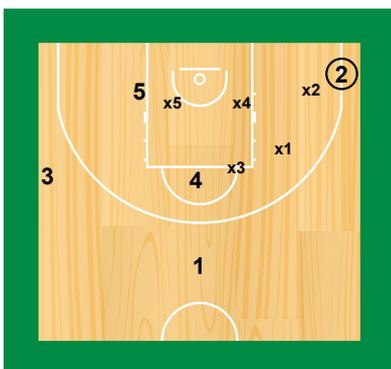
Again, the resulting alignment is similar to when a ball is passed to the corner. If the corner player dribbles out to the wing:

- if a guard is defending (e.g. x2) – they remain on the player to the wing;
- if a forward is defending – the "hand off" to the nearest guard and then rotate back onto the front line.
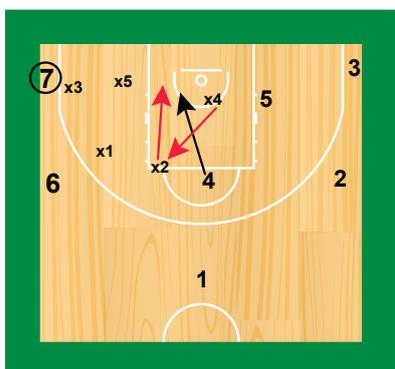
DEFENDING POST CUT

If the high post player dives to the basket, the guard must also defend that cut. This can be done by switching with the help side defender (as shown) although this is most effective when the help side defender is a guard.

It can also be done by "handing" off the cutter to one of the front line defenders, which is particularly effective if they post up.
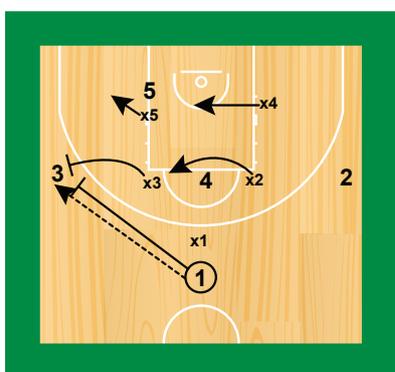
TRAPPING

The zone can trap at either the wing or the corner. The wing trap is set:
- x3 moves to the wing as the ball is passed and x1 follows the pass
  (this works best when x1 is closer to the wing than the middle of the court);
- x2 moves to cover deny the high post
- x5 moves to short corner and x4 rotates to low post.
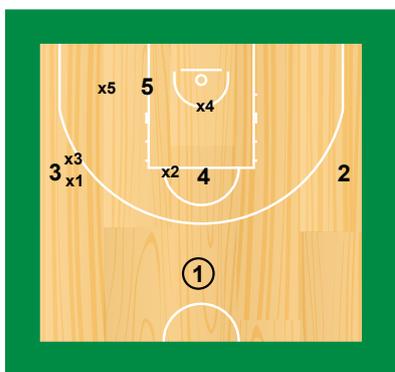
In this alignment, x2 and x5 are "stealers" or "interceptors" and x4 is the "safety"
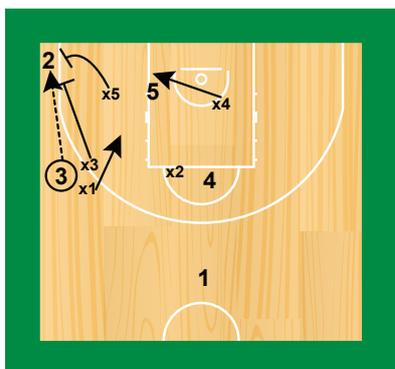
To trap in the corner, the guard from the wing follows the pass. This can be done after trapping at the wing or just in the corner.

A forward then defends the low post and guards defend both the high post and the wing.

The difference here from normal coverage is that the "help defender" is not present
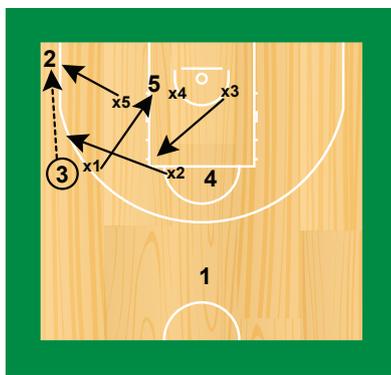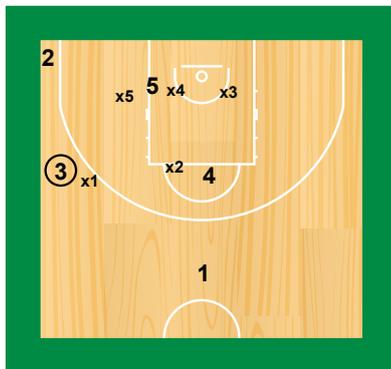
"FIRE" – PRESSURE DEFENCE

The 1-2-2 matchup can also be used as a pressuring defence, where passes to posts and the wing are denied.

Here, x4 and x5 combine to deny the post, keeping their arms active to be in front.

On a pass to the corner:
- x5 rotates to defend the ball;
- x3 rotates to deny the high post.
- x4 remains behind the post player to stop any lob pass;
- x2 rotates to deny a pass back to the wing;
- x1 rotates to deny a pass to the high post.
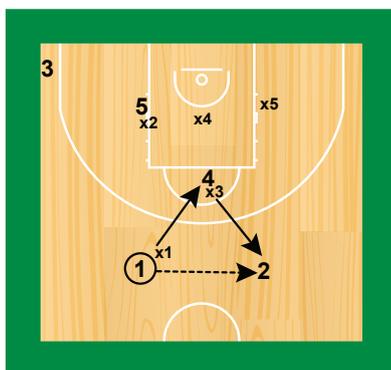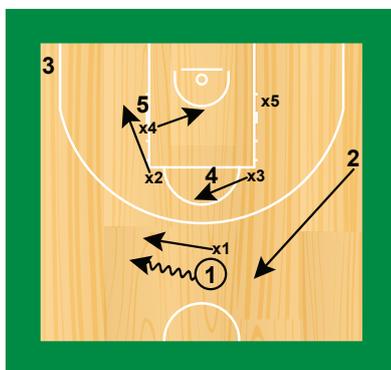
ADJUSTING TO A "2 GUARD FRONT"

Commonly an offensive team that is facing a zone defence that has a guard in the middle of the floor will place two offensive players at the top of the key.

In the 1-2-2 match up, the guard that has the ball (x1) moves with it and the other guard (x3) moves to the middle of the foul line and in front of any high post. x2 rotates to the front line.

x2 makes this rotation as x3 has further to move to reach the position.

Once the ball is reversed, the guard from the high post defends the ball, and the other guard rotates back to the high post.

Similarly, if the ball is passed to the wing, the guard at the high post moves to defend the wing. To help this, the guard may stand to the ball side of the high post player, whilst keeping hands in front of the player to deny a pass.
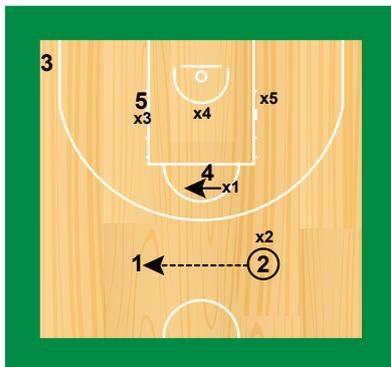
x1 stands to the ball side of 4 and steps across as the ball is "reversed" to 1.
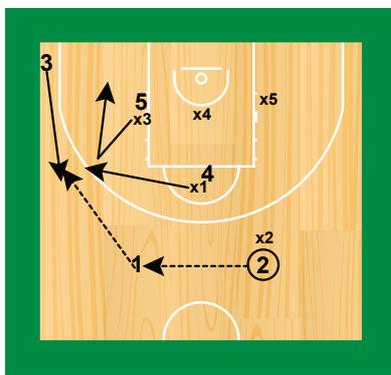
As the ball is passed to the wing, the forward may hedge toward the wing before recovering back to the front line. This can give the guard time to get to the wing.
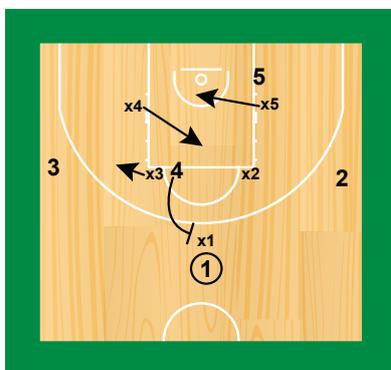
DEFENDING PENETRATION

"Containing" the ball is a critical defensive skill in both man to man and match up zone defence.

If 1 penetrates, the other guards are responsible for stopping passes to perimeter shooters – they do not help to stop the dribble.
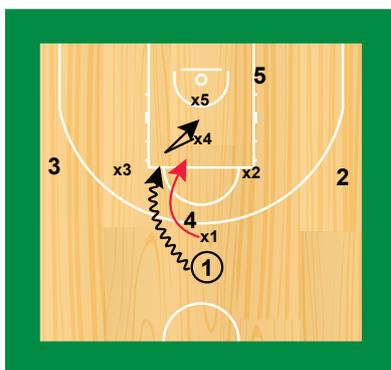
A common tactic is for the high post player to screen the ball defender. When this screen is set, x4 and x5 move into a tandem position.

As the dribbler penetrates, x4 moves to stop the penetration. They recover back once x1 re-establishes good position.
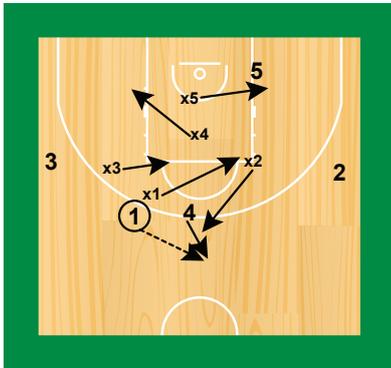
If the screener "pops" to the perimeter and receives the ball, the closest guard moves to defend them and other players rotate to the initial alignment.
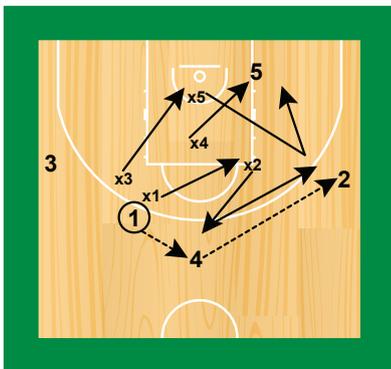
Often the screener, will quickly pass to the wing – this "second pass" is often the most effective at creating an open shot.

This is a "scramble" situation. The forward may need to guard the wing, and then be "bumped down" by a guard, to return to the normal alignment. This is shown in the movement of x5 and x2.
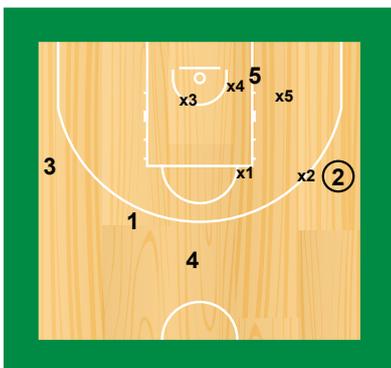
Good communication is the key to this working. The aim is to make the most "efficient" slides and if all team mates know what the others are doing, the defence can be effective.

Here the team rule can be "it's only wrong, if you don't bring your team mates along!"
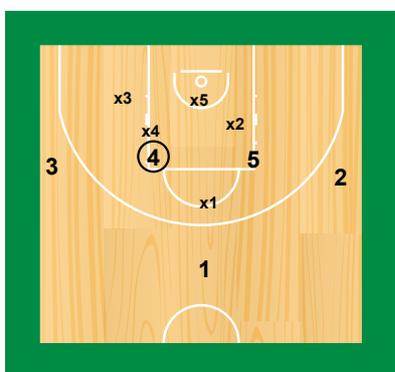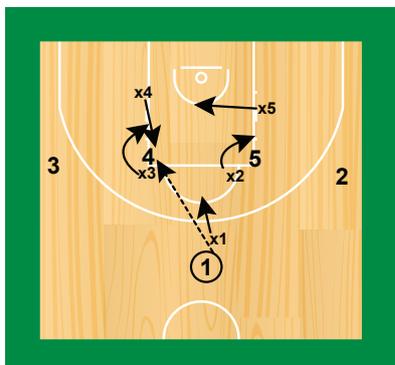
DEFENDING 2 HIGH POSTS

Where an offence has two high post players, both guards at the high post deny an offensive player. Again, they do not have to stand directly in front of the post player, but must deny the pass by at least having an arm across the post player.

If the ball is passed to one of the post players, both guards drop and the forward steps up to guard the post player while the other forward moves to the middle of the key.

The defence has now moved to the same alignment as when a single high post receives the ball. The guards (x3 and x2) will move to defend any wing or corner player that receives a pass from the high post.

WHEN TO USE THE 1-2-2?

The main characteristics of this defence are:

- x4 and x5 do not have responsibility to guard wing players;
- x2 and x3 will have responsibility to defend in the "front line", at times which may involve guarding post players

Accordingly, the defence may suit teams that have "bigs" that are slow guarding perimeter players or have "swing players" that can guard both perimeter and post.

1.3.2   1-1-3 MATCH UP DEFENCE

Another common match up defence is the 1-1-3, which (in contrast to the 1-2-2) requires "front line" players to defend in the wing position which coaches need to take into consideration in determining whether or not they wish to use the defence.

KEY CONCEPTS

The key concepts of the 1-1-3 defence are:

1. Deny all penetrating passes;
2. Influence the ball to one side of the court and keep it there;
3. Deny passes to the post – "front" low post players;
4. Keep hands up and active to stop passes;
5. Never let a cutter on the "strong side" get in front of a defender.
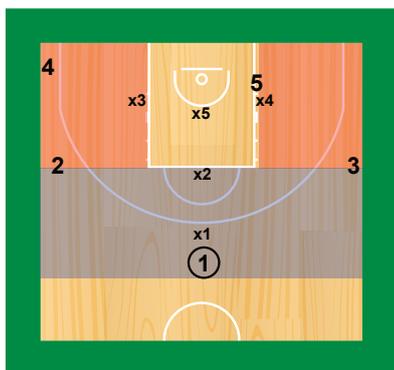
INITIAL ALIGNMENT

Initially one guard (x1) defends the ball – the "up" guard. The second guard (x2) denies the high post area. The guards have responsibility to guard the ball above the free throw line.

The "frontline" (x3, x4 and x5) take position in the back of the zone, staying in front of any low post player.
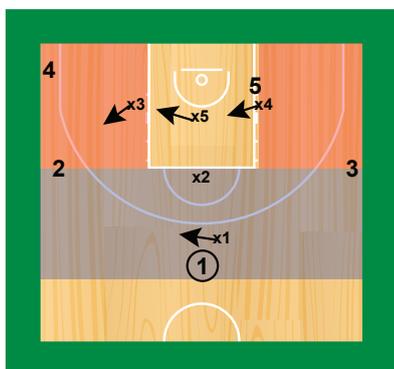
The "Up guard" forces the play to one side of the floor. The frontline also "hedge" in that direction, in anticipation of the ball moving to the wing.

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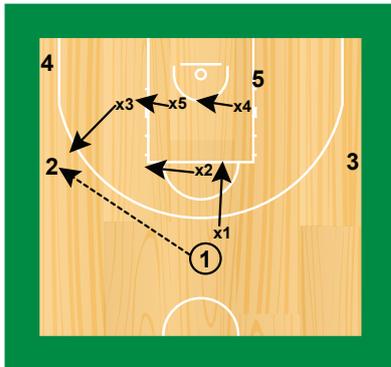
When the ball is passed to the wing, the front line moves to defend the ball. The frontline and the guards adjust to form a "box" with two defenders at the high and low post (in front of any offensive players) and two defenders in the "help" position.

The players in the "help" position are positioned the same as "split line" in "man to man".
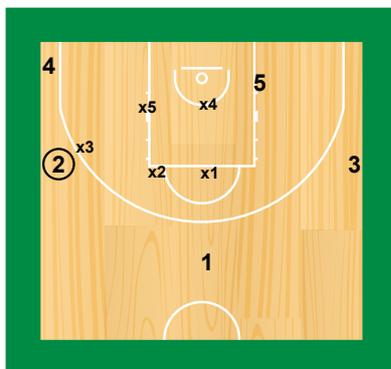
x2 and x5 deny any pass to the post positions. x4 and x1 are in the help position.
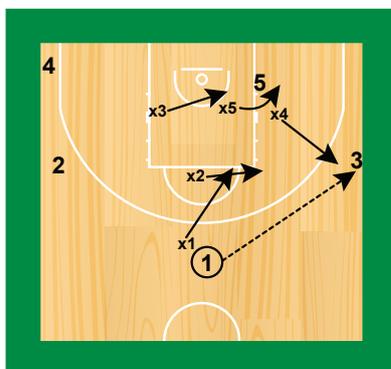
When the ball is passed to the strong side wing, the front line defender in the low post "fronts". The help defender becomes particularly important in order to stop any lob passes into the post.

Pressure on the wing player (so that they cannot make the lob pass) is also very important.
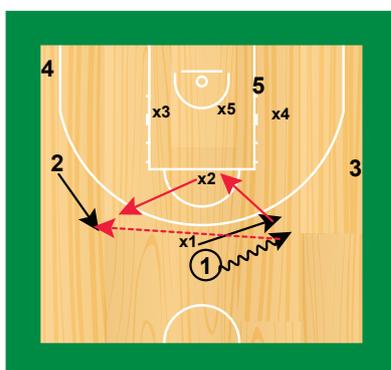
DEFENDING THE DRIBBLER

Where the ball is dribbled from the point, the up guard defends that. On any reversal pass, the up guard and the back guard switch (this is shown in red.)
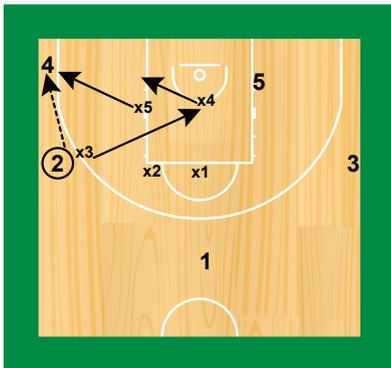
"DEFENDING THE CORNER"

When the ball is passed to the corner, it is defended by the nearest "frontline" player.
The preferred rotation is for the help player to move into the post position, and the wing defender to sprint back to the help position.
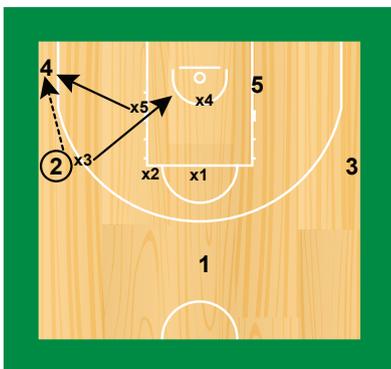
Alternatively, the wing player can rotate back into the low post position.
This can be effective when the low post is not occupied by an offensive player.
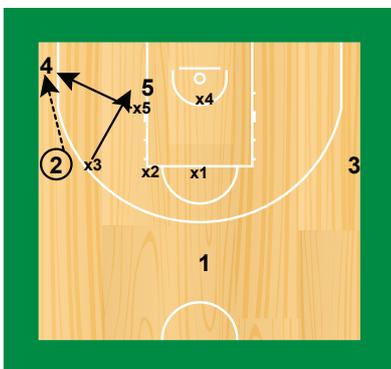
However, it can also be used to get into a "fronting" position where there is an offensive low post player
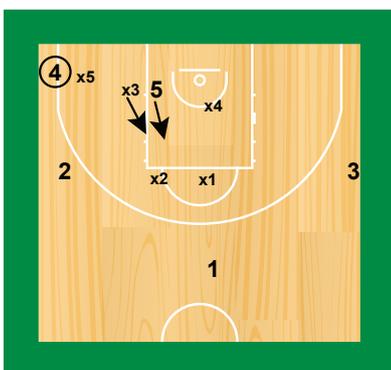
The defender "fronts" the low post. Even if the offensive player moved toward the high post, the frontline defender (x3) stays between the player with the ball and the post player.

The on ball defender must not allow any baseline penetration.
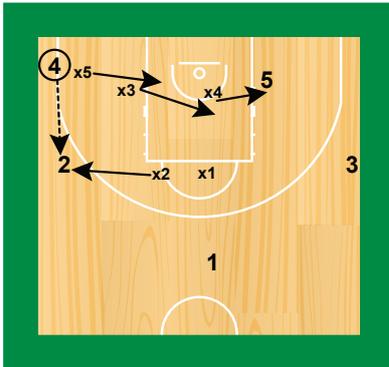
When the ball is passed out of the corner, the wing is now taken by the high post defender. And the three front line players rotate across.

This is different to a penetrating pass (from the point to the wing) where the wing would be defended by a front line player.
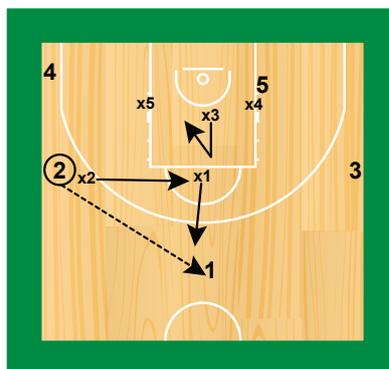
If the ball is then reversed to the point, the "back" guard moves to defend the ball. They should hesitate before moving, to give the other guard time to recover to the high post position.

The middle player in the frontline can also hedge toward the foul line to provide additional protection.

This restores the initial alignment.
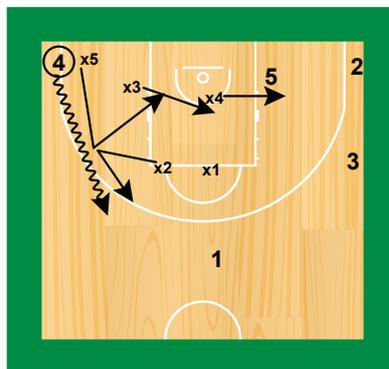
If the ball is dribbled out of the corner, it is initially defended by the frontline player (x4), and is then handed off to the "up guard" (x2).

This is also an opportunity to trap if desired.
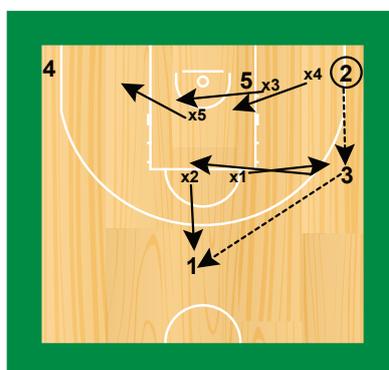
When the up guard is defending at the wing, should the ball be passed to the point, the guard must sprint to the middle of the high post area. They will not be guarding either wing on the next pass and must focus on defending the high post area.
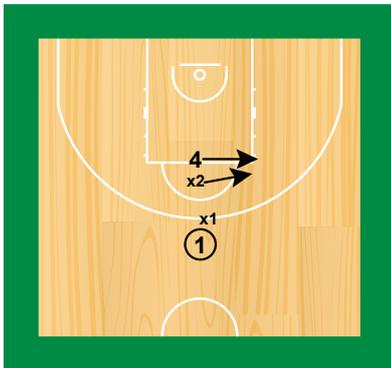
DEFENDING THE HIGH POST

When the ball is at the point, the back guard must front any offensive player in the high post. To do this, they must at least have their arms and hands in front of the post player.

Defenders may opt to stand directly in front of the post player.
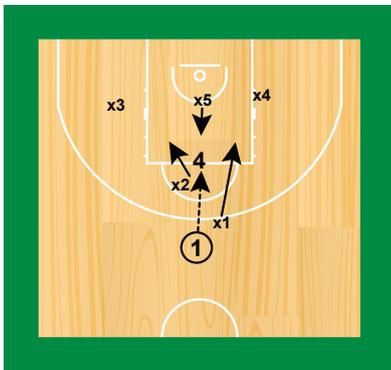
If the ball is passed to the high post player, the two guards drop to the foul line, and may "crowd" the player. Their responsibility will be to guard the wing player if they receive a pass.

x5 hedges toward the high post player, and x3 and x4 take responsibility for any low post players.
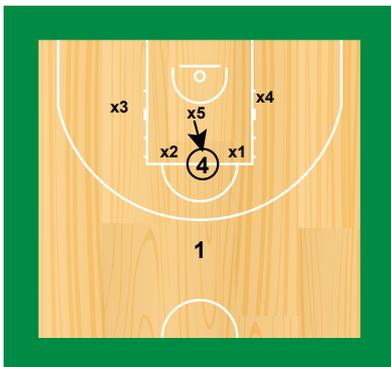
If the high post player turns to face the basket, x5 steps up to defend them.
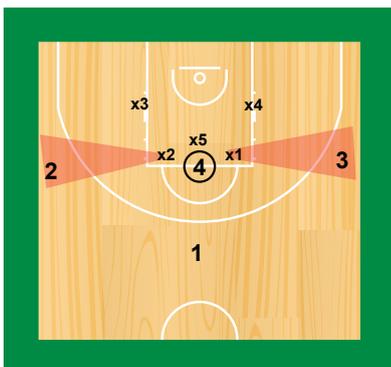
DEFENDING PASSES FROM HIGH POST

Any pass to the wing from the high post player is defended by whichever guard is on that side of the floor. This means it is important that the guards keep vision of wing perimeter players.
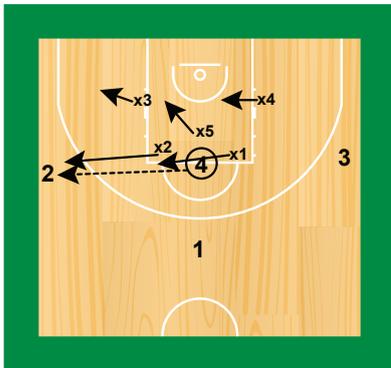
Whenever the ball is passed all players must move.

As the high post passes to the wing, the nearest guard moves to defend the ball and the other guard moves to defend the high post.

The front line players adjust towards the ball.
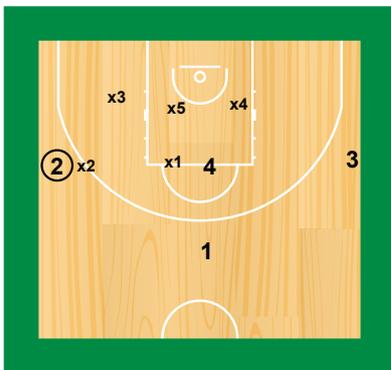
The defence is now in the same alignment as when the ball is passed from the corner to the wing.
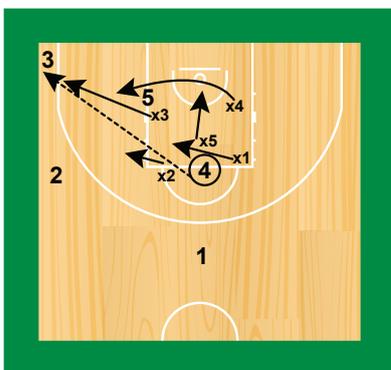
On a pass to the corner, the nearest front line player defends the corner player and the opposite front line player moves across the baseline to front any low post player. They should move on the baseline side of a post player.

The front line player that was defending the high post, rotates down to the help position. They do not move to the low post (although they may be closer) as they have a poor angle and could be easily sealed by the post player.

PRACTISING THE
1-1-3 MATCH UP ZONE

An effective way of developing any match up zone defence is to play it against 6, 7 or even 8 offensive players. Initially, limiting the offensive players to passing the ball and then allowing them freedom to dribble and ultimately cut.

When a team is initially learning the "slides" or movements within the match up zone, it can be useful to work separately with the guards and the frontline.
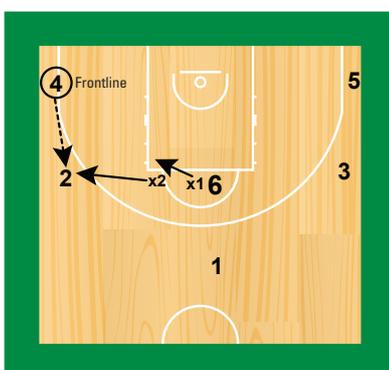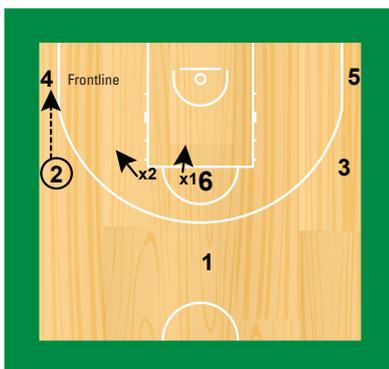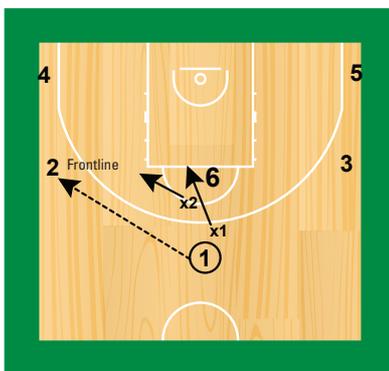
GUARD SLIDES

As the ball is passed around by offensive players, the two guards move as they would in response to the movement of the ball.

If the up guard is guarding the ball, they call "ball". If the ball would be defended by a player from the frontline, then both guards call "frontline".

Sometimes the movement of the players will be minimal, however, every time the ball is passed, both guards should adjust position.

Whilst initially the offensive players will be slow, allowing time for the guards to adjust position, they should quickly work to a game like speed.

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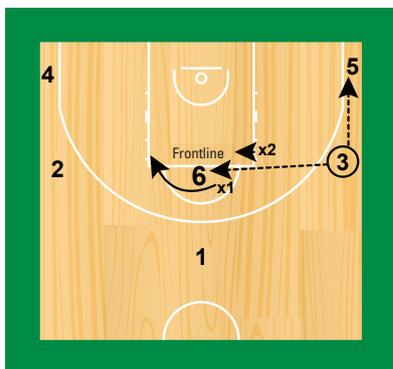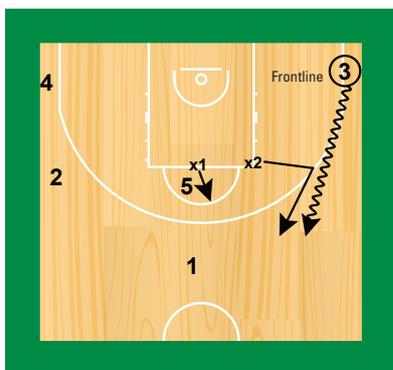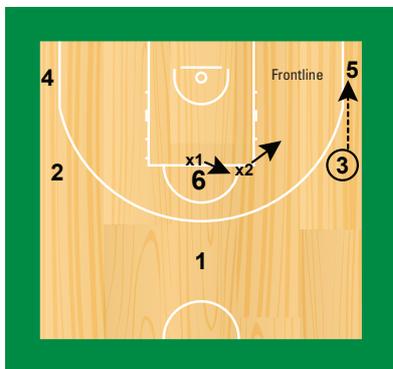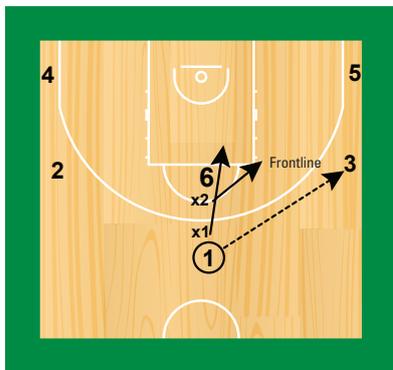
The activity can be made "live" with players that a guard has direct responsibility to defend, being able to shoot or penetrate.

This will also help the offensive players understand the defensive movements as they anticipate whether or not they can shoot or drive when they receive the ball.

In this sequence of diagrams, all of the basic movements that the guards may be required to do on defence are shown.

As in any defence, it is important that the defenders "fly with the ball", moving while a pass is in the air so that they are in their next defensive position when the pass is caught.

The high post must be denied by the guards at all times, but once the player has the ball, it is a player from the frontline who has responsibility to defend the post player.
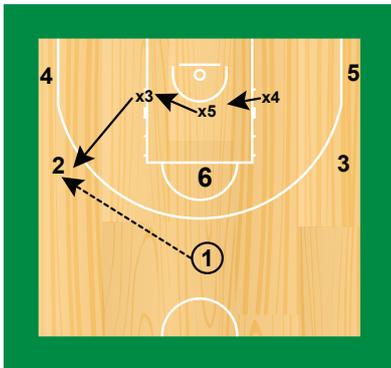
FRONTLINE SLIDES

Similarly, the slides of the Frontline players can be isolated, with passers initially slow but building to fully contested.
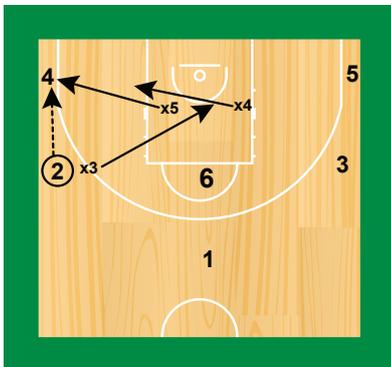
As the ball is passed to the corner, the front line players adjust.
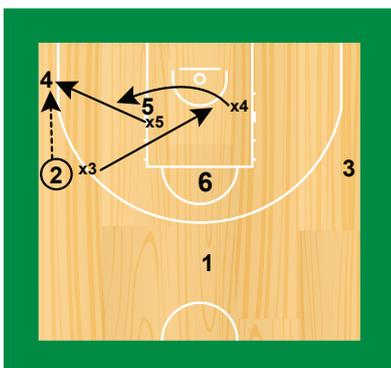
It is critical that the help defender (x4) move under (baseline side) of the low post to get to a fronted position.
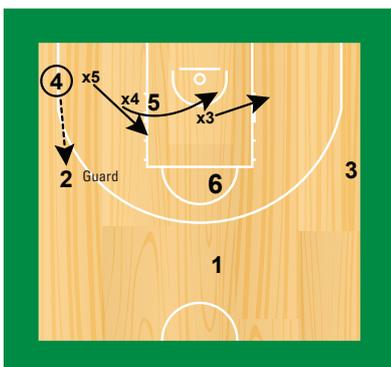
Again, the frontline players call "ball" if they are defending the ball and all players call "guard" if the person who has the ball would normally be defended by one of the guards.
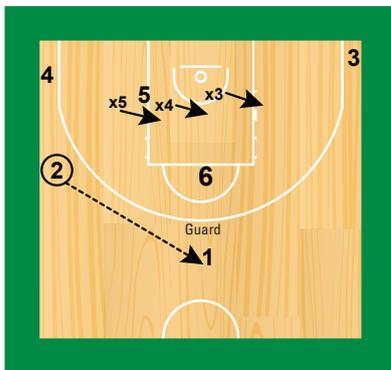
Sprinting to the next position is crucial, as is denying the pass to all post players.
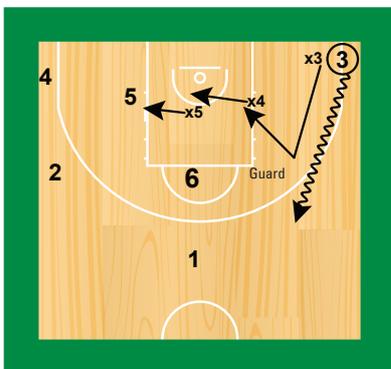
When the ball comes from the corner to the wing, the frontline crowd any low post player.
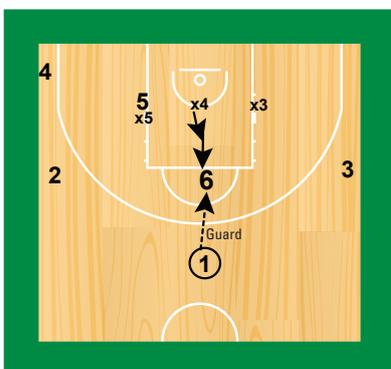
When the high post receives the ball, the middle player in the front line (x4) hedges towards them. If the high post turns to face the basket, it is x4's responsibility to defend the player as closely as possible.
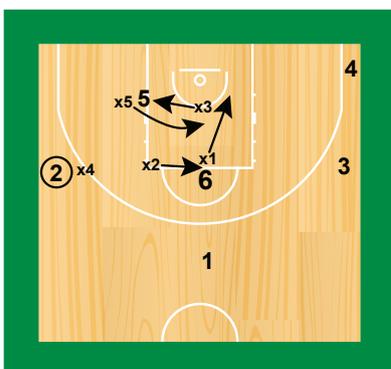
REBOUNDING IN THE 1-1-3 MATCH UP

If the shot is taken from either the corner or the wing, the frontline defender who is in front of the low post player has no "blocking out" responsibilities (as they are in a poor position). They should drop step past the post player into the key to contest for the rebound.

Other players rotate away from where the shot was taken and "find a body" to box out.
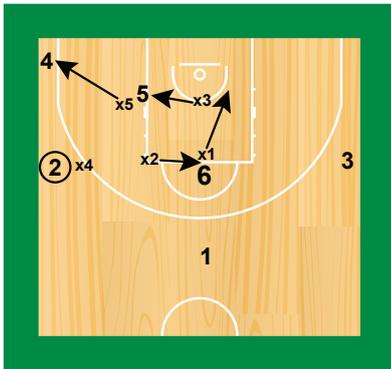
However, if there is a player in the corner, x5 (who was fronting low post) is responsible to box out the corner player.
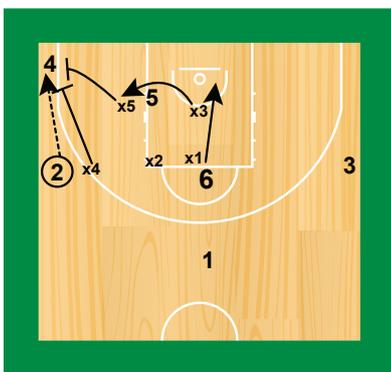
TRAPPING IN THE 1-1-3

Trapping in the 1-1-3 is mostly done in the corner, with the wing defender following the pass to act as a "trapper".

The frontline defender and guard still front any low or high post players, being active to intercept any pass.

The back guard must move down to be in a help position behind any low post player.
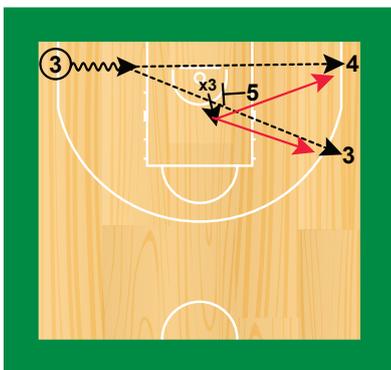
"SCRAMBLING"

Many offences will screen the outside of the zone, and then throw a skip pass or send a cutter along the baseline. The frontline player being screened should adjust their position so that they have "foot advantage" and can get past the screener.
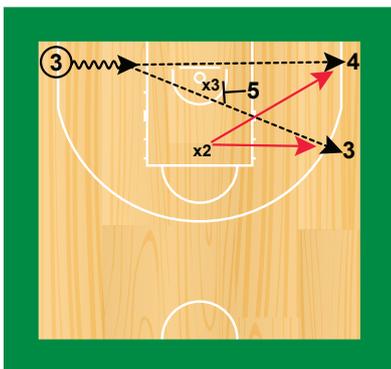
However, if the screen is effective, the guard may need to rotate to defend the ball.
The simple rule is that whoever can get there quicker is the player that defends the ball.

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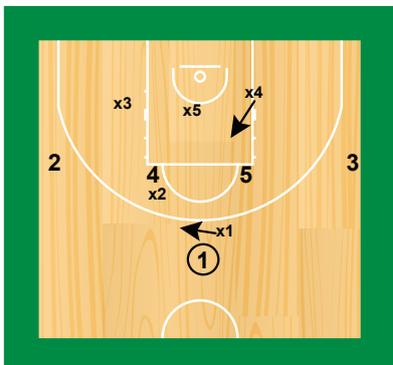
1-1-3 AGAINST TWO HIGH POSTS

Where there are two high post players, the up guard attempts to influence the ball to one side and the back guard denies the high post on that side.

The frontline player (x3) hedges towards the other high post.

1.3.3   1-3-1 MATCH UP ZONE DEFENCE

Like the "Box and 1" defence, a 1-3-1 Match Up Defence can be taught relatively easily from an initial 1-1-3 alignment

To successfully play this defence:

- Frontline defenders must be able to defend wing perimeter players (as is the case in the 1-1-3);
- A very quick guard is required, who plays the back of the zone and is responsible for coverage from one corner to the other;
- Preferably the guard that is to play the back of the zone, should be a relatively tall guard, as they will at times have responsibility to defend in the low post.

An advantage of the 1-3-1 Match Up compared to the 1-1-3 Match Up, is that it provides better coverage on perimeter shooters, particularly at the wing.
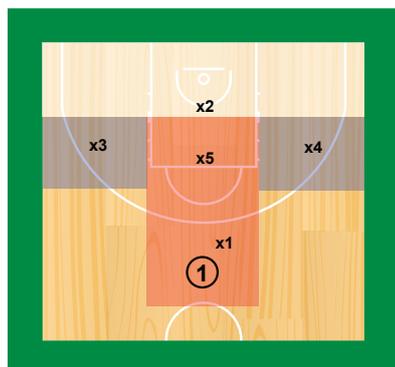
INITIAL ALIGNMENT FOR 1-3-1

The "up guard" is responsible for the middle of the court, and for influencing the ball to one side. The "back guard" plays as the last line of the defence and covers from one corner to the other.

x3 and x4 retain responsibility to defend the wing perimeter players, and have less distance to cover than in the 1-1-3.
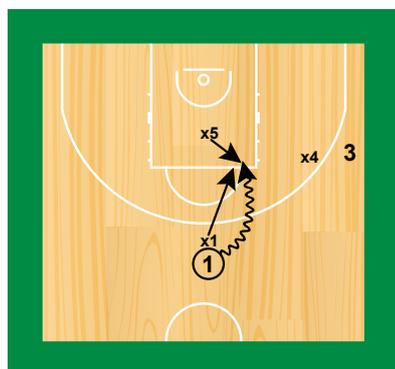
x5 is responsible for stopping any penetration into the keyway.
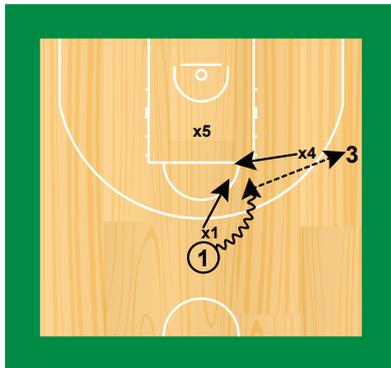
The reason x5 has responsibility to defend dribble penetration, is that if x4 steps in to stop the drive, it will lead to 3 being open, which negates the advantage of the zone (which is coverage on perimeter shooters).
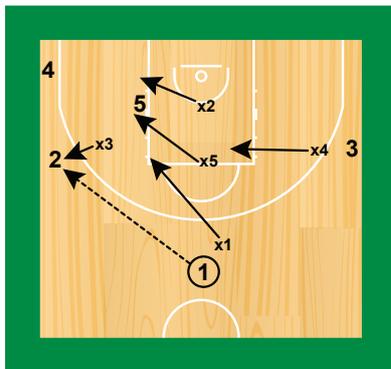
On pass to the wing, rules from the 1-1-3 apply:

• Frontline player (x3) defends the wing player;
• Up guard rotates to deny the high post
• Front line player (x5) rotates to be in front of any low post player
• X4 rotates to a help position.

The back guard (x2) moves toward the corner, but remains in the keyway. If the player in the corner is a very good shooter, x2 can hedge closer.
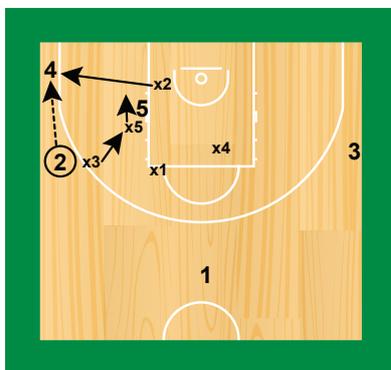
When the ball is passed into the corner, x2 moves to defend the player. x5 moves to front the low post player, and x4 remains in a help position behind the post player.

x3 can hedge down toward the low post, but has primary responsibility to defend the wing.
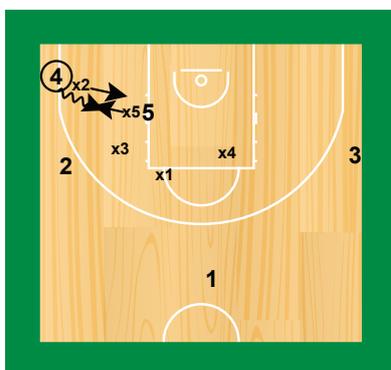
DEFENDING THE DRIBBLE

On any dribble penetration from the corner, the defender in the low post area moves to stop the dribbler.

x3 may hedge to the dribbler, but ultimately must keep the wing player in sight and be prepared to guard that position.

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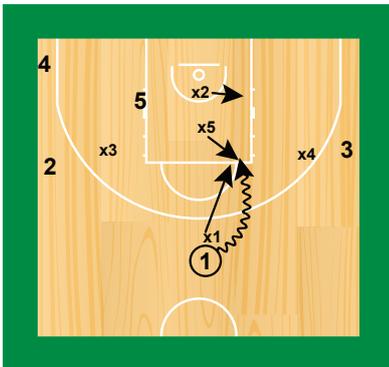
Similarly, any dribble penetration from the point position, is defended by x5 stopping the dribbler from getting into the key.

The back guard (x2) also moves across the key, to be closer to any perimeter shooter in the keyway.
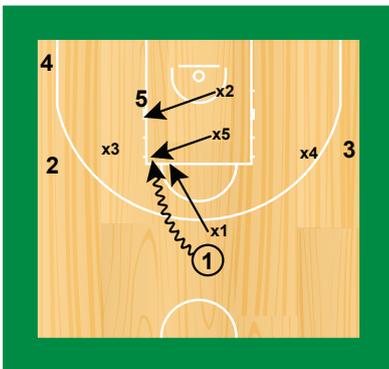
Where there is a low post player, x2 may rotate to deny any pass from a penetration dribbler to the low post player.
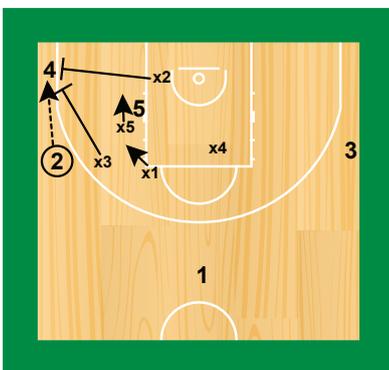
TRAPPING FROM 1-3-1

A player in the corner can also be "trapped" by the perimeter defender following the pass down.
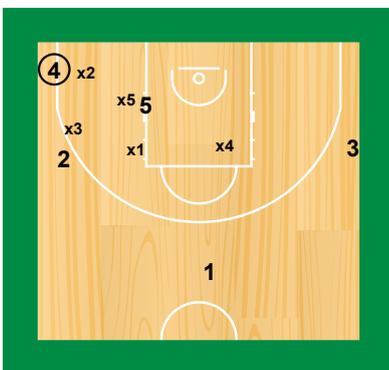
Alternatively, x3 can deny any return pass to the wing, which means that all close passes are denied.

Whatever Match Up defence a team wants to employ, it will only be successful if:

1. Defenders can defend a perimeter player to stop them from passing or dribbling;

2. Defenders "fly with the ball", moving as the pass is made;

3. The defenders communicate with each other.

FOLLOW-UP

1. What are the relative strengths and weaknesses of a 1-2-2 Match Up Zone defence?

2. Reflect upon a team that you have coached. What offence (or offensive principles) would they have used against a 1-1-3 Match Up Zone defence?

3. When would you introduce a zone defence with your team? Explain your answer.

1.4 ADVANCED DEFENSIVE TECHNIQUES

1.4.1 DEFENDING DRIBBLE HAND OFFS

A dribble hand off is similar to an on ball screen and can be defended using similar techniques.
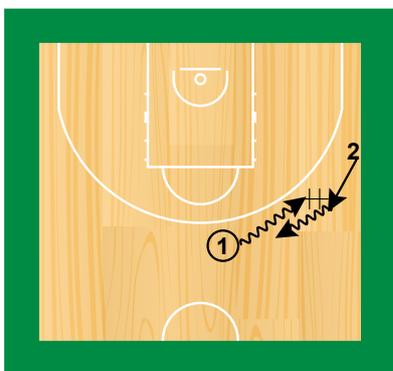
A dribble hand off is an exchange between a person with the ball and a person running past them. It is a dynamic move, with the dribbler stopping and then immediately handing the ball to a person running past.

1 dribbles toward 2, who cuts past, grabs the ball and immediately dribbles.

For convenience, in the following diagrams 1 is not shown dribbling, however 1 would normally be on the move, which does make defending more complex.
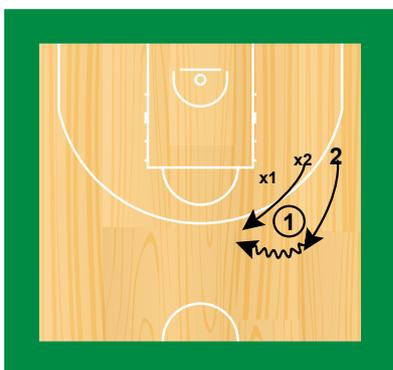
THROUGH

x1 may step back from the dribbler, allowing a path for x2 to move through to defend 2.
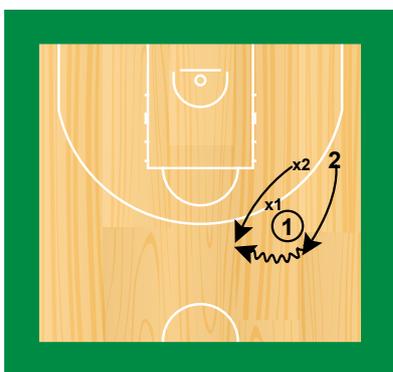
BEHIND

x1 may "jam" into the dribbler, so that x2 can move behind them to defend 2.
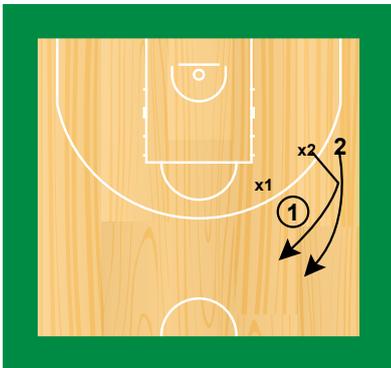
"JUMP"

x2 may move directly into the path of 2. If 2 continues the cut then x2 keeps between 2 and 1, making the hand off ineffective.
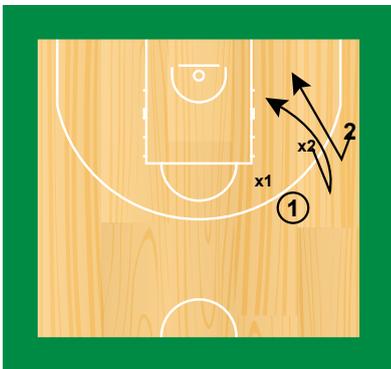
Alternatively, 2 may opt to cut back door toward the basket, and 2 moves to defend that.

2 may try to get close to 1 before performing the back cut (so that x2 gets "stuck" on 1). In this event, x1 could defend the back cut and x2 could relocate to defend 1.
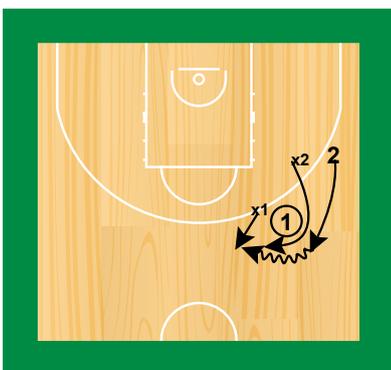
DOUBLE

The defenders may double team 2 as they start their dribble. x1 moves to get directly into the path of 2 and x2 "trails" and moves with 2.

x1 should not move position until 1 has stopped their dribble and picked the ball up. If x1 moves to early (when 1 still has a live dribble), 1 could simply turn to dribble to the basket.
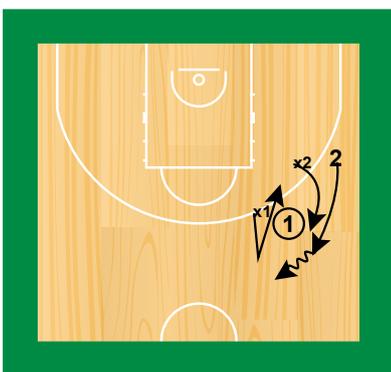
SHOW

Similar to "double", x1 can "show" by getting into the path of 2 and then recovering to defend 1. This will stop 2 from turning the corner and attacking the key and gives 2 time to recover and defend 2.
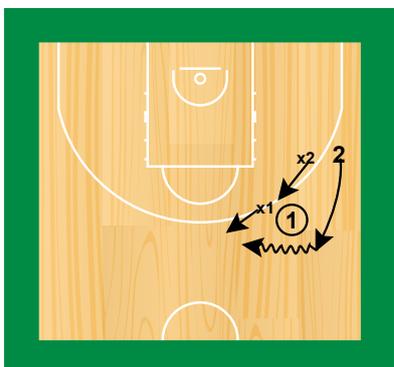
SWITCH

Particularly if the hand off is from one guard to another guard, the defenders may switch, with x1 moving to defend 2 (who now has the ball) and x2 moving to defend 1.

The two defenders should "come together" as they switch, to ensure that there is no gap where the dribbler could penetrate after x2 has stopped defending the ball and before x1 is defending the ball.

Some teams add a screen to the hand-off action, which is designed to stop whichever defender is going to defend the new ball handler from getting in position to do so.
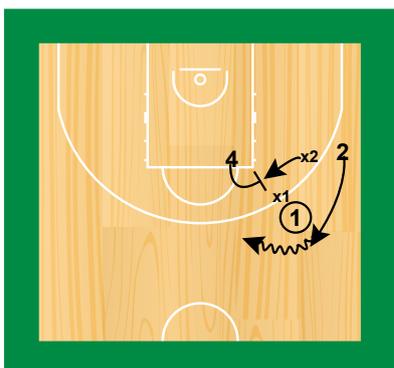
4 steps from the high post into the path of x2 (who is depicted going "under" to defend the hand off).

4 does not set the screen at a "spot" and instead must "read" how x2 is defending the screen and move to a spot that will impede x2 from being able to defend 2.
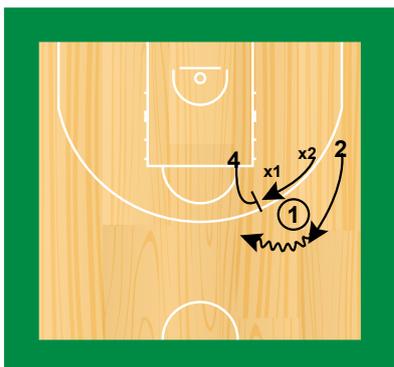
If the defenders switch to defend the hand-off, x4 would then need to establish a position to screen x1.
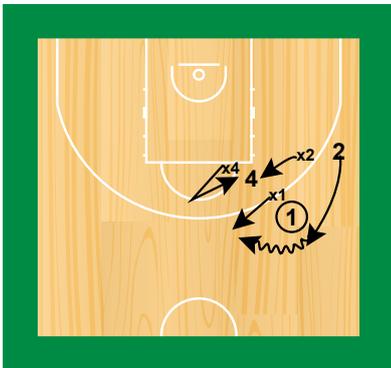
The screener's defender (x4) can also assist to defend the hand-off.

If x2 and x1 are going to hedge, x4 may step out to ensure 2 cannot penetrate to the key ("show"), then x1 defends 2 and x2 rotates to defend 1.
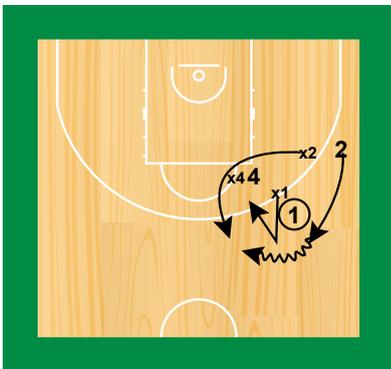
x4 may "jam" into the screen so that x2 can go "under". x1 should "show" and then recover to 1, to ensure that 2 cannot take an easy shot as they come off the hand off.
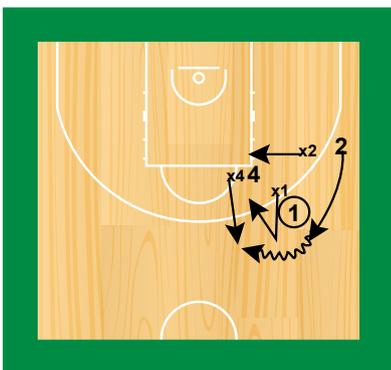
x4 can switch onto 2 and x2 rotates across to defend the screener (4). x1 may "show" and then recover to defend 1.

This tactic may be used if the shot clock is low or if x4 is not particularly mismatched in their defending on the perimeter.

1.4.2 DOUBLE TEAM POST PLAYERS

George Mikan was so hard to defend and to score against, so much so that the NBA had to change its rules of play in order to keep him from completely overwhelming the league.[12]

Basketball is a team sport but there is no doubt that talented individuals can have a significant impact upon the success of a team and it is commonplace for a team to employ specific tactics to reduce the impact of dominant players.

Some coaches will adopt specific tactics to defend a dominant player, whilst others may be prepared to concede that the dominant player will score a certain number of points and to focus on limiting the performance of other players. The "Box and 1" defence discussed above is an example of a tactic that might be used against a dominant player.

With junior teams it is probably more effective to highlight particular aspects of an existing defence rather than devise something new to guard a dominant player. Most importantly though, is that the team has time to prepare and practice whatever the coach wants to do.

DOUBLE TEAM POST PLAYERS

Often where a team has a dominant post player, the defence may attempt to limit how often the player receives the ball. This can be done by "fronting" the post player so that no pass can be made. Alternatively, coaches may prefer their team to attempt to limit the effectiveness of the post player once they receive the ball.
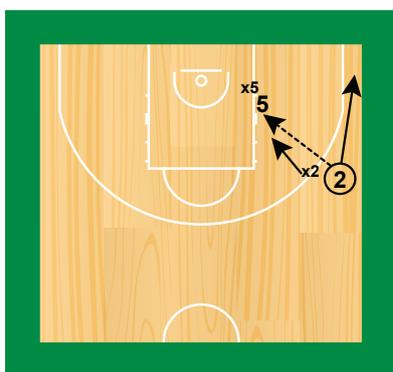
CROWDING THE POST PLAYER

When the ball is passed to a low post player, the wing defender may "hedge" toward the post (one or two steps) to reduce the space the post has to play.

This can be particularly effective against a post player that plays facing the basket.

The wing defender remains responsible for defending the wing player and must keep vision of them.

12 http://www.nba.com/history/players/mikan_bio.html
The NBA changed the shape and size of the keyway in an effort to reduce the dominance of George Mikan.
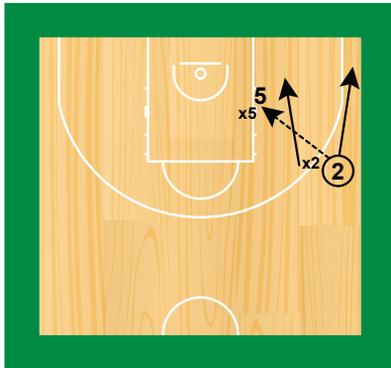
The wing player can go on either side of the post player, and this is influenced by where the post defender is positioned. If the post defender is low, the wing may crowd on the high side (which is the direction the post player may move).

Shown here, the post defender is high, so the wing defender moves low. They should play "butt to the baseline" – with their back facing the baseline to maintain vision of their opponent and the post player.

The option of "crowding" the post player effectively leaves a one on one contest between the post player and their defender. An alternate tactic is to double team the post player once they receive the ball in an effort to force them to pass or take a poor shot option.
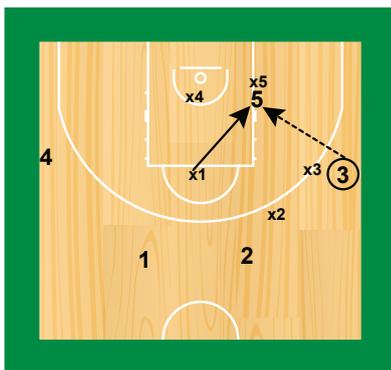
DOUBLE TEAM POST

When double teaming the post, x5 takes a position on one side or another of the post player. This defines where the double comes from.

When x5 is on the baseline side, x1 double teams the post player, moving from the high "split line" position.

In double teaming, x1 should keep their hands high – reaching for the ball will often result in a foul.
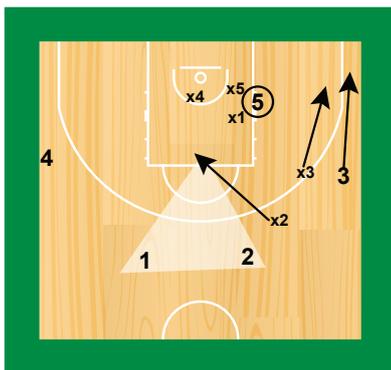
Importantly, x3 denies a pass back to 3 and x2 rotates into a help position at the top of the key.

x2 must be active and adjust their position to potentially intercept any pass that the low post player may make.
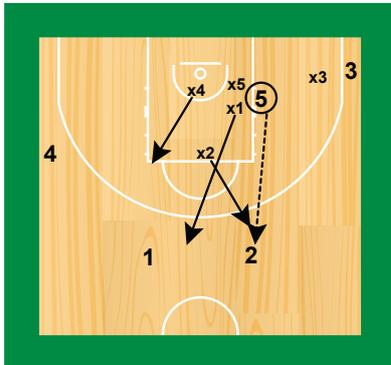
When the post player does pass the ball, the defensive rotation is similar to when there was dribble penetration.

x2 rotates to the first pass and x1 moves to guard the next perimeter player. This means that x4 remains responsible for defending 4 and adjusts their position accordingly.
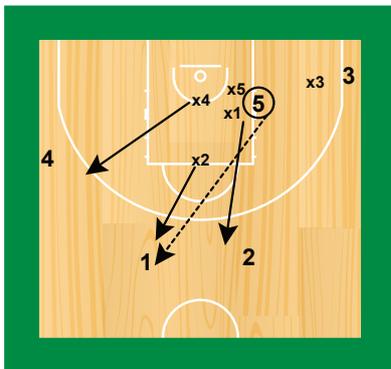
When the ball is passed to 1, x4 adjusts their position to defend 4. If 4 is a "driver" rather than a "shooter", x4 may not move to a denial position, but will remain in a position to defend the penetration.
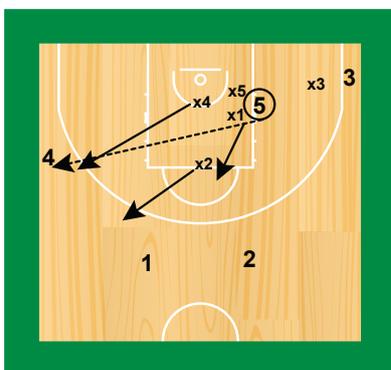
When the ball is passed to the opposite wing, the team could simply have x4 "close-out" and guard their player.
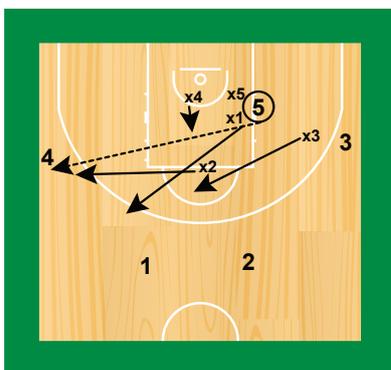
However, having x2 rotate to defend the wing enables more pressure on an outside shot and may be preferred if 4 is a good perimeter shooter.

As x2 rotates to 4, x1 rotates to deny the pass to 1 and x3 rotates into the key to a help position, and is responsible for defending 2. This leaves x4 in the key (and now responsible for defending 3), which can be very effective if 4 is likely to drive, as x4 will be in position to help if necessary.
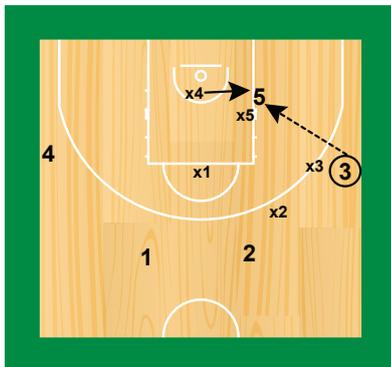
DOUBLE TEAM FROM LOW POSITION

If x5 is defending the low post player on the "high" side, x4 rotates across to double team. The double team needs to arrive as the ball is being caught, ensuring that the post player has no time to make any offensive move to the basket.
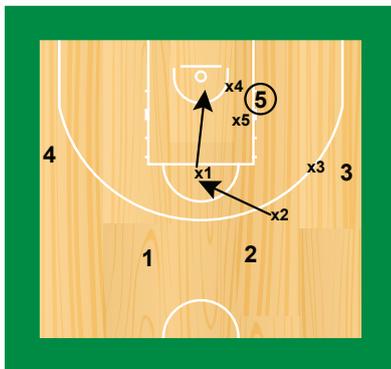
Again, following "help the helper" principles, x1 rotates to the low help position and x2 rotates to the high help position.

x3 continues to deny a pass to the wing, however if 2 was more of an offensive threat, x3 may sag toward the key to deny any pass to 2.
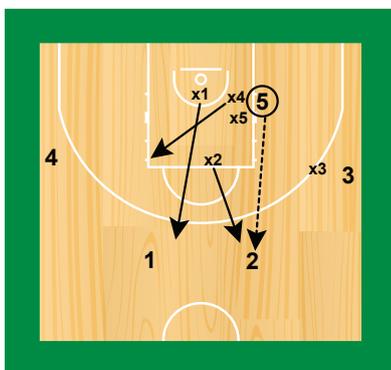
The team can rotate as indicated above, however this would require x5 to move to the perimeter and x1 to remain in the low help.

Alternatively, x1 can rotate to defend the "second pass" (the perimeter player nearest to where the ball was passed) and x4 returns to defend their player.
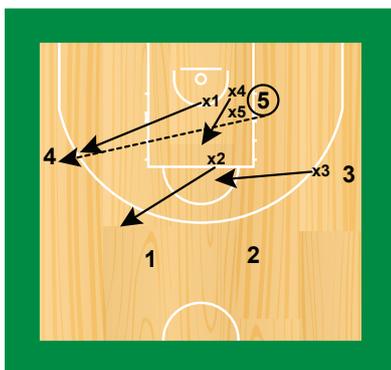
On a pass to the opposite wing (4), x1 could defend 4, x2 rotates to 1 and x3 rotates to the high help position.

If 4 is a known perimeter shooter, x2 may rotate to them. If 4 is a known driver, x1 should rotate, as they then have a better angle to defend any drive.

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With junior teams, it may be preferable to use the same rotation regardless of whether the initial double team came from the high position or the low position.

1.4.3   GETTING THE BALL OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE POINT GUARD

Many teams (at both junior and senior level) have a preferred point guard who has the ball "in their hands" for the majority of the team's offence.

Many times that is also how the team practices, with the preferred player having the ball most of the time.

It can accordingly be a very effective tactic if the defence is able to force a different player to have the ball.
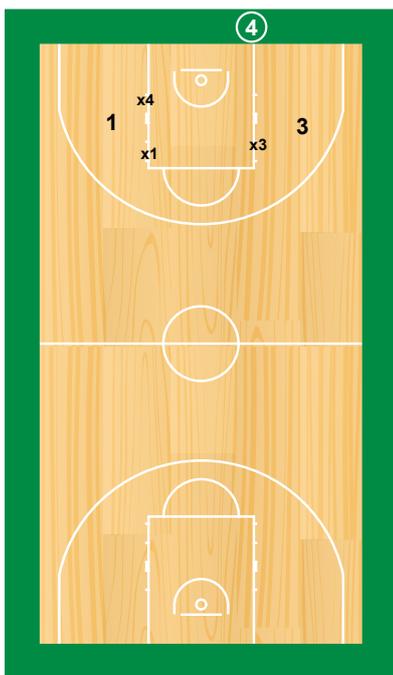
An inbounds pass is the most common opportunity that a defensive team has to force the ball info the hands of someone other than the preferred player.

Instead of guarding the inbound passer, the defender (x4) can aggressively deny a pass to the preferred player (1). This also enables x4 to step away from the baseline to be in a better position to defend them if they do receive the ball.

In this example, x3 is in position to deny a pass to 3 in the middle of the court, but would allow a pass toward the sideline.

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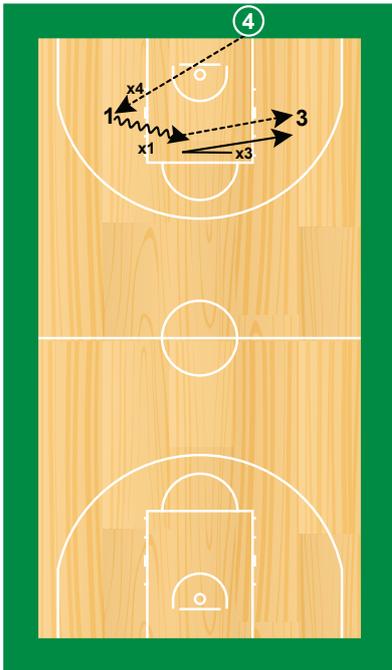
Teams may also have x3 step off , so that x3 is in a position to help defend any dribble if 1 does get the ball. A strong "hedge" may cause 1 to pass the ball, which achieves the defensive objective of having another player with the ball.
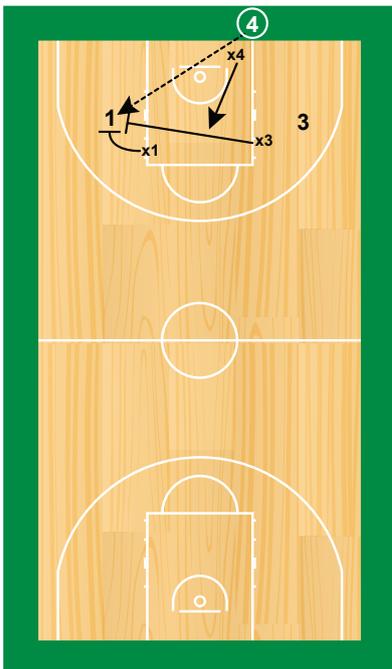
Another tactic is to have x3 double team 1 as soon as they receive the pass. This double team must happen quickly, so that x3 arrives as the pass is caught.

On the pass, x4 can rotate to defend x3, which allows an easy pass for 1 to make, which again achieves the defensive objective.

x3 is used to double team 1, as they come from a position that can stop 1's dribble x4 is not in a position to stop this dribble as they are above the line of the ball.

COACHES MANUAL

These tactics can also be adopted in the half court context, when the team has an inbounds pass. The harder situation is to keep the ball out of the hands of the preferred player in "transition" or open play.

It can be achieved through tactics such as:

- "double teaming" the person that has the ball and then denying the pass back to them;
- playing a "sagging" defence, with help defenders being ready to rotate to stop any dribble penetration;
- have whoever is being defended by the "preferred player" immediately deny them after a shot attempt.

1.4.4   DENYING SPOTS ON THE FLOOR

Just as many teams have a preferred point guard, many teams have a preferred position on the floor from where they initiate offence

Commonly, the wing will be where offence is initiated and it is often on the right hand side of the floor, given most players are right-hand dominant.
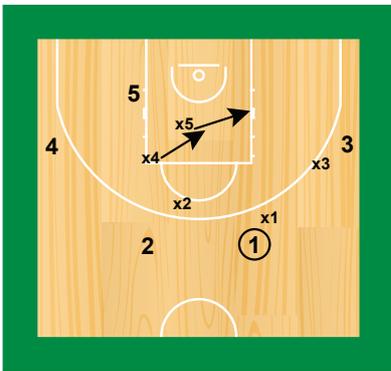
AGGRESSIVELY DENY PASSES

x3 denies the pass to the wing, which may cause 3 to cut back door.
x5 steps toward the wing to help to stop any pass to a "back door" cut.
x4 similarly moves toward the middle of the floor.

If the offensive team looks to initiate from either wing, then x4 may deny a pass to 4, while x2 sags towards the key.
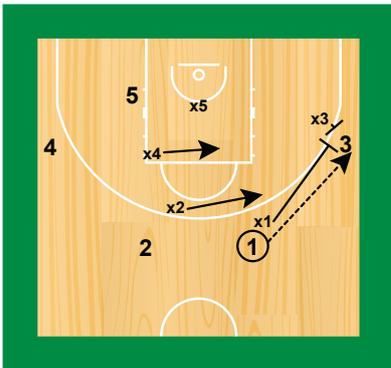
Another tactic is to automatically double team the ball when it is passed to a preferred area of the court.

x1 follows the pass to the wing and x3 adjusts position to force any dribble back toward x1. x2 and x4 both rotate across.
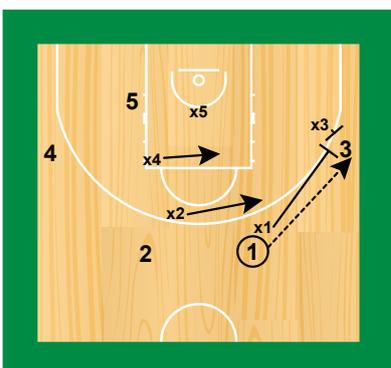
From the double team, the player that has vision of where the pass went, sprints out.

1.4.5   "BOX AND 1" DEFENCE

A "Box and 1" defence is often regarded as a "junk" defence, however particularly if a team employs a 1-1-3 Match Up defence, the "Box and 1" can be incorporated into the defensive scheme to provide an option that most teams have little experience in playing against.

Simply, the "Box and 1" is a combination defence, with one defender denying a particular player the ball at all times. This is done by playing a "tight" man to man style defence, however without any responsibility for "help" or rotation. The defence is mostly used if a team has a particularly dominant perimeter player.

The remaining four defenders play a "zone" defence and the rules of the 1-1-3 Match Up can be used to quickly develop a "Box and 1" defence.
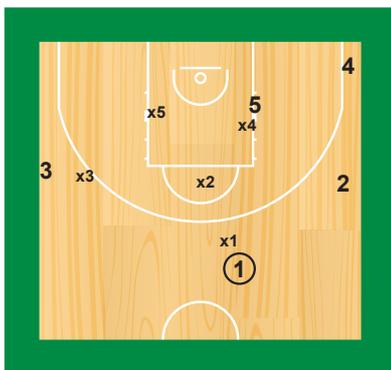
TEACHING THE "BOX AND 1"

To teach the "Box and 1", have 4 defenders and up to 7 offensive players.
The defenders are to use the slides of the 1-1-3, provided that:

a)   1 defender is always on the ball;

b)   3 defenders always have one foot in the key (or are fronting a post player).
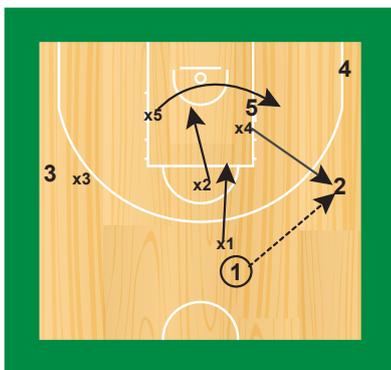
Shown are the 1-1-3 rules being used:

- Frontline defender (x4) takes the wing;

- Frontline defender (x5) fronts the low post;

- Guard (x2) moves to help position behind post
  (e.g. the same position as when trapping in the 1-1-3).

- x3 remains close to 3, denying them the ball

1. Defensive tactics & strategies   1.4 Zone defences   1.4.5 "Box and 1" defence
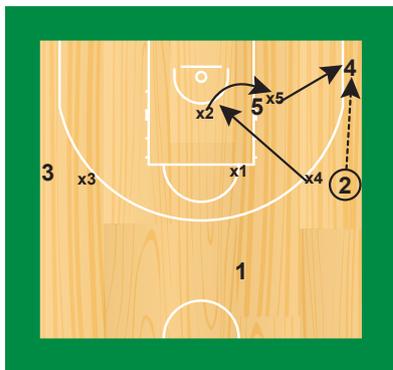
As the ball is thrown to the corner, the frontline defender (x5) moves to there. The help defender (x2) moves to front the post and the defender that was on the wing makes the "long slide" to the help position.
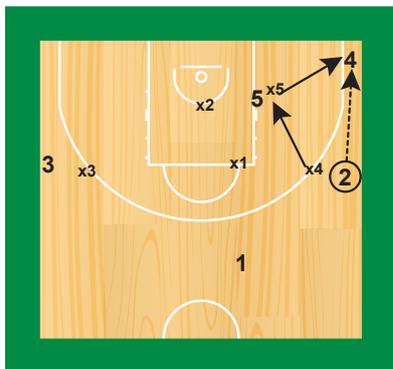
Alternatively, x4 could have made a "short slide" into fronting the low post, leaving x2 in the help position. The difficulty with this, is that the low post player may "seal" x4 as they rotate.
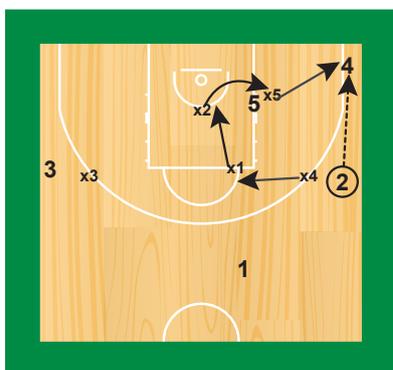
Another alternative rotation is for x4 to rotate to the high post (and denying any high post players) and x1 rotating down to the help position.
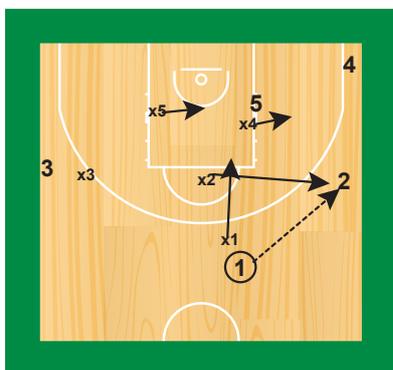
The defenders may also apply the principle of "whoever can get to the ball quickest moves". Here x2 rotates to defend 2 at the wing position and x1 drops to deny the high post.

This leaves the two front line players (x3 and x4) defending the low post player.
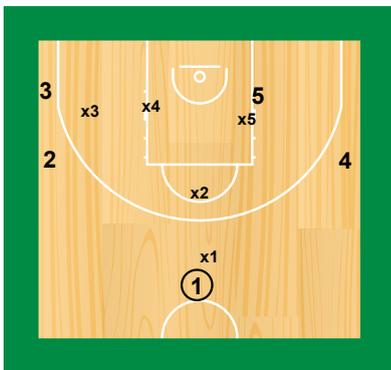
PLAYING THE "BOX AND 1"

As shown, initial alignment is very similar to the 1-1-3, with the exception that x3 is guarding only 3. x3 stays close to the offensive player, not needing to move into "Help" positions.
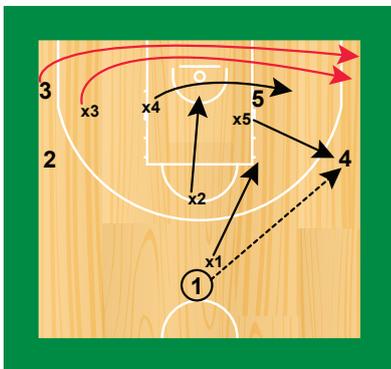
x3 defends 3 wherever they go on the court – denying any pass to x3.
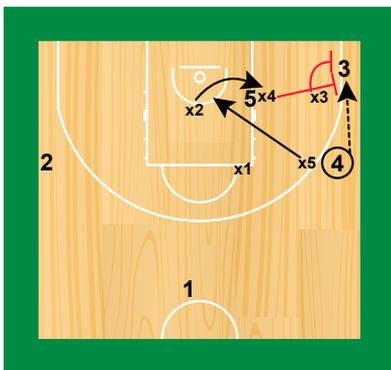
When the ball is passed to the player that is under pressure (3), the zone defender that would have normally rotated to defend a person in that area, can now make the same rotation and trap or "double team" the offensive player.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Discuss with a coaching colleague the pros and cons of using a "box and 1" defence with an U18 team? If a team used that defence against your team, what would you tell your offensive player that was defended by the "man to man" defender.

2. How would you defend a dominant post player? If you were coaching that post player, what would you instruct them to do in response to this defence?

3. Some coaches do not put in place a particular defensive scheme to stop the dominant player and instead focus on limiting the scoring of the rest of the team. Do you agree with this approach? Discuss your views with a coaching colleague.

4. Who are the dominant players that your team plays against? How have you defended those players in the past? What change could you make?

1.5 DEFENSIVE STRUCTURES FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

1.5.1 BASELINE OUT OF BOUNDS & SIDELINE

Some common options taken by defensive teams are:

- Switching every screen;

- Playing zone defence (essentially another form of switching on screens);

- Having a tall player defend the passer, regardless of whether the passer is a guard, forward or centre. The defender will often angle their body to "allow" a pass to the perimeter, but to block any pass toward the basket;

- Having defenders sag in towards the key, but to allow passes to the perimeter;

- "Sagging" into the key, essentially allowing a pass to the perimeter but denying any pass into the key;

- Strongly denying the "safety" pass. This can be particularly effective, as the presence of the backboard limits the areas of the court where this pass can be made.

There is no necessarily preferred method for defending a baseline inbounds pass but what is important is that the team is organized and all players understand (and implement) whatever method is employed.

DEFEND SIDELINE OUT OF BOUNDS

As with defending Baseline Out of Bounds, there is no particularly preferred way to defend a sideline out of bounds situation although each coach may have their own preference.

A coach may also opt to have more than one way to defend, and then choose a particular tactic depending upon:

- Time left on the game clock or shot clock;

- Margin between the teams (i.e. does the opponent have to shoot a 3 point shot?);

- Position on the sideline where the ball is to be inbounded.

Some common options that are used in defending sideline out of bounds are:

- Switching screens;

- Having a tall player defend the inbounds pass – the inbounder may also stand at an angle to influence the area on the court where the ball is passed;

- Having a player "sag" into the key way to stop any lob pass to a player cutting to the basket (which is often done off a back screen and it is often the defender of the screener that will sag);

- Allowing the inbounds pass, but double teaming a particular receiver;

- Completely deny passes to a player outside the 3 point line, forcing players to cut inside the 3 point line (this may be done if the offence was ahead by 3 points);

- Defending the inbound passer and then strongly denying to them receive a pass as they step into court;

- Denying passes to particular spots on the floor (e.g. based upon where particular players prefer to shoot or to stop particular shots).

1.5.2   LATE SHOT CLOCK

Teams do not necessarily need to have complicated or intricate "plays" but it is vitally important that all players know the team rules that apply in a "late clock" situation.

Some tactics that are commonly employed are:

• Double-teaming any on-ball screen;

• Switching off all ball screens;

• Denying a particular player getting the ball (e.g. point guard);

• Denying the ball being passed to a particular area of the court (e.g. wing, if the opponent often uses an on-ball screen from the wing);

• Double-teaming the low post.

A common frustration for coaches is where a defender fouls as the shot clock is about to expire and this is particularly frustrating if they foul while trying to steal the ball. Simply instructing players "don't foul" is unlikely to be effective. Instead, coaches should help players to develop the mindset that:

• The "shot clock" is like a defender and will "steal" the ball;

• The role of other defenders is to prevent the opponent from shooting.

This mindset can be reinforced at practice by using a "no grab" rule in practice, which simply means that a defender cannot take the ball out of the hands of an offensive player. Passes can be intercepted, but the emphasis is on playing aggressive defence, without "reaching" for the ball.

1.5.3   LAST POSSESSION PLAYS

LAST POSSESSION PLAYS

There are a number of considerations that the defensive team need to consider in a "last play" situation, such as:

• How to defend back cuts;

• Whether to play "help" defence or defend the 3 point shot;

• Whether to guard the passer or deny receivers.

Often in a "last shot" situation, the defence will deny a pass, particularly when in an inbound situation and the offensive team has only 5 seconds to make the pass. However, to counter that, teams may look to make back door cuts.
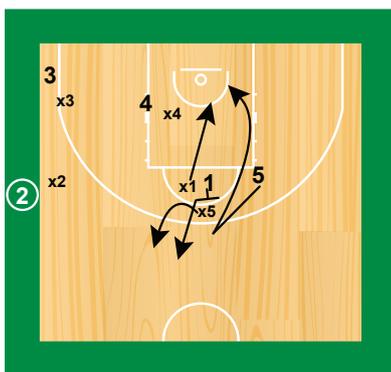
Here the defensive team is denying all passes.

5 moves to the perimeter and then cuts off a back-screen from 1 to the basket, which is designed to allow a lob pass to 5. Even if x1 and x5 switch, 5 may have a height advantage and people able to catch the pass.
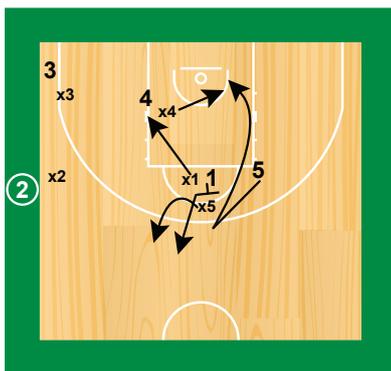
To combat this disadvantage, x4 can rotate across to intercept the lob pass, and x1 rotates onto 4.
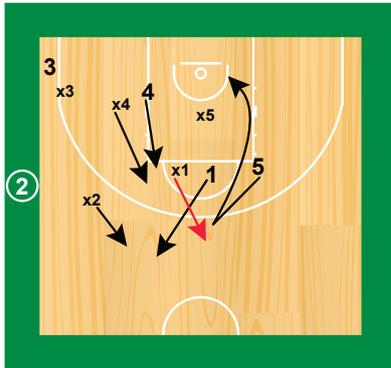
Another option to defend this situation is for:

- x2 not to guard the passer but instead, face in court and deny cutters.
- x5 sags into the key to defend any lob pass
- x1 guards the initial cut by 5, with x2 denying any pass to 1
- with x5 in the key to defend a lob pass, x4 can move to a denial position on 4.

Another consideration for the defensive team is whether or not to have a player defend the passer. Above is an example, where a team may not defend the passer, which can be effective to either deny a particular player the ball (as above) to enable a defender to remain in the safety position.

However, there are two particularly memorable examples where teams opted not to defend the passer from the baseline and the offensive team were able to make a full court pass, which was caught and the subsequent shot was made.

In the gold medal game of the 1972 Olympics and in the Eastern Regional Final in the 1992 NCAA Championship, the offensive team (Russia and Duke University respectively) had the ball on the baseline, with barely seconds left in the game and were 1 point behind.
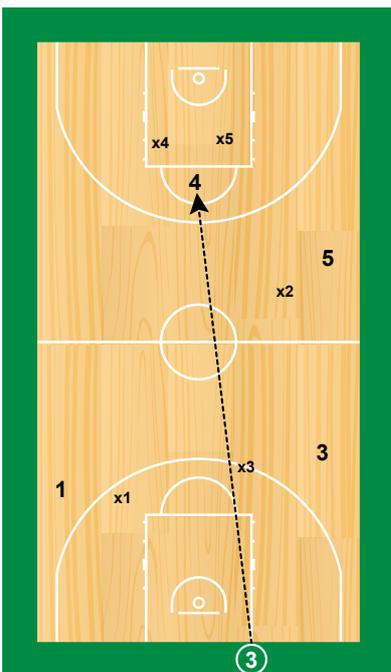
On both occasions the defensive team (USA[1] and University of Kentucky) did not defend the passer, but instead had two players back guarding the basket.

The offensive team made a full court pass, which was caught (by Sergei Belov for Russia and Christian Laettner for Duke), who then made a shot to win the game!

Whilst it is a matter for speculation only, it is perhaps unlikely that the passes could have been thrown as accurately as they were if the defender (particularly a tall defender) was standing in front of the passer.

1 The last play in the Olympic final was replayed a number of times
 - on the last occasion the inbounds pass was not defended.

Most teams in playing "man to man" defence, have defenders move to a position on the court, where they can help to defend against dribble penetration. However, a last shot situation may require a change to that tactic.
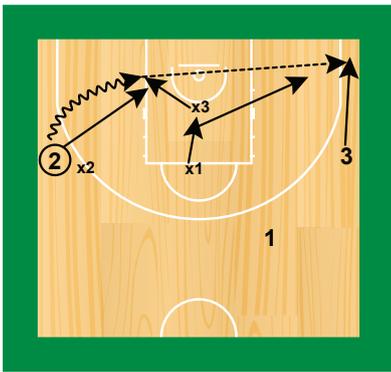
In this situation x1 and x3 are on the "split line" and are able to assist to defend if 2 beats x2. In that situation, x3 will rotate across to stop the dribbler and x1 will rotate down. If the ball is passed to 3, x1 will move to defend.

However, assume that the offensive team is 3 points down with seconds left. By having x1 and x3 in a position where they can help against penetration, it is likely that 3 would shoot a 3 point shot.
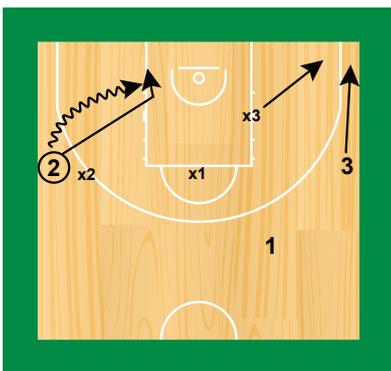
Instead, if x3 did not move to the "split line" but instead stayed on the perimeter to defend 3. It is unlikely that 3 will get an open 3 point shot.
2 may beat x2 on the dribble, however, a successful lay-up would only be worth 2 points, resulting in a 1 point loss if this was the last possession.

Obviously, x2 would defend and attempt to contain any dribble penetration (and stop 2 from shooting), however varying from the normal rule may be required in response to the game situation.

1.5.4   CATCHING UP - STRATEGIC USE OF FOULS

When an opponent has a lead a team can only catch up if they are able to out score the opponent.

This often means that the team will change defensive tactics (e.g. trapping players, changing from zone to man to man). Hopefully, the team is able to get consecutive "stops" and score themselves.

The shot clock was introduced to stop an opponent that has a lead from simply passing the ball without attempting to score. However, when trying to catch up, a team needs to be conscious of how much time remains in the game and they may need to quicken the tempo of the game to increase the number of possessions that they have.

Once a team has 4 team fouls in a quarter, any additional foul (that is not an offensive foul) results in the opponent having two free throws whether or not they were in the "act of shooting" when fouled. The team may strategically foul the opponent to:

- Reduce the time taken by the opponent's offence (it can be 1 or 2 seconds rather than 24);
- Have opponents that are poor free throw shooters take shots, rather than the higher percentage shooters.

In adopting this strategy, teams must:

- Avoid either an unsportsmanlike or technical foul, as either will result in the opponent having free throws and then getting another possession. Some examples of an automatic unsportsmanlike foul are:
  - fouling a player before an inbound pass is made (e.g. holding onto a player and not allowing them to cut);
  - fouling a player on a "fast break" when they are the last defender and do not attempt to defend the ball.

- Foul quickly as there is little point in defending for 20 seconds and then attempting to foul (at this stage the team should continue to force a bad shot). Often teams will initially attempt to intercept a pass and if unsuccessful then foul;
- Be aware of who is a good free throw shooter and try to deny them the ball and then foul players that are not as good. The offence will usually attempt to have the ball in the hands of their best free throw shooters and the defence may need to foul a good shooter to stop too much time being taken;
- Consider which of their players will foul. It is better for a player that is not one of the team's scorers to foul. Some coaches will substitute their scorers out of the game to avoid playing defence, and then substitute them back into the game to play offence;
- Execute their own offence efficiently and as quickly as possible. They must still score to catch up.

A team may also use the strategy when they are ahead. For example, if a team is 3 points up on the last possession they may prefer to foul (giving the opponent 2 free throws) rather than allow them to take a 3 point shot to win the game.

This tactic can also be used prior to the last possession and will often result in both teams taking a succession of free throws with only a few seconds coming off the clock each time. If the team that is ahead is able to make their free throws they will obviously win, however any missed shots provide an opportunity for the opponent to catch up.

13 An offensive foul is when the team has possession of the ball. For example, once a shot is taken, neither team has possession of the ball and any foul in the rebound contest is not an offensive foul.

14 The penalty for a foul against a player that is in the act of shooting remains the same (i.e. 2 or 3 free throws if the shot was missed and 1 free throw if the shot

FOLLOW-UP

1. How many times during a game do you think your opponents have a baseline inbounds situation at their offensive end? Have someone count the number of times in your next game – are you surprised by the result?

2. How much time do you practice defending baseline inbounds plays? Do you think this is warranted with regard to how many times they happen in a game? Discuss this with a coaching colleague.

3. Do you have a particular structure for your teams to defend when it is a late shot clock?

4. What is your preferred way to defend baseline inbounds situations?
   Does it depend upon your opponent?

5. At what point in a game would you instruct your team to foul the opposition so that they were given free throws?

7. Assume you were 20 points down during a game and you made some substitutions. Your substitutes got the margin back to two points, with three minutes to play. Do you keep them in or return to your starting players? Discuss your view with a coaching colleague. What other factors might influence your decision?

TEAM

OFFENSIVE TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

CHAPTER 2

OFFENSIVE TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

2.1 COMMON OFFENSIVE SETS

2.1.1 READ AND REACT OFFENCE

"Read and React" Offence is not a set or structured offence. Instead it is a framework that relies upon "reads and reactions" in a 2 player context, which are combined into a seamless framework for 5 players.

Teaching the offence requires "drilling" the "reads and reactions" into the 2 player context so that they become habits. The offence is differentiated from a "motion" offence because it does stipulate specific actions that a player is to take and in the "read and react" offence the key is what the person with the ball does. Players without the ball act based upon the action of the ball handler.

In contrast, a "motion offence" teaches players to react both to their defender and also to the movement and position of their team mates.

The offence has many "layers", which add complexity to what the team will do. The layers are taught in sequence, however a particular team may not work through all layers, depending upon their skills and experience.

The offence is most effective the better the skills of individual players, so coaches must teach and practice fundamental skills, not just work on team movements.

For simplicity, the offence is often initially taught in a 5 Out alignment, which emphasizes that all players must be able to play on the perimeter. Below is an overview of the foundations of the read and react offence. There are DVDs and other materials available for coaches wanting further information about the offence.

LAYER 1 – DRIBBLE PENETRATION AND CIRCLE MOVEMENT

On any dribble penetration, the dribbler looks to penetrate "to the rim" (i.e. get the lay-up), however they will also have the following passing options:

- Pass to a perimeter player that is opposite
- Pass back to a person behind them
- Pass to a baseline cutter
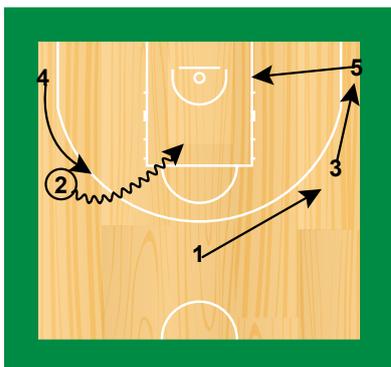
Whichever direction the dribbler moves, the other players also move in that direction, creating a circular movement.

Here, 5 is the baseline cutter, 1 and 3 are opposite and 4 lifts behind the dribbler.

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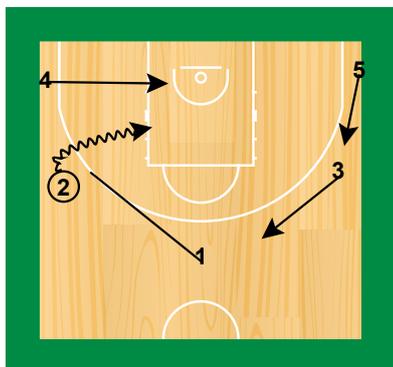
Similarly, where 2 dribbles to the left, the circular movement is to the left.
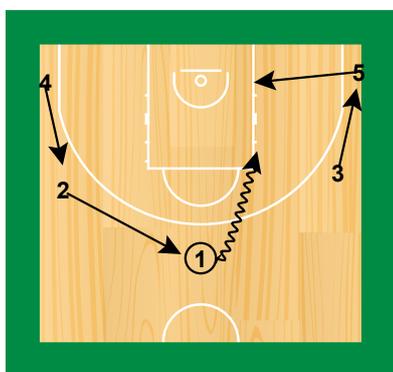
The rule applies regardless of where the dribbler is.
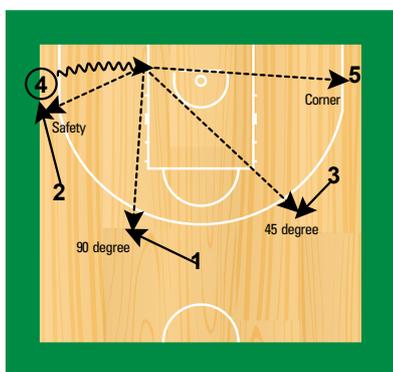
LAYER 2 – BASELINE PENETRATION

On baseline penetration, the player in the opposite corner stays as this is a good passing angle.

The other players continue circular movement, although it may be smaller movement. On baseline penetration, the dribbler must have 4 passing options:

- Opposite corner
- Opposite side – 45 degree
- Same side – 90 degree
- Same side – behind (safety)
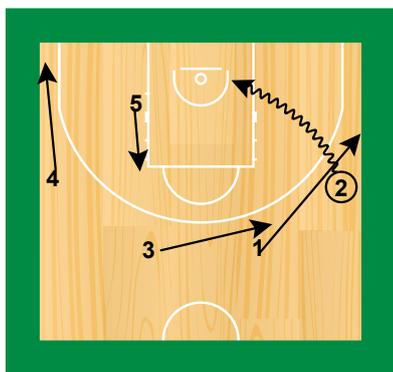
The baseline penetration rule may mean that a player rotates in the opposite direction to the "circle". For example, in a "4 Out, 1 In" alignment, the movement is:

- 4 drops to the opposite corner (even though this is not in the direction of circle movement)
- 5 lifts to 45 degree position, but at the post not on the perimeter
- 3 moves to the 90 degree position
- 1 moves to the safety (behind) position

LAYER 3 – BACK CUTS AND PASS & CUT

The next layer introduces the "pass and cut", which is one of the simplest yet effective moves in any "invasion" sport, whether that is basketball, football, hockey etc.
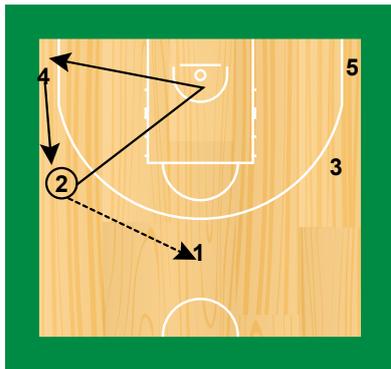
When a pass is made to a team mate that is "one pass away" (also known as a "single gap"), the passer must cut to the basket.

Other players rotate in a circular movement in the direction of the pass. Here, 2 cuts to the basket, 4 lifts and 2 moves out to the corner.
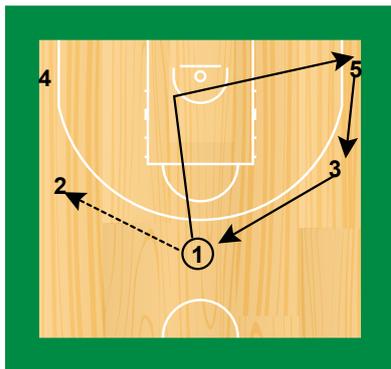
The rule applies regardless of where the pass was made from. Here, the pass is made from the point to the wing, and players from the opposite side of the floor lift and rotate, with 1 moving out to the corner (which is the vacant spot).
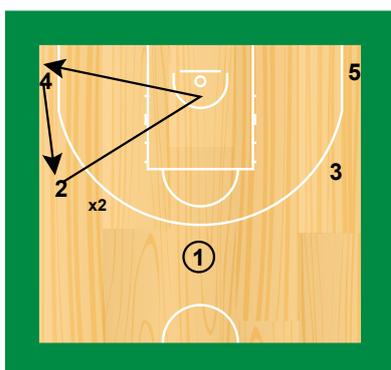
Anytime a defender that is "one pass away" (or single gap) is outside the 3 point line, the offensive player cuts to the basket (a "back cut") and players rotate to fill positions from the baseline.

Here, 2 cuts to the basket and 4 lifts from the corner.
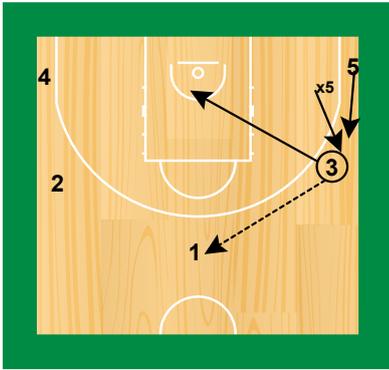
The rule equally applies to an offensive player moving following a pass and cut.

3 passes to the wing and cuts to the basket. 5 lifts, however x5 moves to deny a pass and is outside the 3 point line.
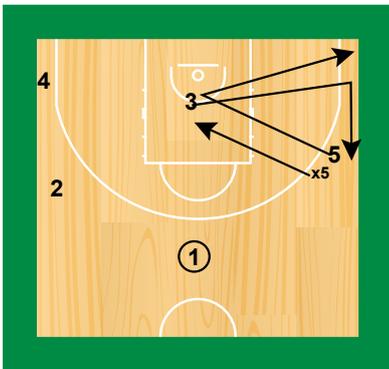
Accordingly, 5 then cuts to the basket and 3 will lift having moved to the corner. 5 then moves out to the vacant corner.

LAYER 4 – POST MOVEMENT ON DRIBBLE PENETRATION

When a dribbler penetrates the key, any post player moves according to the following rules:

- If the penetration into the key comes from below the post player or along the baseline, the post moves up to the elbow
- If the penetration into the key comes from above the post player, the post steps to the short corner which (if their defender steps out) creates more room for the dribbler or (if the defender stays in the key) creates a passing lane.
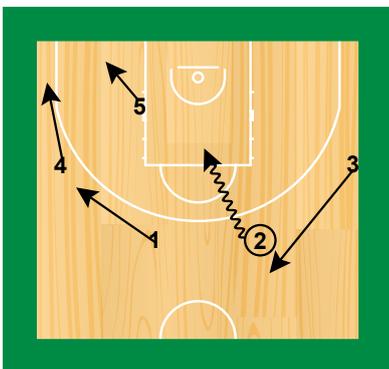
2 penetrates into the top of the key, so 5 steps to the short corner.

The other perimeter players move in a circular movement, to the left which was the direction of the penetration.
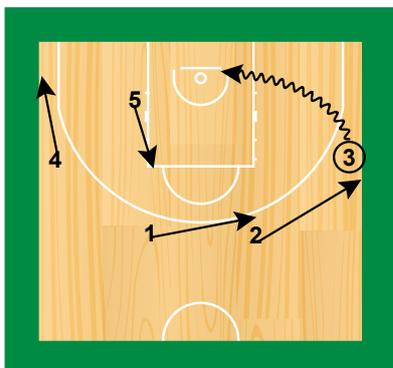
3 penetrates along the baseline, so 5 lifts to the corner.

1 and 2 rotate to the right (the direction of the dribble) and 4 drops to the opposite corner because the penetration was baseline.
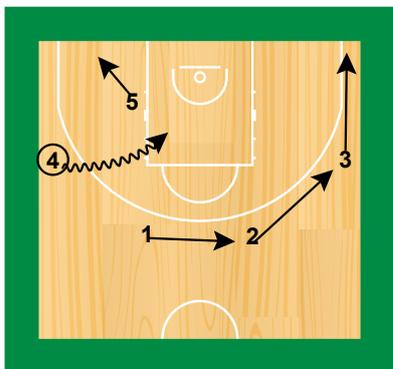
The rules equally apply when the penetration is from the same side as the post player. As 4 penetrates the top of the key, 5 moves to the short corner.

The perimeter players move to the right, the direction of the dribble.
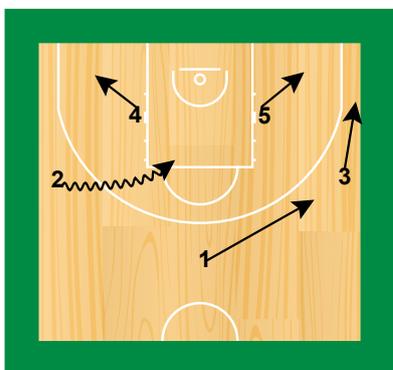
The rules also apply when there are two post players, with 4 and 5 both stepping to the short corner on 2's penetration to the top of the key. 4 in effect becomes the "safety" pass and would move higher (on the perimeter) if necessary.
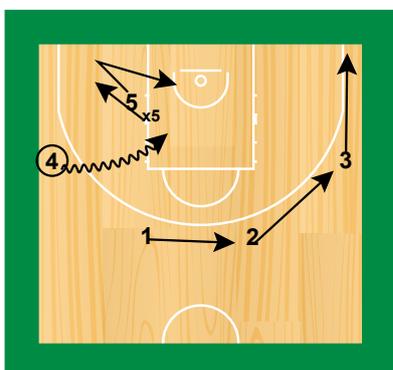
If the post defender steps out to the short corner, the post player may be able to back door cut.
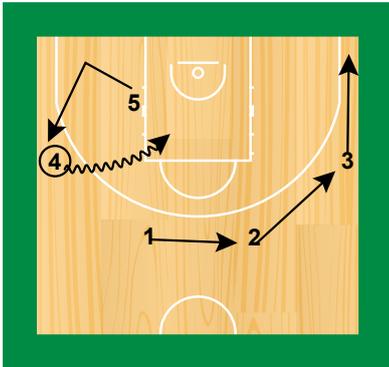
The post player can also move from the short corner to the "safety" position behind the dribbler. This can be very effective if the post player is a good perimeter shooter.

LAYER 5 – SPEED DRIBBLE

The "speed dribble" is a non-penetrating dribble (i.e. it moves from perimeter position to another perimeter position) and forces a backdoor cut which then triggers other perimeter movement.
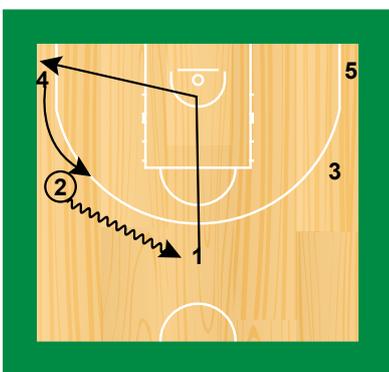
If the dribbler does not penetrate into the key, but dribbles toward a team mate, that team mate cuts back door to the basket.

Other perimeter players adjust position from the baseline up.

The dribbler uses a "speed dribble", facing the direction that they are moving in.

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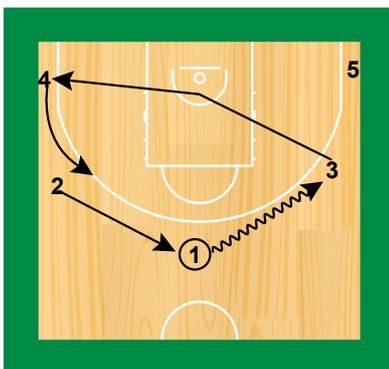
LAYER 6 – POWER DRIBBLE (DRIBBLE HAND-OFF)

A power dribble is used to initiate a dribble hand off. It may be used as a pressure release or to get the ball into the hands of a better ball handler. It can be signalled either by using a sideways "step-slide" dribble or other visual signal (e.g. tapping the chest).
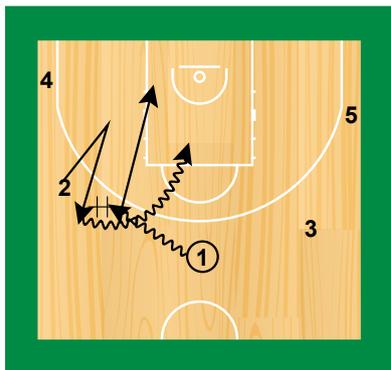
1 dribbles toward 2 and comes to a jump stop. They hold the ball with one hand, one top and one hand below.

2 "v-cuts" (and could cut to the basket if their defender does not react) and then takes the ball from 1, attempting to penetrate into the key.

1 can roll to the basket.
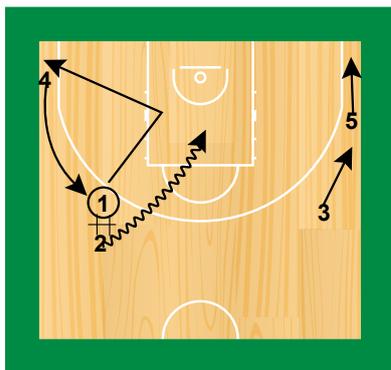
If 1 does not receive the pass, they move to the perimeter. 4 lifts to be a safety pass behind 2.

3 and 5 drop on the perimeter.
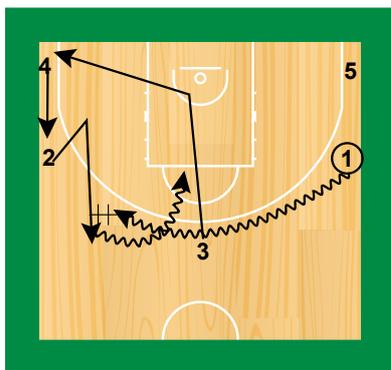
Sometimes the player dribbled at may cut to the basket, in which case the dribbler can continue to the next player for a hand off.
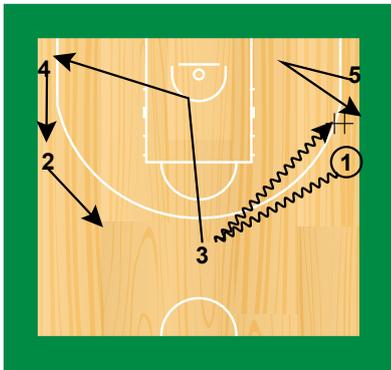
Alternatively, 1 could reverse direction and hand off with 5.
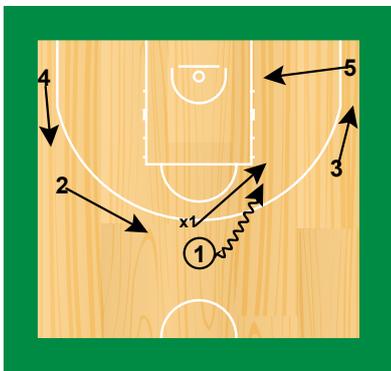
LAYER 7 – CIRCLE REVERSE

If the defence are able to stop dribble penetration, the perimeter players change direction and "circle" in the opposite direction.
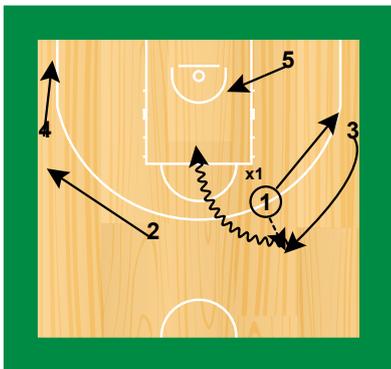
The pass to 3 could be a hand off or a short pass.
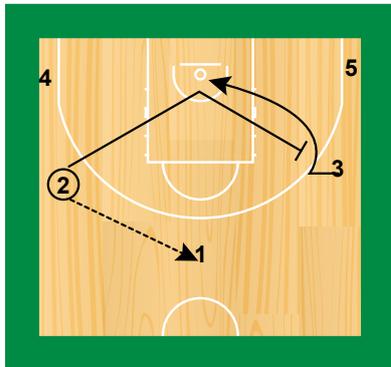
LAYER 8 – BACK SCREENS

After any back cut, the player can back screen for a team mate, rather than moving to a gap on the perimeter. As with any screen, it is important that the cutter does not move until the screener has "set" – listening for the screener's feet landing on the floor.
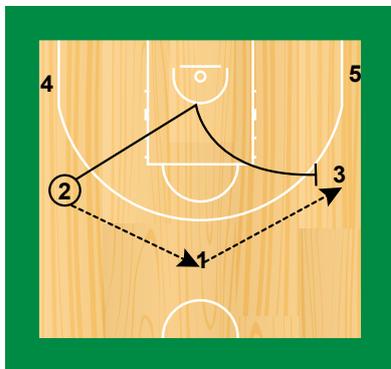
The player can also set a ball screen, if the player they were setting a screen for receives a pass.
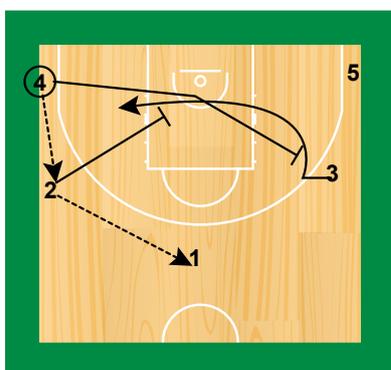
LAYER 9 – STAGGERED SCREENS

There are also opportunities for staggered screens when multiple players cut after passing the ball.
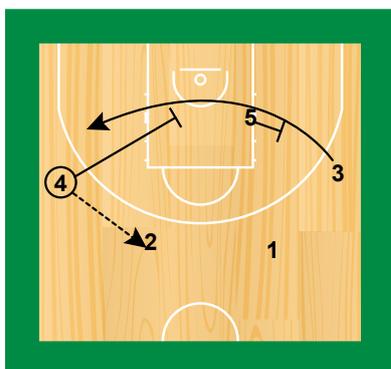
Staggered screens can also be used where there is a post player.

2.1.2   "FLEX"

The next section provides a short summary of some common offensive sets, the names of which are a part of the basketball lexicon. There are many videos and books that provide detail about each of these patterns and how to teach them.

This summary is provided so that coaches may have some familiarity with each of them. However, any coach interested in introducing some of these concepts should seek out further information.

Coaches of young players must be particularly careful to ensure that players do not become so fixated on running the particular "movement" that they do not learn to correctly identify opportunities to "beat" their defenders and score.

An example of this, is where a play requires the ball to be passed to a particular player. Young players may concentrate on that option to the extent that they do not see other passing opportunities and will "force" this pass instead.

To avoid this, in practice coaches should allow players to make "reads" and where a player makes a pass that is different to what the play required, the coach should ask the player what they saw and why they attempted that particular pass, where were defenders positioned, where their team mates were etc. It may be that in this context, the coach will agree that what the player did was appropriate.

If the coach simply insists that players must follow the play, they will not learn to read the defenders. And whilst they may initially have success with the play, other teams will soon learn what they are doing and will defend it.

Set offensive plays should be used as a framework, which is designed to create offensive opportunities but most of all, players must be taught to react to whatever the defence does.

"FLEX"

"The Flex" is a patterned offence that is a "continuity" offence because a team can play it on one side of the floor and then the other in a continuous fashion. The offence is most effective against "man to man" defences and it will often create size "mismatches" through its screening action.

The basic motion of "The Flex" includes a baseline cut off a back screen and then "screen the screener" action.
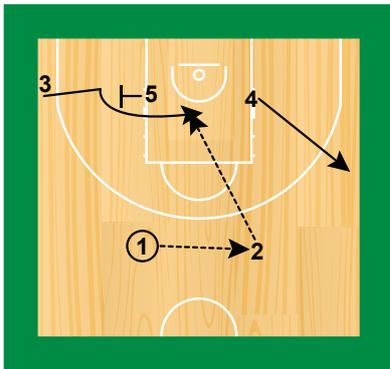
3 cuts off a back screen from 5, as 1 "reverses" the ball
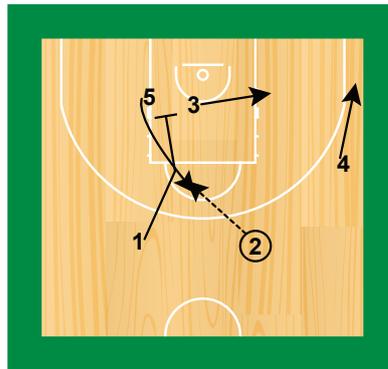
1 then sets a screen for 5 who cuts to the free throw line
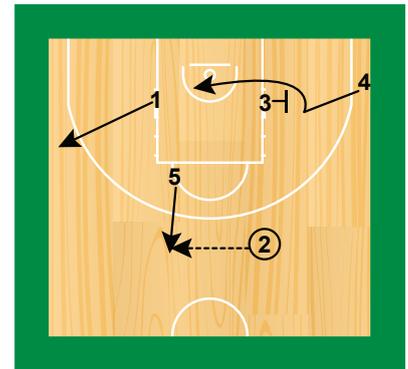
2 can reverse the ball to 5 and 3 sets a back screen for 4. This is the start of the "continuous" nature of "Flex"

2.1.3   "THE SHUFFLE"

"The Shuffle" was first named in the 1950s when coach Bruce Drake at Oklahoma University used its basic cutting action as part of the team's offence.

Many teams have used aspects of the "The Shuffle" or have added options to the initial movement. It can be used against either "man to man" or zone defence.
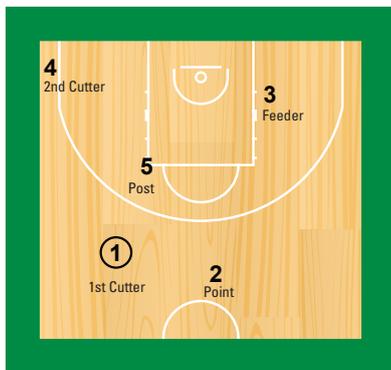
If the offence is used with junior players, they should be given the chance to play each role
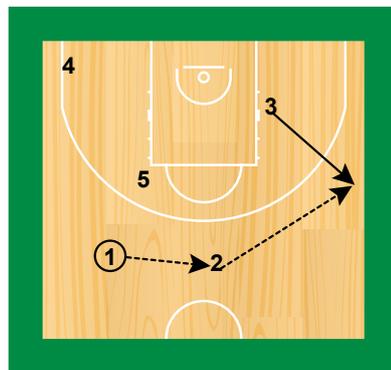
"Reversing" the ball starts the movement of the basic "Shuffle Cut"
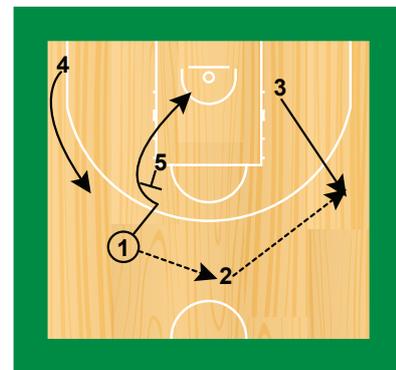
1 cutting off the high post screen is the "Shuffle Cut"
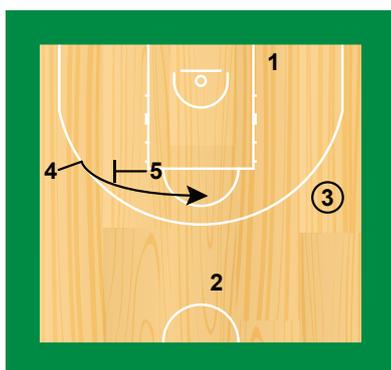
The "second cutter" also cuts off a screen from the high post player.

There are many other options that can be incorporated into "The Shuffle" and the "Shuffle Cut" is often used in other offensive patterns.

2.1.4   "TRIANGLE"

"The Triangle" half-court offence, originated with coach Sam Barry at the University of Southern California and has come to prominence more recently being used at both the Chicago Bulls and Los Angeles Lakers by Head coach Phil Jackson and assistant coach Tex Winter.

The key to the offence is its spacing, with players about 15-18 feet apart.

The basic structure of the offence is a "triangle" (formed between a post player, wing and guard on the strong side of the court) and a "two-man" game on the weakside of the court.

Below are some options involving cutting off the low post:
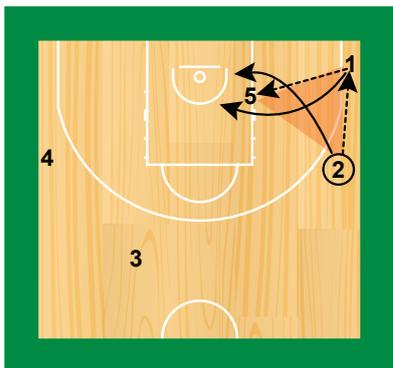
When the ball is passed to the low post player, the wing or corner can cut off the post player.
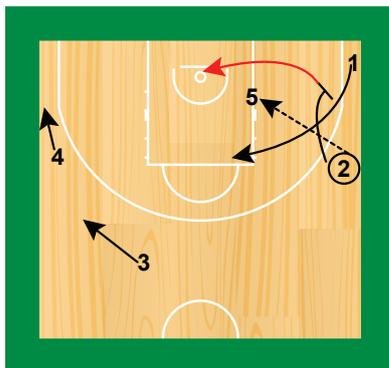
The wing player can also screen for the corner player and then cut to the basket.
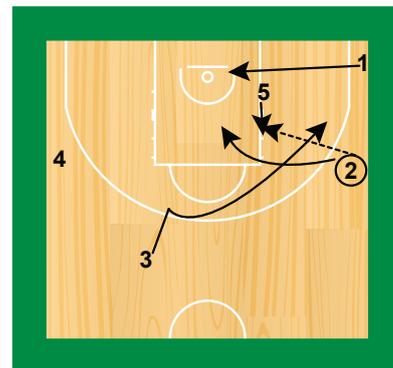
The low post player steps toward the high post to receive a pass. The corner player cuts to the basket and the wing cuts off the post.

3 moves to the perimeter to receive a pass from the post player.

2.1.5   "HORNS"

The "Horns" offence (sometimes called "A-Set") has been used at both US College, NBA and Euro League levels by a number of teams. It is a relatively simple basic alignment, with two screens being set for the ball handler.
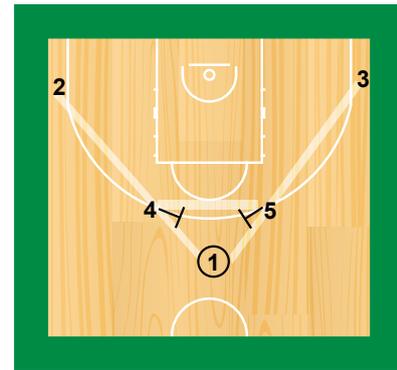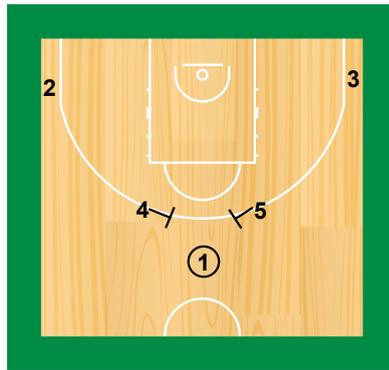
The offence is sometimes known as "A-Set"

"Horns" starts with basic high pick and roll action. It can include various options for movement by both the screeners and perimeter shooters.
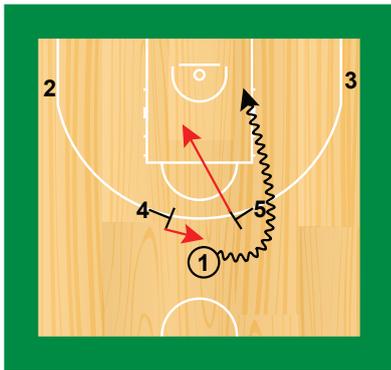
Basic Screen and Roll
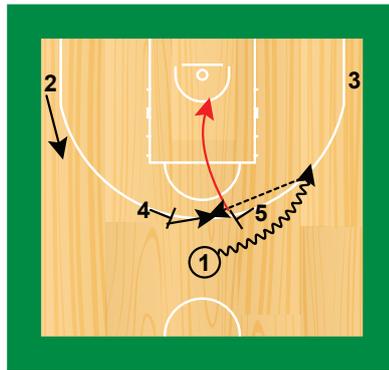
The screener rolls to the basket and the ball is reversed back to the top
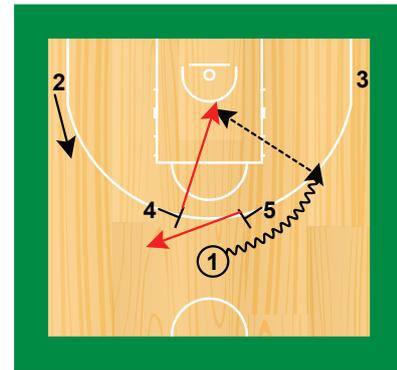
The unused screen cuts to the basket
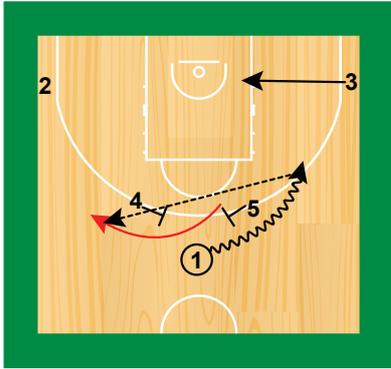
This is a basic "screen the screener" action.
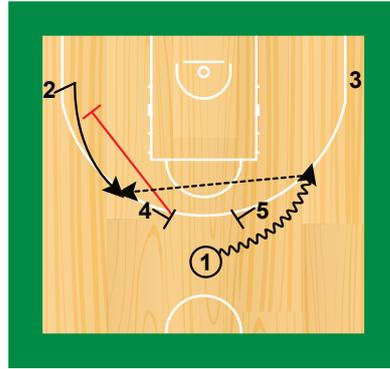
"Pick and Roll" on the strongside and downscreen on the weakside.
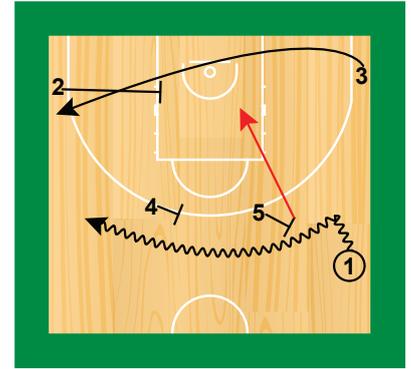
The offence can also be run with a "sideline entry".

2.1.6   "PRINCETON"

The "Princeton Offence" is named after Princeton University, where coach Pete Carrill first developed this team offence.

The "Princeton Offence" is not a set pattern but instead is a structure of play that breaks down into a series of "3 man game" opportunities. The "back door" cut is often regarded as the hallmark of the offence, however it is much more than that.

For a team to effectively use the Princeton Offence all players must have good offensive fundamentals – understanding "spacing" and passing and having the ability to pass, shoot and dribble from the perimeter. Two basic principles underpin the offence:

1. The player in front of you (i.e. your defender) tells you where to go;

2. If a defender overplays you (denies the ball), cut back door.

There are low-post and high-post opportunities within the Princeton Offence. The high post offence has the following advantages:

- Using the high post spreads the floor more and leaves the area below the free throw line open for cutting (particularly back door cuts) and dribble penetration;

- Opponents "big" defenders may not be as comfortable defending in the high post (this again emphasizes the need with junior players to teach all players both post and perimeter skills);

- It is relatively easier to reverse the ball when there is a high post player, as the high post can relieve defensive pressure on perimeter players.

Some elements of the high post offence are set out below. These particularly utilize "turn out" cuts.
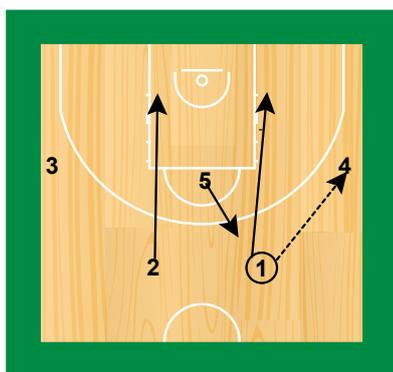
The Princeton Offence starts with a "2 guard front" and two wing players at the free throw line.

The post player (5) can play either low or high.

The ball is passed to the wing, and both guards cut low toward the basket, stopping below the "block". The high post player steps to the perimeter.
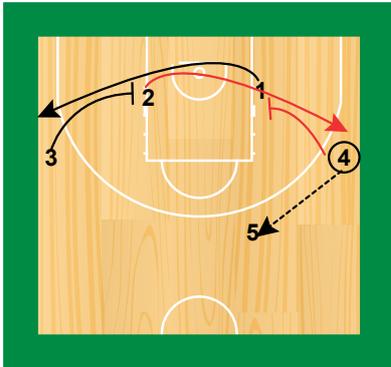
4 passes the ball to 5.

3 and 4 set screens at the side of the key, and 1 and 2 cut to the opposite side of the key, coming of the screens ("turn out cuts").
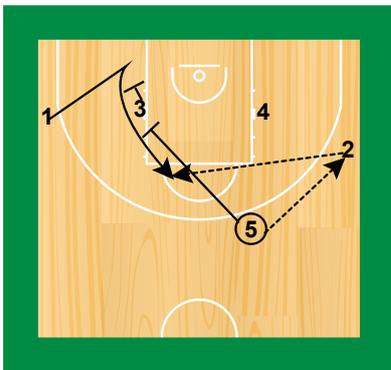
5 looks for one of the guards coming off, and for them to shoot from the perimeter.

After passing, 5 moves to set a staggered screen for the opposite guard.
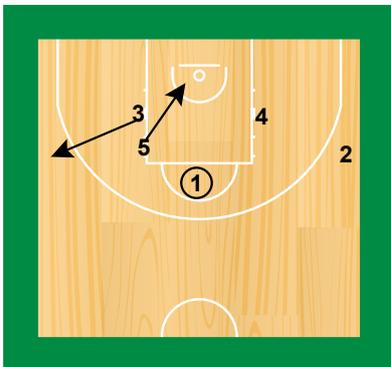
After the staggered screen, 5 moves to the low post or basket and the other screener returns to the perimeter.
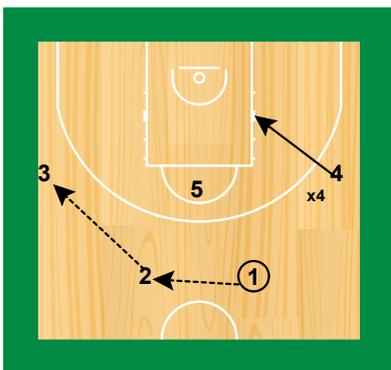
If an initial pass to the wing is denied, the wing player cuts back door, which is one of the underlying principles in the offence.

The ball is then reversed to the opposite wing player.
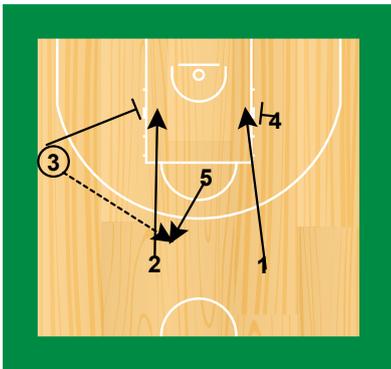
The offence then continues as before, with the two guards moving to below the low post and making turn out cuts off screens, following the ball being passed to 5 on the perimeter.
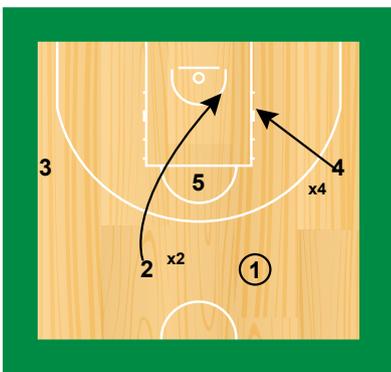
If both a pass to the wing and to the other guard are denied, the wing and guard cut back door (again following the basic rule of the offence).
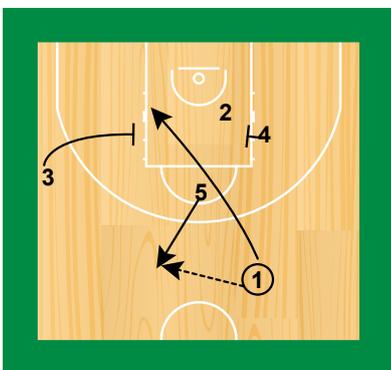
5 steps to the perimeter to receive a pass directly from the guard, who then cuts to the opposite block.

Again screens are set for the guards.
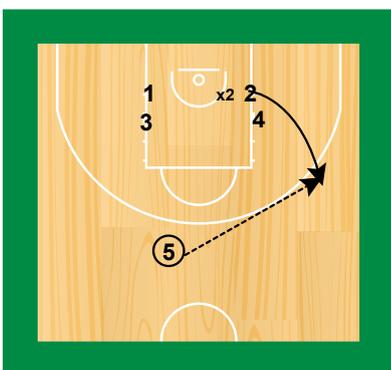
If a defender (x2) denies a guard from make a "swing" cut to the opposite side, the guard can simply utilize the screen nearest to them.

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2.1.7 "UCLA CUT"

The UCLA Cut received its name due to its use by coach John Wooden at UCLA. It is a simple "pass and cut" motion, with a screen from the high post.
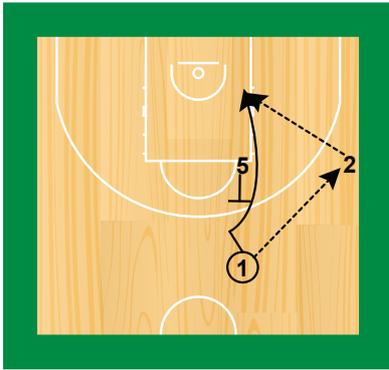
A UCLA Cut is used in many offensive structures

2.1.8 "ZIPPER"

The "Zipper" is a continuity offence, which was used by the Boston Celtics in the NBA, amongst others, in the 1960s. More recently, many teams use a "zipper cut" (which was the first movement of the "zipper" offence) to start their offensive movement.
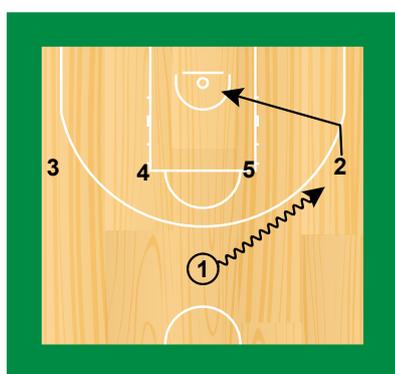
"Zipper" starts in a 1-4 High, offensive set.

1 makes a dribble entry to the wing and the wing player (2) cuts to the basket. They may sink toward the baseline first before cutting to the basket or may step toward the ball handler (as if moving to a hand-off).

If possible, 1 passes to 2 as they cut to the basket.
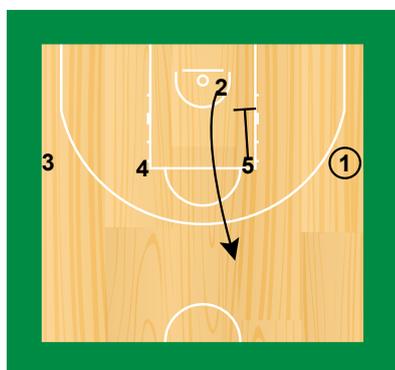
2 then cuts from the basket up the key, using a screen from the strong side post player.

This is the "Zipper" cut. 1 dribbling to the wing "opens" the zipper, and 2 cutting up the key "closes" the zipper.
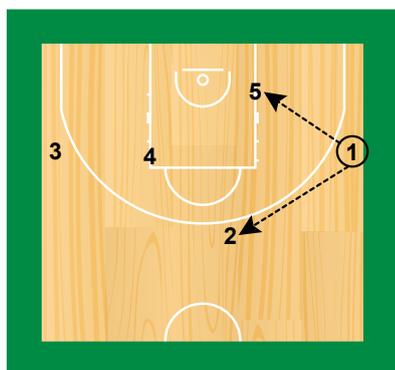
1 looks to pass to 5 in the low post position or to 2 for a shot at the top of the key.
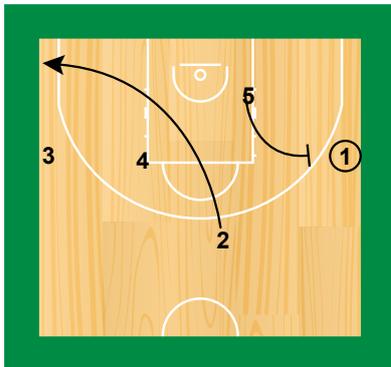
If 2 does not receive the ball, they cut through to the opposite corner.

5 can set a ball screen for 1 at the wing.
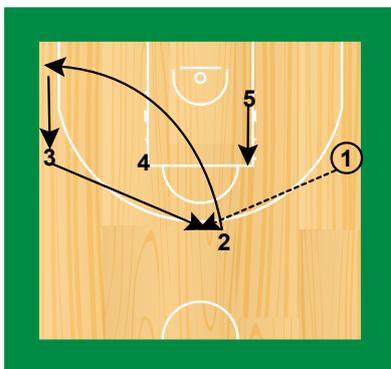
Alternatively, 3 lifts to the point position to receive the pass from 1.
5 lifts back to the high post and 2 lifts from the corner to the wing.
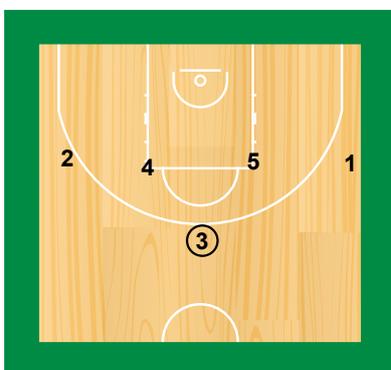
The team is not in the initial alignment (1-4 High) and the play can continue by 3 dribbling to either wing. It is also possible to add other elements, such as:

• 4 setting ball screen for 3 while 2 drops to the corner. 5 could also screen for 1

• 3 passing to 2, 1 cutting to ballside corner and 3 cutting to weakside corner

The "Zipper" is a relatively unsophisticated structure that is easily "scouted" and accordingly is less likely to be used as a structured offence. Instead, it is common in professional leagues for the "zipper cut" to be integrated into their offensive structures, particularly being used as an "entry" into half court offence. Set out below are various options that utilize a zipper cut to start.

Coaches of junior teams in particular are encouraged to consider that these are examples of play, rather than a set structure to implement with their team. These options are probably most effective when they are the result of a "read" by the players, rather than a set rule.
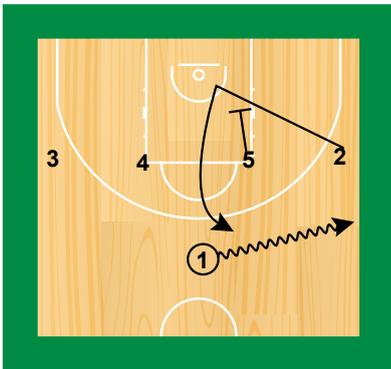
Most professional teams that use a "zipper cut" do not have 1 dribble to the wing and instead they dribble to the size of the court. 2 still cuts to the basket, although some teams have the screen from 5 executed at the foul line rather than near the block.
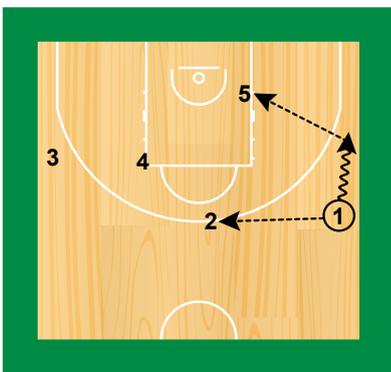
1 still has options to pass into the post or to 2, however will usually need to dribble to a lower position in order to be able to pass to the post player.
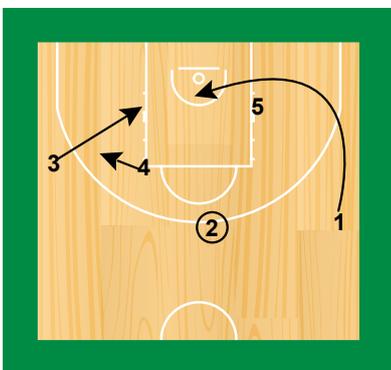
After passing the ball, 1 may also cut to the basket. Commonly, 4 and 3 will move position to be able to screen.
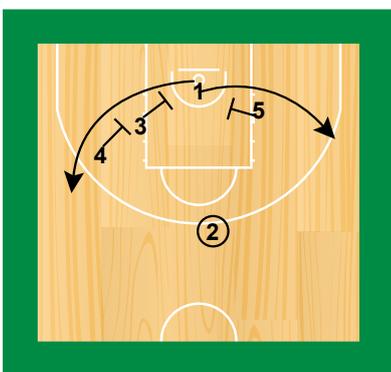
1 pauses at the basket and then can either:

(a) Cut back to the perimeter using a screen from 5

(b) Cut off a staggered double screen from 3 and 4.

Whichever cut 1 makes, they must read their defensive opponent. This may mean they flare to the corners, or curl on a screen etc, depending upon how the cut is defended.
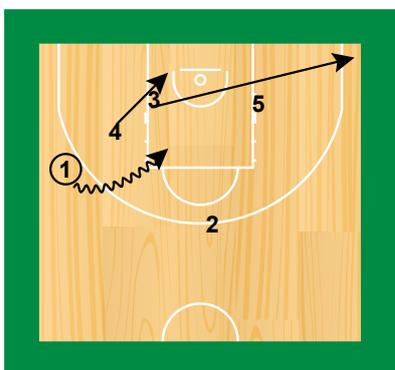
If 1 receives the ball on the wing, they may penetrate. Here, 3 moves out to the opposite corner (to receive a pass after penetration) which creates space for 4 to drop to the basket.
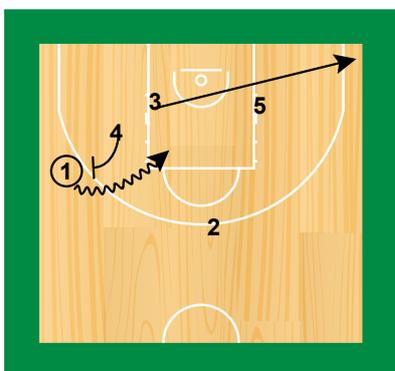
Alternatively, 4 could ball screen at the wing.
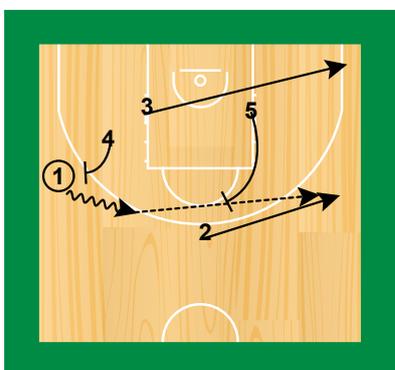
Another alternative is for 5 to screen for 2 to flare to the opposite wing to receive a pass from 1.
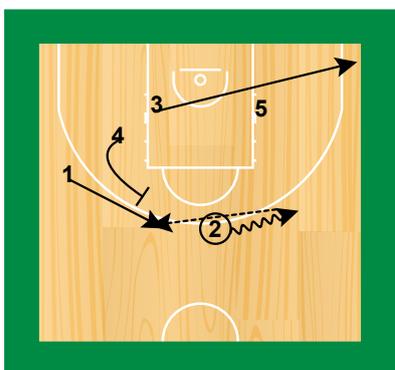

Rather than passing to 1 at the wing, 2 may clear toward the opposite side and pass to 1 as they lift to the point. 4 can then set a screen at the elbow extended.
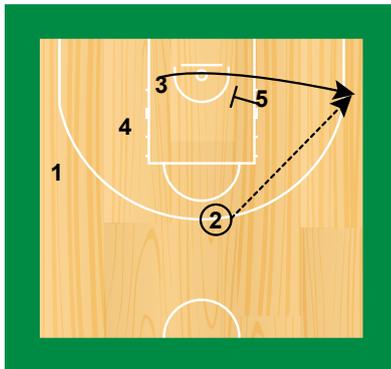
If 2 does not pass to the wing, 3 can make a "turn out" to cut off the screen from 5.
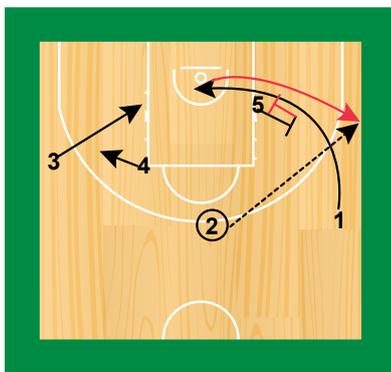
After the initial "zipper cut", 5 can back screen for 5 as they cut to the basket and can then re-screen as they cut back to the perimeter. 3 and 4 can still set the staggered double on the other side.

If 1 does not use the staggered double, 3 could then cut off 4's screen.
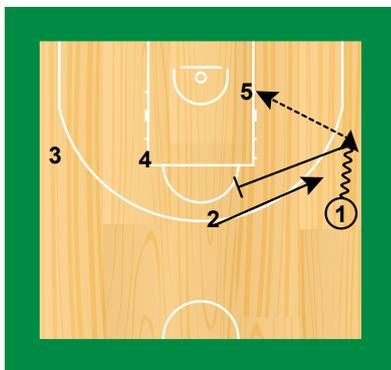
After the initial "zipper" cut, if 1 passes to the post (instead of to 2), 1 can then set a screen for 2 to cut to the wing.

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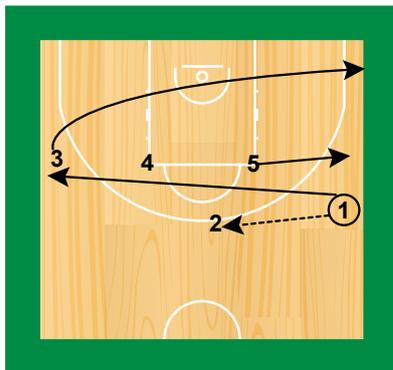
Another option after 1 passes to 2 (on the initial zipper cut) is for 1 to then make a horizontal cut to the opposite wing.

3 would clear that wing by moving to the corner and 5 would also step to the perimeter.
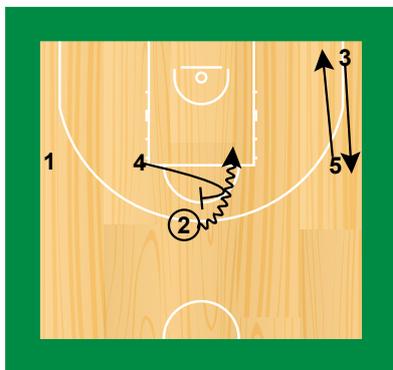
4 then steps across to set a ball screen and 2 penetrates.

3 lifts and 5 drops to the corner and 1 makes sure that they are in a position to receive a pass.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Which offensive structure would best suit your team? Discuss with your assistant coaches.

2. Discuss with a coaching colleague whether the statement Junior Teams (up to the age of 16) should not be taught particular structures and instead should use an offence like "Read and React".

2.2 OFFENSIVE MOVEMENT

## 2.2.1 MOTION OFFENCE - 3 OUT, 2 IN - SCREEN THE SCREENER

With 17-18 year olds, other concepts may be introduced and at this age players can learn to play with two inside players (either two low posts, two high posts or one low post and one high post).

THESE PLAYERS MAY USE THE FOLLOWING CONCEPTS:
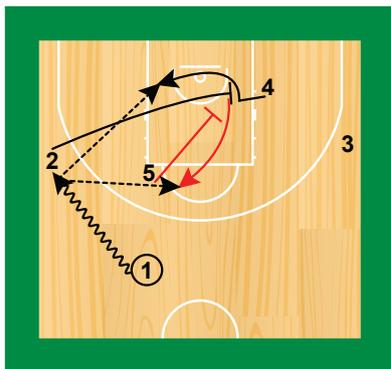
A player that sets the screen is immediately screened by another team mate, providing the player with the ball with two consecutive options to pass.

Here 2 screens for 4, and 5 sets a screen for 2.
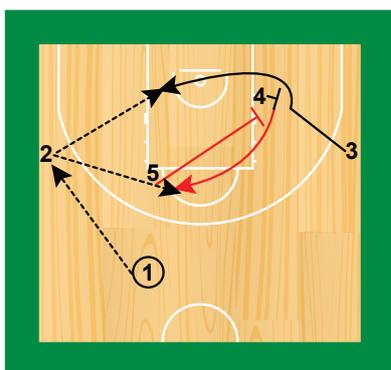
Here, 4 sets a screen for 3 and then 5 sets a screen for 4.

## 2.2.2 MOTION OFFENCE - 3 OUT, 2 IN - MULTIPLE SCREENS FOR THE SHOOTER

Two or three screens can be set in a row to allow a shooter to get free.
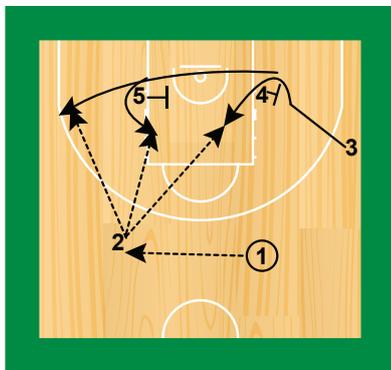
Two or three screens can be set in a row to allow a shooter to get free.

The screeners should also look to receive a pass after the cutter has made their cut.

Here 4 and 5 both set screens for 3
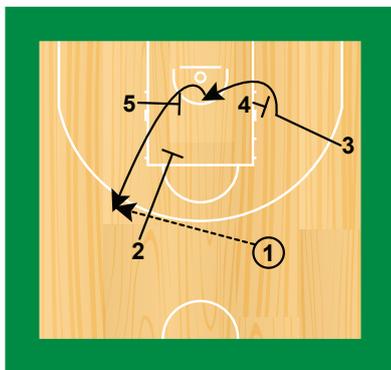
4, 5 and 2 set screens for 3

2.2.3   MOTION OFFENCE - 3 OUT, 2 IN - DOUBLE SCREENS

*A double screen is where two team mates stand together to set a screen.*
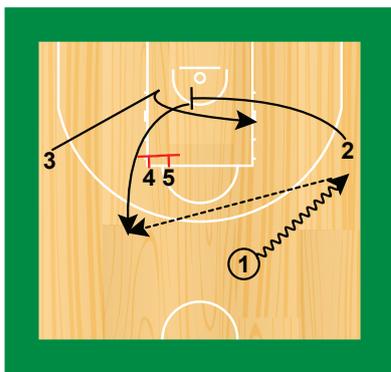
After the cutter has used the screen, the screeners need to both "read" the defence and also be aware of the position of the other screener, when looking to receive a pass after setting the screen.

Here 3 cuts to the basket and then cuts to the opposite side of the court using a screen from 2.

2 cuts off a double screen from 4 and 5.
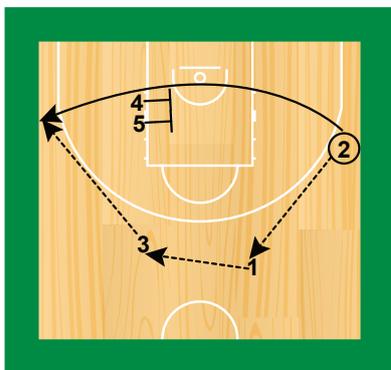

2 makes a "turn out" to cut off a double screen.
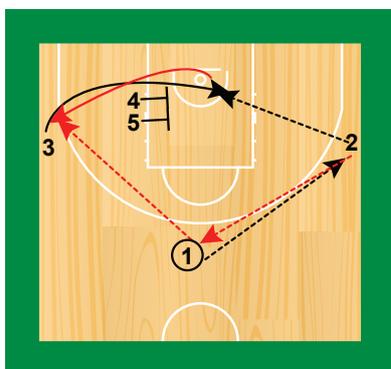
Here 3 uses the double screen from the post players twice. First, 3 cuts to the basket and the ball is passed to 2 to make the pass.

However, if 3 does not get open, they can cut to the perimeter again, off the double screen and 2 would reverse the ball to 1.

## 2.2.4   MOTION OFFENCE - 3 OUT, 2 IN - BLIND (BACK) SCREENS

"Blind", or "Back" screens, are set behind a defender so that they cannot see the screener.
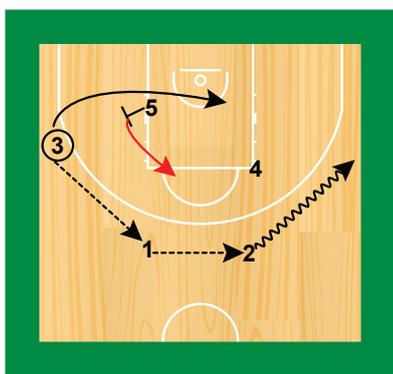
The screen must be set at least one step away from the defender's current position.
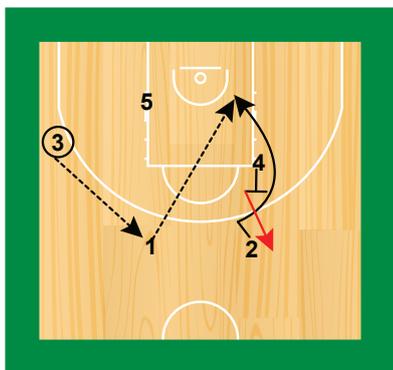
From the same alignment, the back screen can be set on the "weak side", creating an opportunity for 2 to cut to the basket.
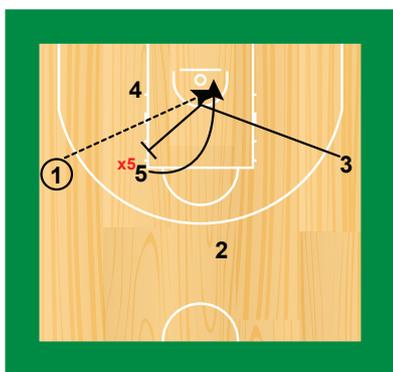

These screens can be particularly effective when used against the defender on a player that has just passed the ball or defenders that are denying passes.

2.2.5   MOTION OFFENCE - 3 OUT, 2 IN - PICK AND ROLL WITH TRIANGLE ON HELP SIDE

The team may play a "pick and roll" with three players at the help side, in a triangle formation (low post, wing and guard). in a triangle formation (low post, wing and guard).
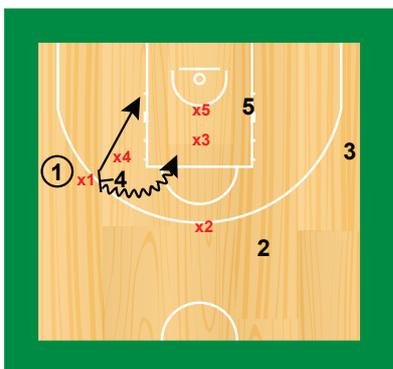
This still gives plenty of space for the "pick and roll", with the dribbler attempting to get to the elbow, and the screener looking to move to the basket.
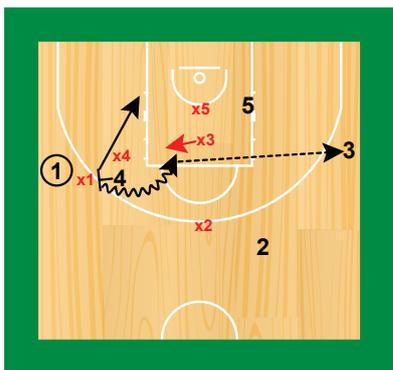

When a help defender rotates to stop the penetration, the ball may be passed to the open player on the perimeter.

2.2.6   MOTION OFFENCE - 3 OUT, 2 IN - CUTS OFF HIGH POST SCREEN

Guards may cut off the high post, after the ball goes below the extended free throw line but before any defenders move to the "split line".
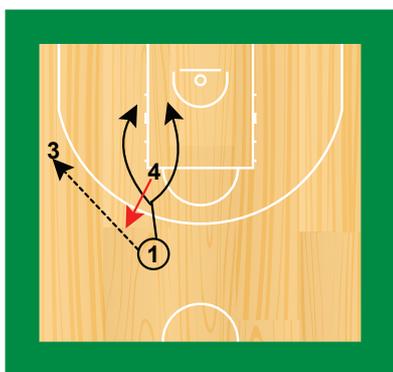
This does not have to be a screen and 4 may move to the perimeter to potentially receive a pass.

If 4 does screen, they can do so facing the defender or facing the basket.
The advantage of facing the basket is that they can see the rest of the play.
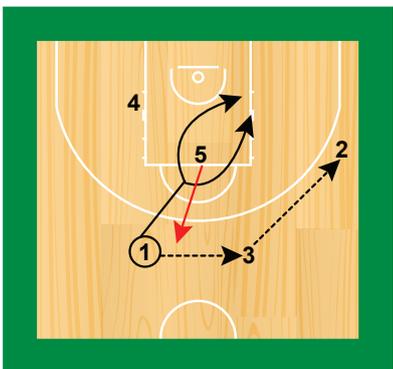
Timing is especially important when the cutter comes from the weak side as the ball needs to have moved to a "passing position". After a cut off of the high post, the high post should pop.

2.2.7   MOTION OFFENCE - 3 OUT, 2 IN - 1V1 ISOLATION

Players can give a team mate room to play 1x1.
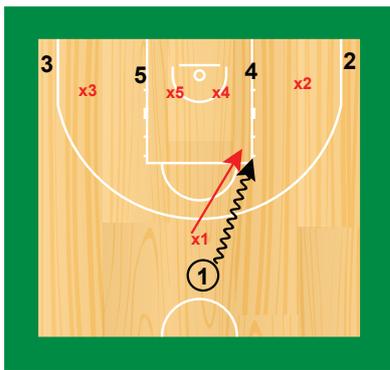
This is often used to create a "last shot" opportunity, with 1 unlikely to get a lay-up, but attempting to penetrate to the top of the key for a shot.
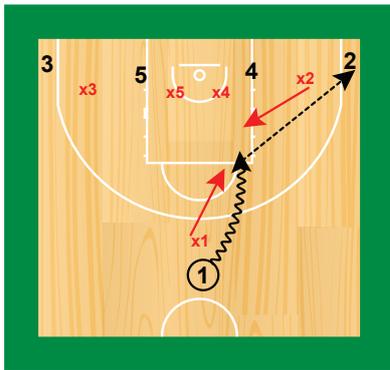
It is likely that help will come to stop any penetration, in which case the offence should be ready to pass to their open team mate. This is most effective if 2 and 3 are able to shoot from the perimeter.
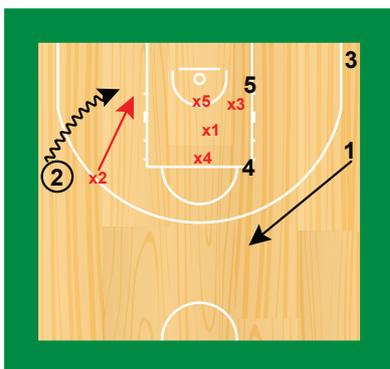
Another isolation alignment is to "clear out" one side of the court. Here, 2 attempts to drive and get an open shot.

Players on the weakside, should be prepared to move to a position to receive a pass.
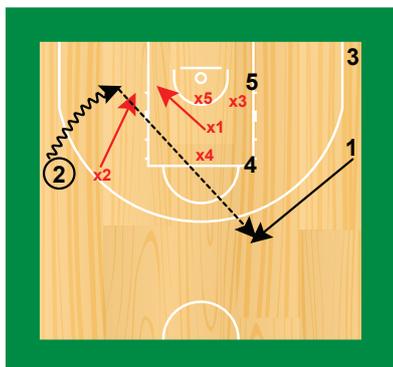
If one of the weakside defenders (e.g. x1) rotate to help defend the penetration, a pass may be open to their opponent.
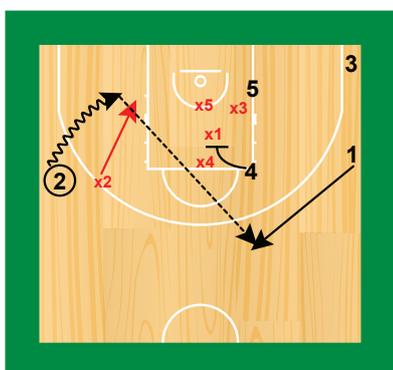
In this alignment a similar passing opportunity can be created by one of the post players setting a screen for the perimeter players.
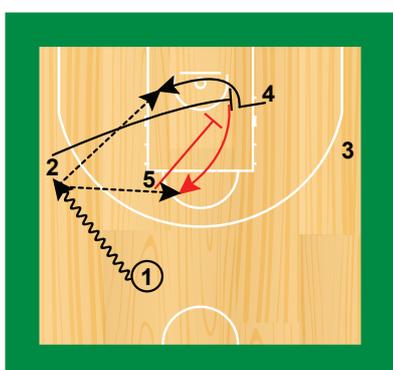
If the defence switch to defend this (e.g. x4 moves to defend 1), it can open a pass into the screener. However, when the isolation play has been run as a "last shot" opportunity, the offensive players must be very conscious of the amount of time remaining.

Many options have been presented here and it is not necessary for a coach to teach all options to their players. Rather they should choose some of the options, depending upon the experience of their players.

Coaches must also keep in mind that "it is not enough to memorize moves, but that players should understand their meaning, master all the decisions, and fundamentals involved, and practice enough to be able to perform each efficiently".

2.2.8 SHOT SELECTION - IMPORTANCE OF THE CORNER 3

The introduction of the 3 point shot has made a significant change to how basketball is played, placing a much greater emphasis on shooting from distance.

The reason for this can be starkly illustrated:

- A team taking 100 2pt shots @ 50% accuracy scores 100 points;
- A team taking 100 3pt shots @ 35% accuracy scores 115 points!

It must be emphasized with junior teams that players should not be encouraged to shoot from "beyond the arc" until they have the correct strength and technique to do so.

Increasingly, teams are adding specific options to their offensive playbooks to take 3 point shots and this trend seemingly continues even though the 3 point line is now further away from the basket than when first introduced.

In particular, the "corner 3" has been described by some commentators as the most important shot in basketball and some recent analysis in the NBA supports its increasing importance:

- Successful teams tend to take more "corner 3" shots than less successful teams do;[15]
- Teams shoot a higher percentage from the "corner 3" than other 3 pt shots.[16]
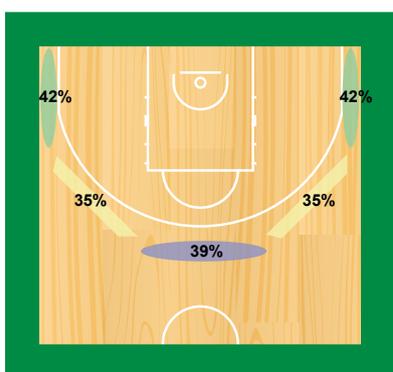
Whilst the "corner 3" is closer to the basket than a 3pt shot from the wing or top of the key, this is only a marginal difference and is unlikely to explain the increased shooting percentage from the corner. More likely an influence is how playing to the corners can distort and stretch a defence leading to shots from the corner not being as closely guarded.

15 In 2014 the teams that competed for the NBA Championship took 11% (Miami) and nearly 8% (San Antonio) of shots from the "corner 3". The league average was 6.6% of shots taken from the "corner 3".

16 NBA teams make 42.5% from the "corner 3", compared to 34.9% from the wing 3 and 38.8% from the top of the key (see http://www.82games.com/locations.htm, which is not official NBA statistics)
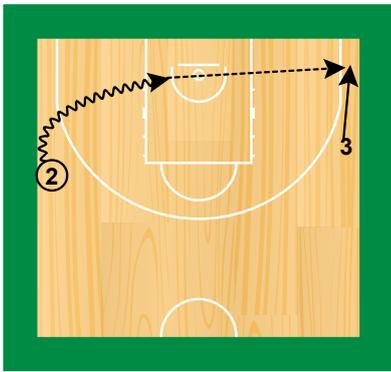
Most teams will have a player move to the corner when there is dribble penetration. On baseline dribble penetration, there will often be a pass directly to the corner.
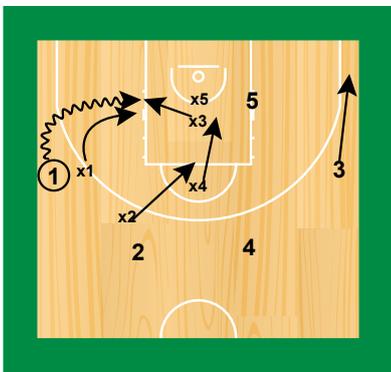
Most defences will "help" stop dribble penetration with a rotation from a player from the low split line – this is usually the defender of the offensive player that moves to the corner.

This rotation requires further help (x4) to rotate, which can result in a shot from the corner being relatively open.
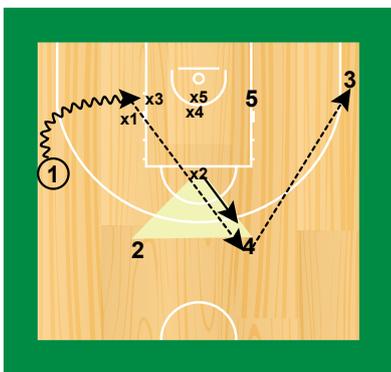
On baseline penetration, a pass to the top of the key will often be defended as the team rotation is designed to defend. Here x2 is in position to close-out and defend either 2 or 4 if they receive the pass.

However, a quick pass to the corner forces a longer "close out" from the defence, which again, can lead to a relatively open shot.

COACHES MANUAL

The effectiveness of passing to create an opportunity to shoot from the "corner 3" is confirmed by analysis that indicates 95% of "corner 3" shots are "assisted", meaning that they are taken after receiving a pass.[3]
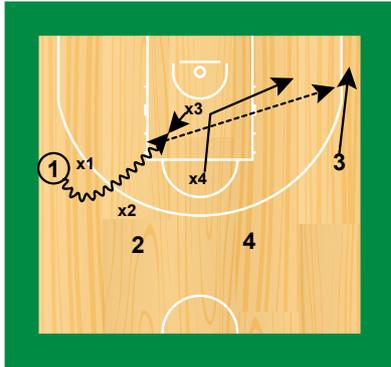
Dribble penetration to the middle also requires rotation from x3, who is responsible for defending the player moving to the "corner 3". Again, this can create a relatively open shot either as x4 closes out (rotating to help x3), or if x3 rotates (after doing a "hedge and recover" to assist in defending 1's penetration).
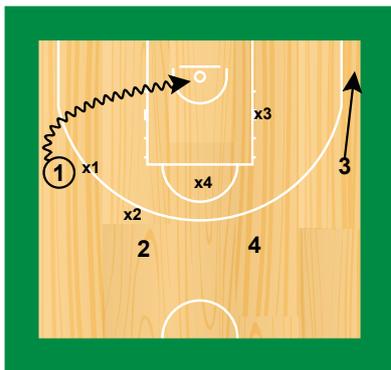
Teams that effectively use the "corner 3" can also create more space for penetration as the defenders adjust and "hedge" toward the shooter rather than being in a position to rotate and help.

3   See http://www.82games.com/locations.htm

FOLLOW-UP

1. If a team was using a "3 Out, 2 In" structure where do you think the majority of their shots would be taken? How could you affect that with defence?

2. Do your teams utilize the 3 point shot? From where are they most effective in scoring?

2.3   SCREENING

2.3.1   ON BALL SCREENS - PISTOL

"Pistol" is simply where the ball is passed to the wing and then the player follows their pass to receive the ball back. An on ball screen is then set.
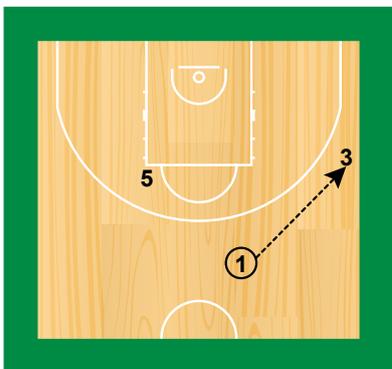
1 passes to 3 on the wing.
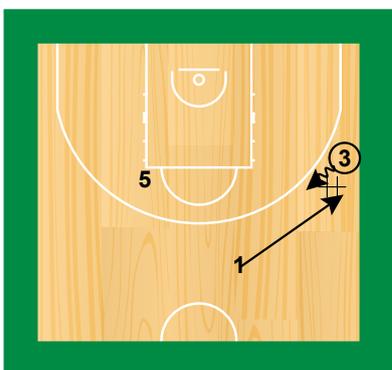
1 then moves to the wing to receive a hand-off from 3, who takes one dribble.
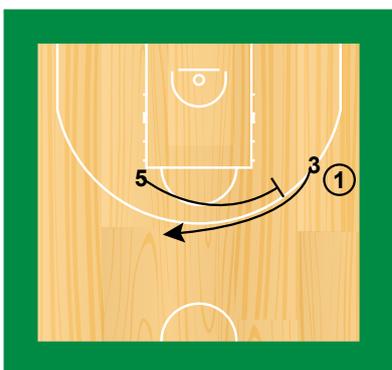
5 moves to screen 3, who cuts to the top. A pass to 3 may create an open shot or an opportunity to penetrate into the key.
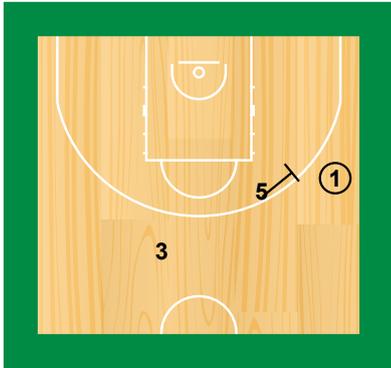
5 then moves to set a "side pick and roll" for 1.

2.3.2   OFF BALL SCREENS - "ELEVATOR" SCREENS

The "elevator" screen is a type of double screen that has been used with particular success by the Golden State Warriors in the NBA.

Simply, when setting an "elevator" screen, two team mates set a screen but stand one or two steps apart from each other.

The "elevator" screen is often used after some other screens in the offence as it is most effective when there is some separation between the cutter and their defender.

BELOW IS AN EXAMPLE OF AN OFFENCE THAT INCORPORATES AN "ELEVATOR" SCREEN.
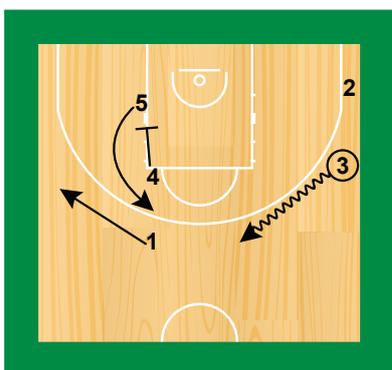
4 sets a down screen for 5, as 3 dribbles out from the wing and 1 relocates to the wing.
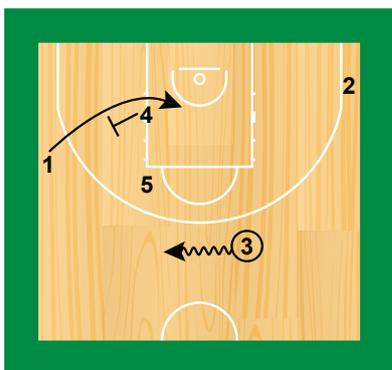
1 then cuts off a back screen by 4.
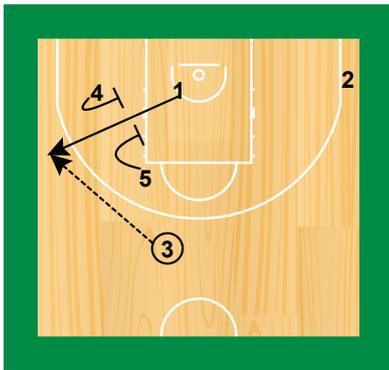
4 and 5 simultaneously set down screens for 1. They leave enough space between themselves that 1 can cut through the middle of them.

1 could also cut either side of 4 or 5, which is a read they would make.
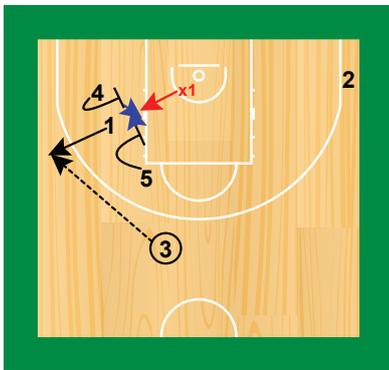
If x1 attempts to follow 1 and run between 4 and 5, 4 and 5 step together (like an elevator door closing) to stop x1.

If x1 attempts to run outside either 4 or 5, then they would not step together.

Timing of the screen in this action is very important. If the screeners step into the path of x1 without giving sufficient time and distance for them to stop or change direction, then that could be an offensive blocking foul.

The other common spot for this screen to be set is for the screeners to be on the foul line.

2.3.3   SCREENING ANGLES AND ALIGNMENTS - ADVANCED PICK AND ROLL

The "pick and roll" (or "on ball screen") is one of the most common plays in basketball.

There are many different angles and alignments that can be utilised by teams using the "pick and roll".

Importantly, despite the name, the screener does not always "roll" (cut to the basket) and may "pop" (move to the perimeter) or re-screen. Some fundamental rules for both screener and dribbler are:

SCREENER:

- "Set-up" – be a threat before going to set the screen
- Sprint into the screen – arrive to set the screen before the defender is there
- Screen angle is important
- Separation after dribbler uses the screen – either pop or roll

DRIBBLER

- Starting point – this will be relative to where the defence is. Move the defender to the screen.
- "Set-up" – be a threat before using the screen. Beat the defender away from the screen and then use the screen
- Separation away from the screener
- Score – be a scoring threat and force the defence to react to you.

Below are descriptions of various alignments that can be used for "pick and roll" or "on ball" screens.
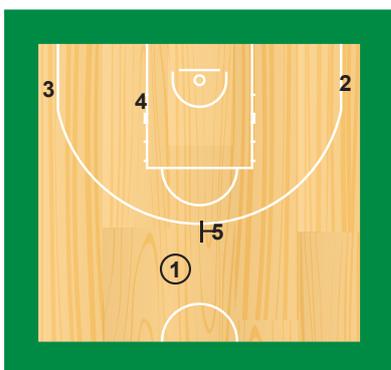
"Mid Pick and Roll", which can be set on either side depending upon the dribbler's preference. The screener has the back to a sideline, or may be slightly angled toward the baseline corner.
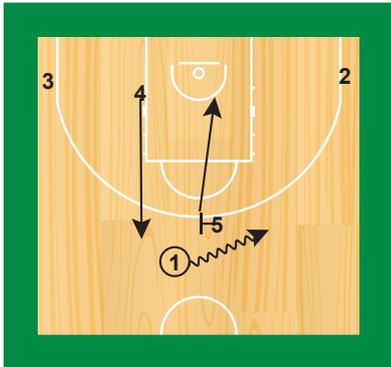
As a general rule, if the screener "rolls" and moves toward the basket, the other post player replaces them.
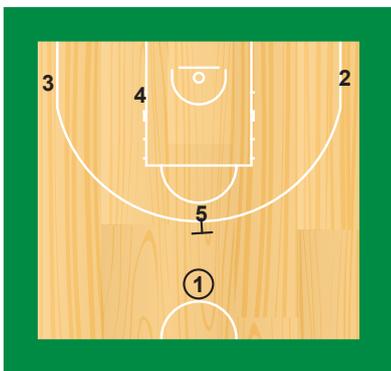
"Flat" pick and roll, where the screener has their back to the basket.
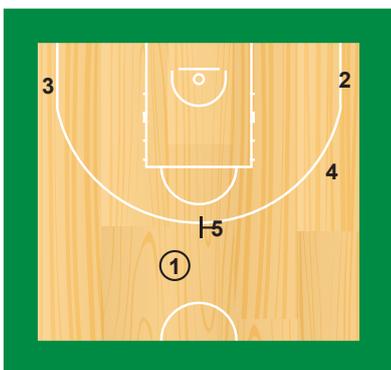
"Lifted Middle Pick and Roll", where the other 3 players are on the perimeter.
This creates more space for the screen to roll and for the dribbler to "attack the rim".
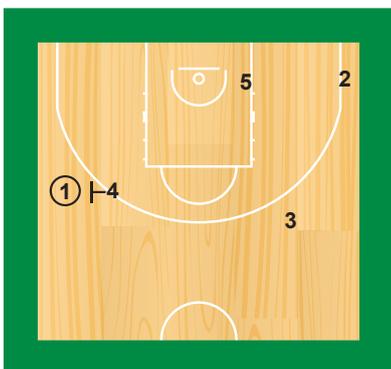
"Side Pick and Roll", with a triangle on the opposite side. The low post player starts below the block.
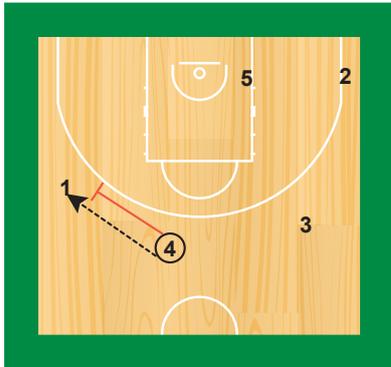
The screening angle must allow the dribbler to play "downhill" (i.e. moving toward the basket. Accordingly, the screener does not move from the point directly to the wing, as this is a poor angle. The dribbler (to use the screen) would be moving away from the basket.
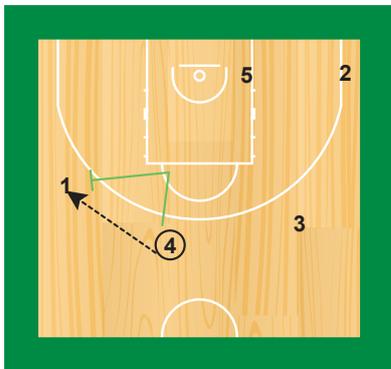
The correct angle is set by initially attacking the basket and then moving to set the screen. This is an example of the screener "setting up" the screen by first being an attacking threat.

When the dribbler uses this screen they are attacking the elbow.
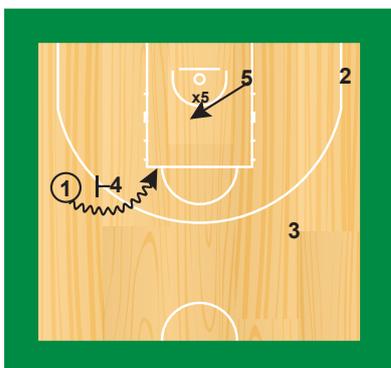
As 1 uses the ball screen the low post player on the opposite side "reads" the defence.

If their defender (x5) is low, 5 may "duck in" to establish position in front of them.
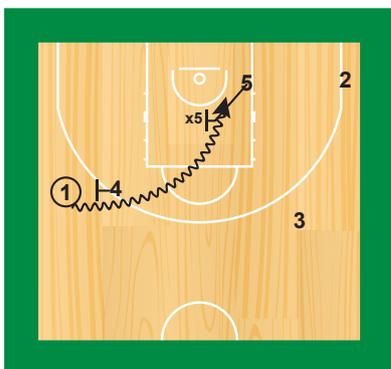
If x5 plays higher, 5 can set a screen to the side, enabling 1 to penetrate to the basket. This is most effective if the defenders of 2 and 3 are not collapsing and instead are "sticking" to their player to stop open perimeter shots.
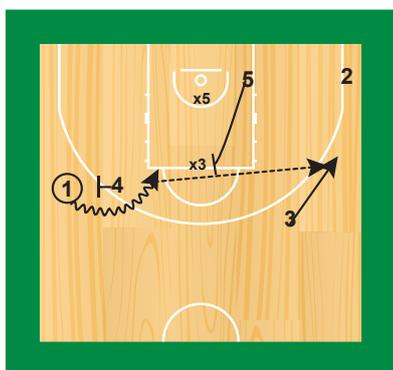
5 can also set a screen on x3, to enable 3 to get an open shot on the perimeter.

Finally, 5 could "flash" high, to receive a pass at the top of the key. Again, this is most effective if x3 is not playing on the help line (and accordingly the high post area is clear).
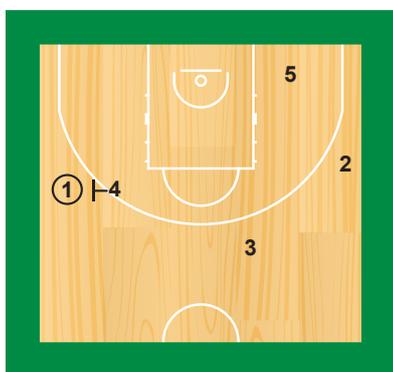
"Spread Side Pick and Roll" places the low post player in the short corner. Again, this is designed to move help defenders away from a position where they can help either defend the dribbler or the screener rolling.
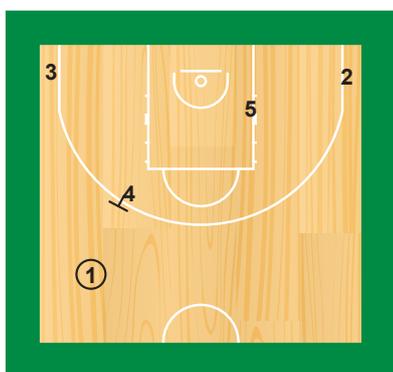
"Angle Pick and Roll", where the screener faces the corner at half way and sideline.
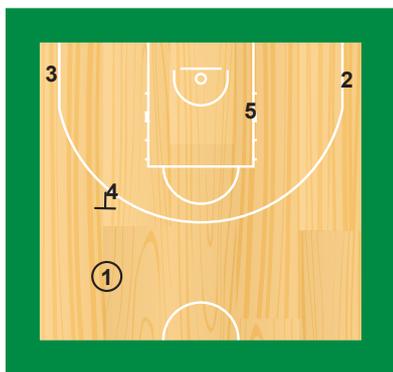
"Step Up" or "Flat Screen", where the screener has their back facing the baseline. This is particularly effective where the defence is forcing the dribbler to the side and the screen defender is stepping off to defend penetration ("Ice" or "Push" defence).

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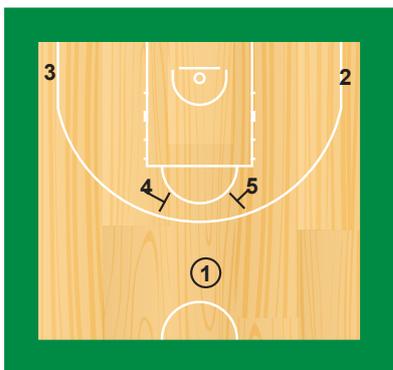
"Horns or 'A-Set" is a very popular offensive alignment. It can be set "tight" (at the elbow) or above the 3 point line.
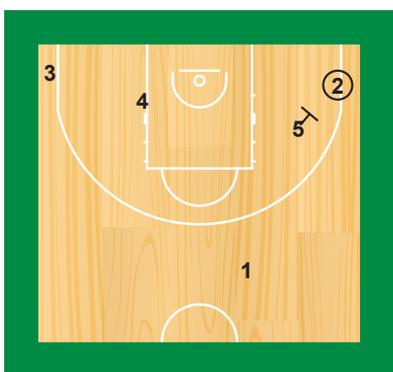
"Corner Pick and Roll" should be used with some caution, as it presents an opportunity for the defence to double or trap the ball in the corner.
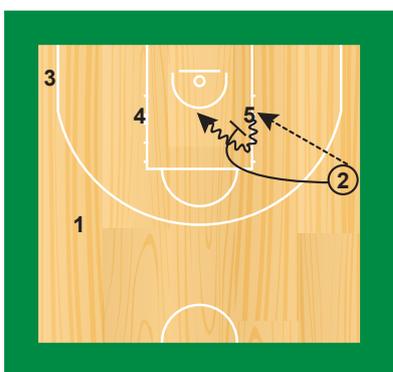
"Brush Pick and Roll" is where a guard passes to the low post, cuts toward the basket and then screens for the low post player. It is a difficult screen to "switch" as it would create a mis-match for the defence.
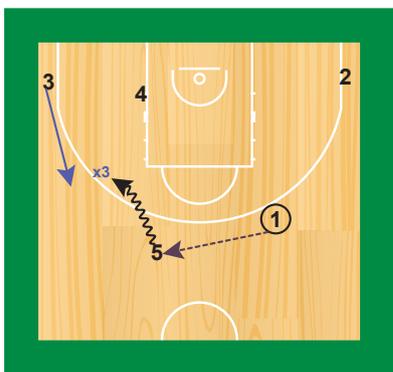
"Dribble Screen" is similar to, but not the same as, a dribble hand off. Here the screener dribbles directly at the defender, effectively adopting a normal screening position but with the ball.
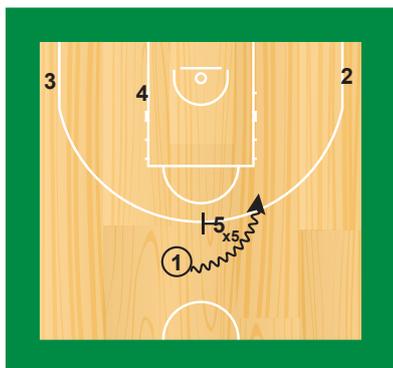
To effectively use the pick and roll, the dribbler must react to however the defence opt to defend the screen.

The screen defender may "strong show", which is designed to make the dribbler flare and create room for the other defender to get to position.

When the screen defender does this, the ball handler must attack the "high" hip of the screener.
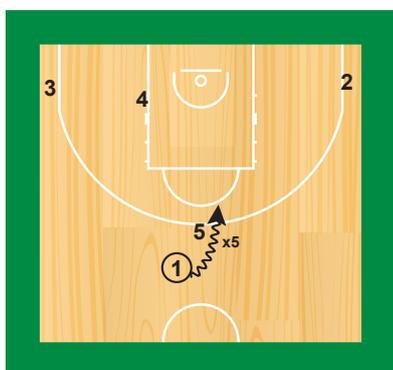
If the screen defender steps away from the screener, the dribbler should "split" the defence and attack through this gap.
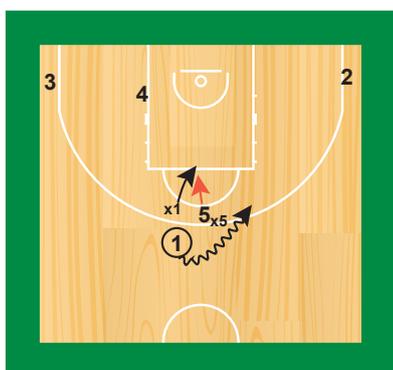
When the defence opt to go under, the screener should roll. This will impede x1's progress to get back to the defender.

If an opponent often goes under ball screens, the screen should be set lower on the court. The dribbler should be ready to shoot.
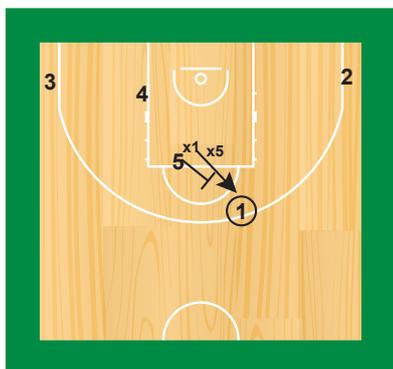
As the defender recovers to the ball handler, the screener can move to re-screen, coming from behind the defender. This will make it very difficult for them to go under again.

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BASKETBALL COACHES
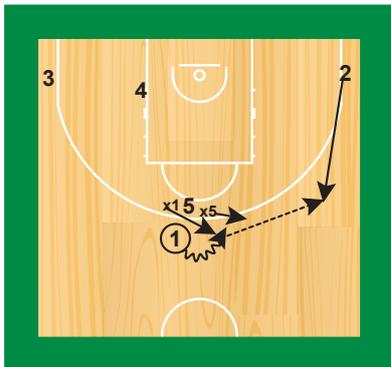
If the defence trap the ball handler, the wing player (from either side) should lift to receive a pass.
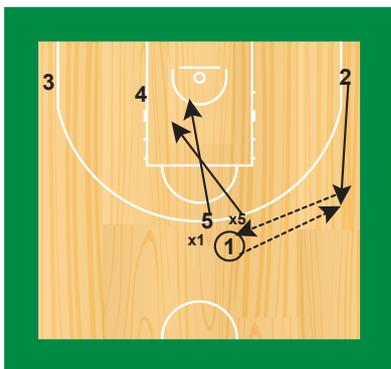
After the pass, the screener rolls to the basket, which will take their defender away. The ball can then be passed straight back to the ball handler, particularly in a late game situation if this is the player the team want to have the ball.
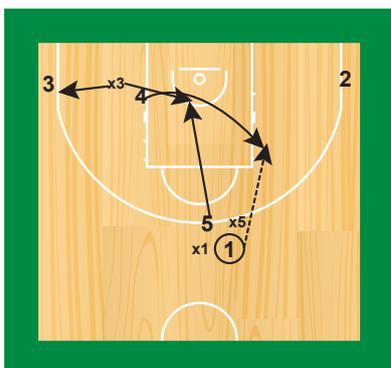
Alternatively, the low post play can swing up to receive a post at the post when the ball handler is double-teamed. The screener also rolls to the basket. This places the help defender (x3) in the situation of either defending the basket (5) or the corner 3. They cannot defend both!
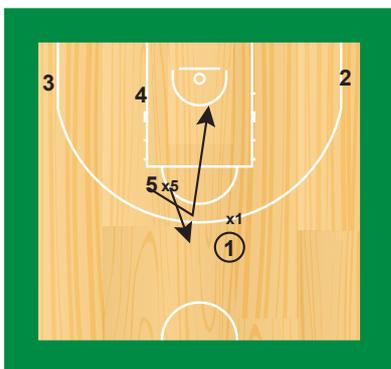
When setting a ball screen, if the screen defender moves above the screener, the screener should dive to the basket. This will often happen when the defence is going to "strong show".

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Often the defence will play "weak" – where they strongly force the ball handler to one side. The screener must ensure they set the screen on the correct side.

Alternatively, the screener can simply slip to the post to receive a "pocket pass" and then turn to look for (a) shot, (b) drive, (c) "high low" action with low post, or (d) pass to opposite corner.

FOLLOW-UP

1. How would you defend a team that used "Elevator Screens" to create a 3 point scoring opportunity at the top of the key (the screen set at the foul line)? What adjustment might the offence make to this tactic?

2. How do teams in your competition tend to defend the "pick and roll". What adjustment needs to be made by the offences against these tactics?

2.4 OFFENCE AGAINST ZONE DEFENCE

2.4.1 PICK AND ROLL (ON BALL SCREENS) AGAINST A ZONE

Many coaches advocate having an offence that can work equally well against "man-to-man" defence and zone defence.[17] The advantage of this approach is that the team does not need to specifically identify the type of defence the opponent is playing.

PICK AND ROLL (ON BALL SCREENS) AGAINST A ZONE

One of the most common offensive situations used at the moment is the "pick and roll" (or "on ball" screen), particularly in the middle of the court. Whilst this has traditionally been used against man to man defence, it can be equally effective against a zone defence.

INITIAL ALIGNMENT

One of the most important aspects for any offence to be successful is for there to be good "spacing" between players.

With an on ball screen in the middle of the court, spacing can have a player in each of the corners and also on one wing.

17 For example, Zeljko Obradovic in his clinic Match Up Offence, which is available on FIBA's YouTube Channel.
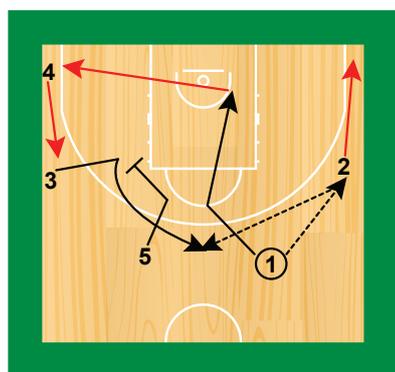
To get into this alignment early in the offence:

- 1 passes to the wing and runs to the opposite corner
- 5 sets a down screen for 3, who cuts to receive a pass from 2
- 4 lifts to the wing, 1 and 2 are in the corners.
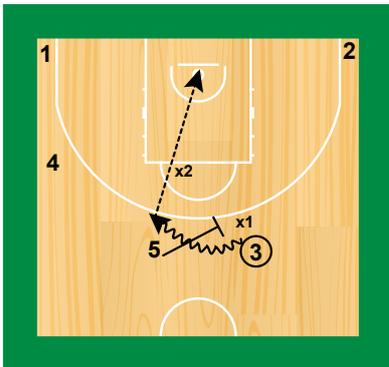
SETTING THE ON BALL SCREEN

In a zone, the defence will often not have a defender on the screener. In this situation, 3 must be prepared to shoot as they use 5's screen.
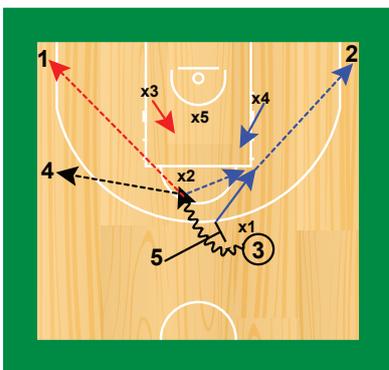
Alternatively, 3 can look to penetrate into the key:

• If x2 stops the dribble, pass to 4 (black)

• If x3 moves to help, pass to 1 (red)

• Pass to 5, if x4 moves to defend, second pass to 2 in the corner (blue)
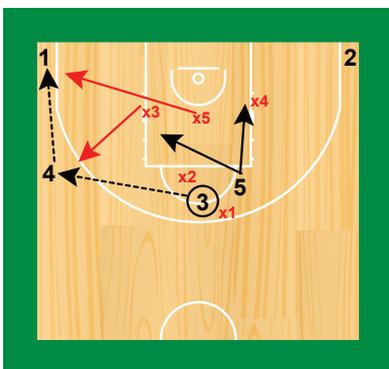
CREATING 2X1 OPPORTUNITY

A pass to 4, creates a situation of 2x1 between the offensive players 1 and 4 against defender x3.

If x3 rotates to the wing, a quick pass to 1, forces x5 to rotate to the corner. 1 must be prepared to drive, as this is clearly a mismatch.

READ THE DEFENCE

If 1 does not drive, 5 can cut to the basket and can:

• "Seal" x3 as they rotate back to the key;

• "Seal" x4 before they can rotate across the key.
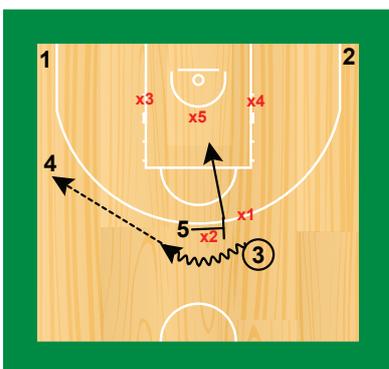
Particularly once the screen has been used effectively, the defence may lift the high post defender (x2) to "hedge" or even switch at the screening action.
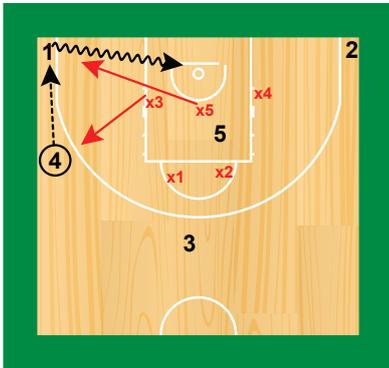
When the defence does this, a quick pass to Player 4 again creates the 2x1 situation between 4 and 1 and defender x3

If x3 rotates to Player 4, x5 must close out to Player 1. This creates a great opportunity for Player 1 to penetrate or for Player 5 to seal either x3 or x4.
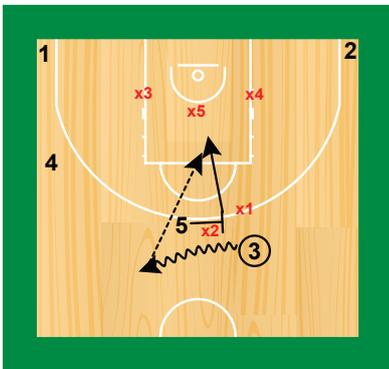
Player 3 can also pass to Player 5 as the cut to the basket. Often to make this pass, Player 3 should separate (dribble away) from the defenders.
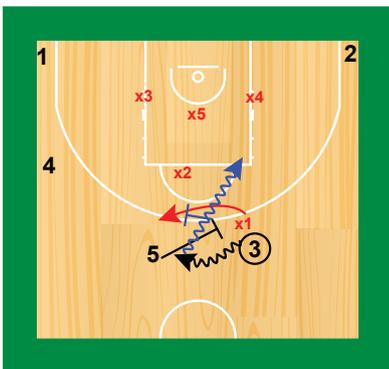
USING A RE-SCREEN

If x1 goes "under" the screen, Player 5 should turn to "re-screen", allowing Player 3 to change direction and penetrate to the elbow.
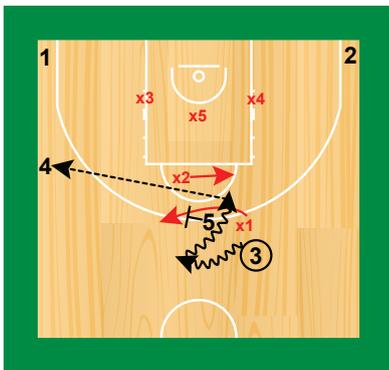
If x2 rotates to guard Player 3, a pass to Player 4 again creates the 2x1 situation with Player 4 and 1 against defender x3.

If x4 rotates to stop the penetration, a pass to Player 2 creates a shot or an opportunity for Player 2 to drive as x5 rotates to defend the corner.

Player 5 can "seal" x3, rather than simply cutting to the basket.

If x5 rotates to stop penetration, this creates a mismatch with Player 3 possibly being able to drive past x5. Player 3 could also pass to Player 5 as they "seal" x3.
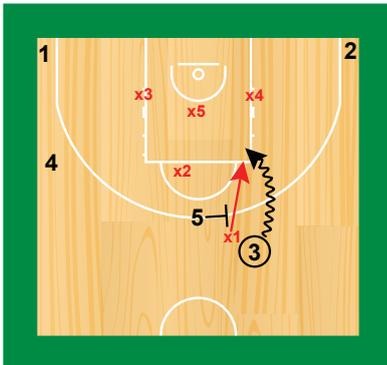
WHEN DEFENCE FORCE SIDELINE

An increasingly common tactic is for the defender to force the dribbler away from the screen. x1 stands next to the screener, facing 3 – making it impossible for 3 to use the screen.

In "man to man" whoever is defending the screener (5) would move to the basket to help guard any penetration. In zone defence, no defender specifically guards the screener.
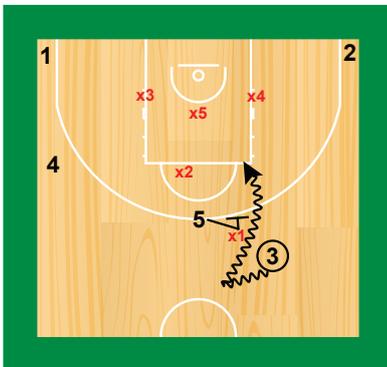
The screener faces the basket, making contact with x1 with the lower body. 3 penetrates, and 5 cuts into the key.

This form of defending the ball screen can be particularly effective closer to the sideline. When in this position, 3 should retreat dribble toward the middle of the court, 5 re-establishes position and then Player 3 drives at the basket.

3 must make sure that 5 has established position before driving, otherwise 5 is likely to be called out for an offensive blocking foul.

As demonstrated, the on-ball screen can create multiple scoring opportunities against a zone defence. Often the "second pass" is crucial in creating scoring opportunities as the zone will make an initial rotation effectively but a second rotation will often create mismatch opportunities.

2.4.2   DRIBBLE DRAG AGAINST ZONE DEFENCE

A simple entry to get into position to use a ball screen in the middle of the court can be used in conjunction with dribbling against the zone..
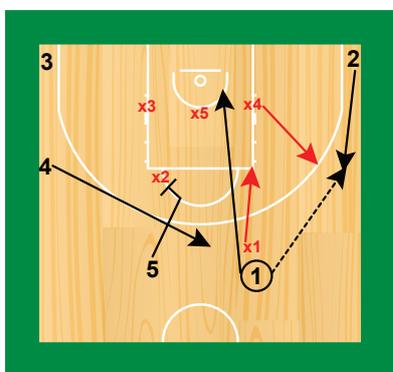
1 passes to the wings and cuts to the basket. 5 screens for 4 who cuts to the top of the key. Importantly, against a zone, 5 must "find" x2 to make the screen effective.
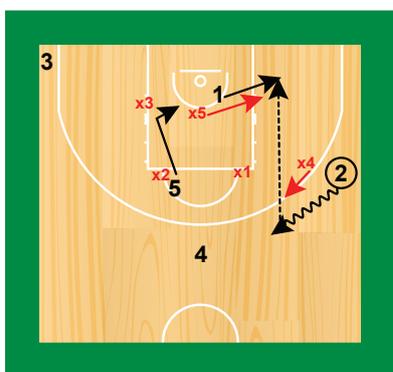
Rather than 2 passing to 3, they can dribble out of the wing – this is the "dribble drag", attempting to engage a particular defender. In most cases x4 will continue to defend, although may hand over to x1.

On this dribble, 1 moves to the strong side short corner to receive a pass. As x5 rotates to defend 1, 5 can dive to the basket and may receive a pass. 1 can also drive against the bigger defender.
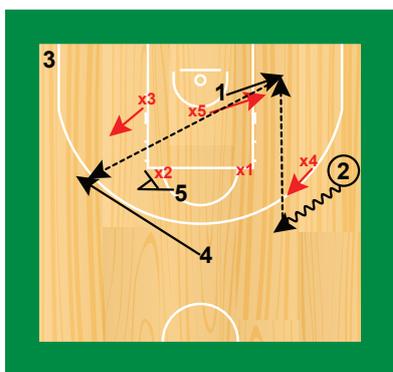
Often x2 will "front" 5 to stop the dive to the basket. This enables 5 to screen x2 allowing a pass to 4, which creates a 2x1 situation with 4 and 3 defended by x3.

COACHES MANUAL

The same option can be created with a pass direct from 2 to 4, with 5 again screening x2.

2.4.3   1-3-1 ALIGNMENT AGAINST ZONE DEFENCE

Many teams when facing a zone defence resort to shooting from the outside and this is a significant part of the reason why FIBA recommends that children do not play zone defence until the age of 14.

However, a well constructed offence against a zone should create:

• Opportunities for penetration off the dribble;

• Shots inside the key and both high and low post play;

• Opportunities to shoot from the perimeter.

Below is a 1-3-1 offensive alignment that can achieve this.
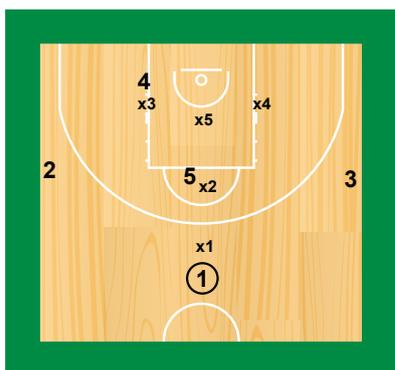
INITIAL ALIGNMENT

The 1-3-1 alignment is commonly seen. Against a zone it is particularly important for a player to be in a baseline position – behind the zone defenders.

If defenders "ball watch" it will often provide an opportunity for 4 to cut.
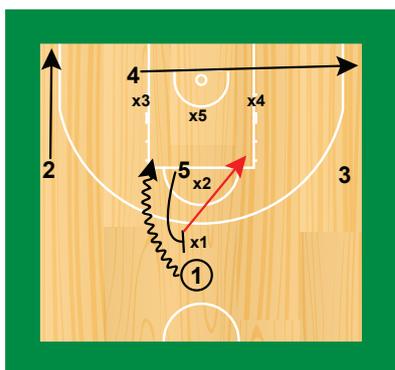
ON BALL SCREEN

The high post can set a screen for 1.

As 1 dribbles, 4 moves to the opposite corner and the strong side wing player also sinks to the corner.

The high post player steps into the key, but allow 1 room to penetrate.
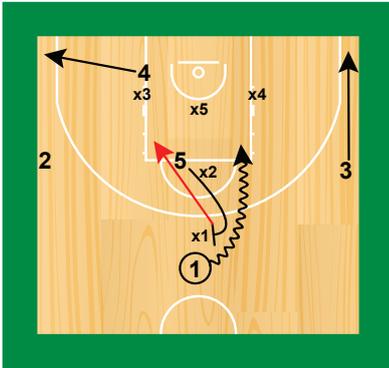
ON BALL SCREEN CONTINUED...

Whichever side that 1 dribbles has two players and the opposite side ("weak" side) has 2 perimeter players and the high post player.

This creates opportunities for the two perimeter players to have a 2x1 opportunity against one of the "frontline" defenders (e.g. 2 and 4 against x3).
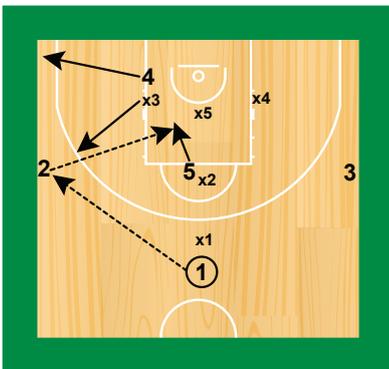
PASS TO THE WING

Many zone defences will defend a pass to the wing by having a frontline player rotate. By having Player 4 move to the corner, this can now create a 2x1 situation.

5 can also seal the high post defender or cut into the key to receive a pass. If x3 has moved to the perimeter, 5 can seal x5 rather than just cutting into space.
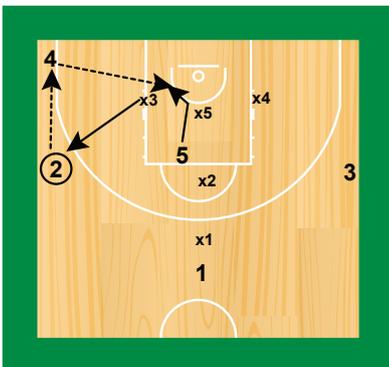
If the ball is passed to the corner, this provides an opportunity to pass the ball to 5 as they dive to the basket, sealing either x3 (as they rotate back to the key) or x4.
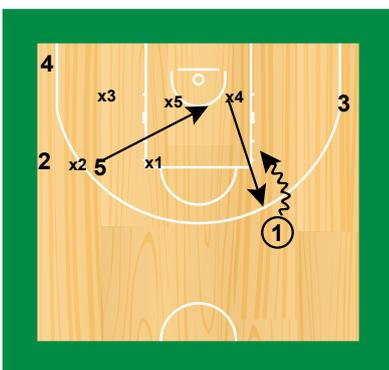
Passing the ball to the corner also provides the opportunity for 4 to penetrate, in which case 5 should delay their cut.

WORLD ASSOCIATION OF
BASKETBALL COACHES
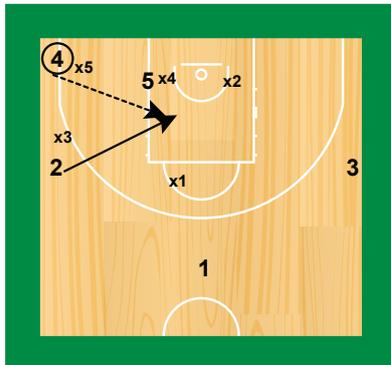
When the ball is in the corner, 2 can also cut to the basket to receive a pass. This is particularly effective if:

• The zone denies the pass back to the wing (x3);

• The post player establishes a low post position.
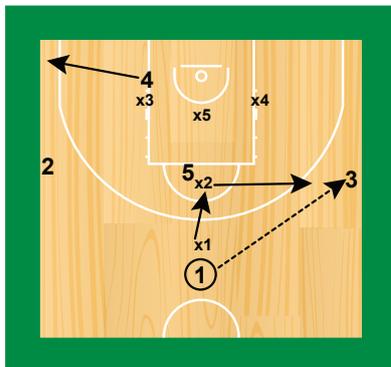
Other zones have the guard (x2) move to defend the pass to the wing. However the same 2x1 situation can still be created by:

• Passing to the wing

• The baseline player moving to the opposite corner

• "skip" passing the ball to the opposite wing
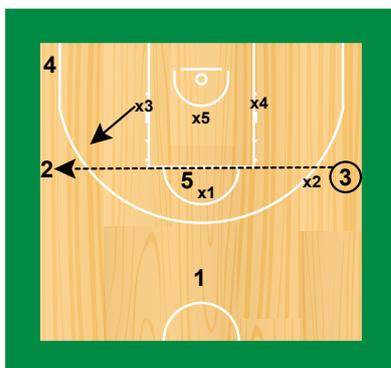
2 and 4 are in a 2x1 situation against x3.
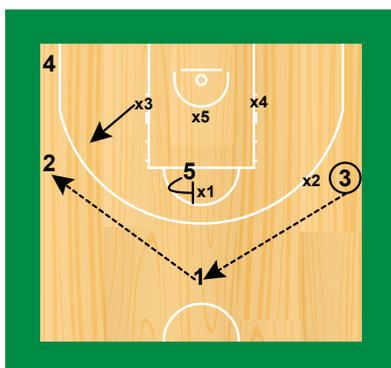
Young players may lack the strength to throw an effective "skip pass". Instead the ball can be reversed by passing to 1 who passes to the wing. 5 can screen the defender at the foul line to force x3 to rotate to the wing.
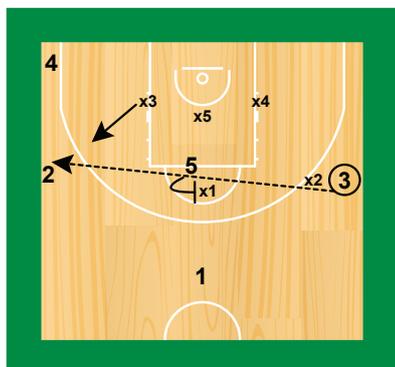
5 may also screen x1 to make the skip pass (if players have the strength to throw it).
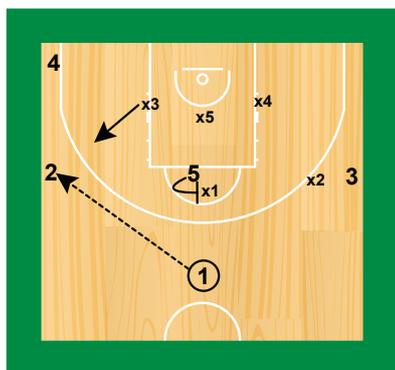
A third and similar way to create the 2x1 opportunity (at any time) is for the high post player to screen the guard on the pass to the wing forcing a frontline player to rotate and defend the wing player.
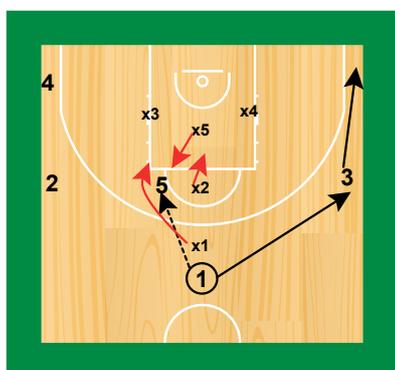
PASS TO THE HIGH POST

The High Post will often be defended by one of the frontline players when they receive a pass. The perimeter players should move to the corners and wing.

The zone is effectively in"man to man" now, with each player responsible for one offensive player. Anytime a player moves to "help" against the high post player, the high post player can pass to that offensive player. For example, if x3 helps, pass to 4.
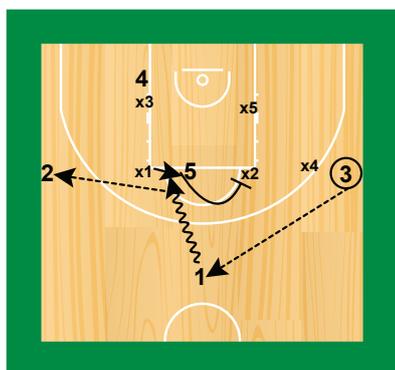
SCREENING OR FREEZING ROTATING DEFENDER

Another effective tactic can be to screen the defender that would normally rotate to defend the ball.

As 3 passes to 1, a screen on x2 forces x1 to be involved - any dribble should look to penetrate past x1. If x1 commits to 1, a pass to 2 creates a 2x1. If x1 slides across to 2, 1 can penetrate into the key.
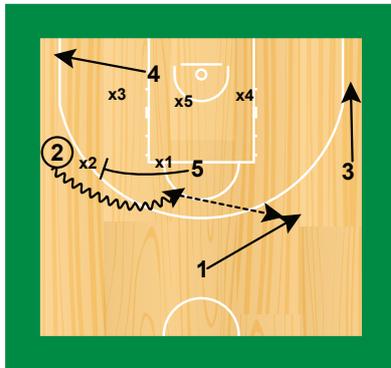
A ball screen on x2, forces x1 to defend penetration from 2.

A pass to 1, forces a rotation by x4 and a further pass to 3 would create a "scramble" as x5 rotated to the corner.
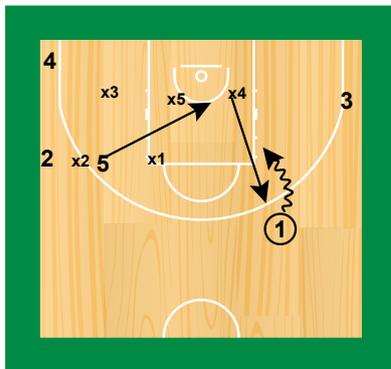
Here, x4 has a long close-out which presents an opportunity for 1 to penetrate, as well as 5 cutting (or "rolling") to the basket after screening for 2.
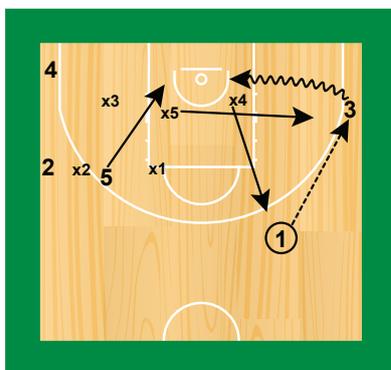
1 can also pass the ball to 3 in the corner, who may have the opportunity to shoot or drive. 5 still dives to the basket.
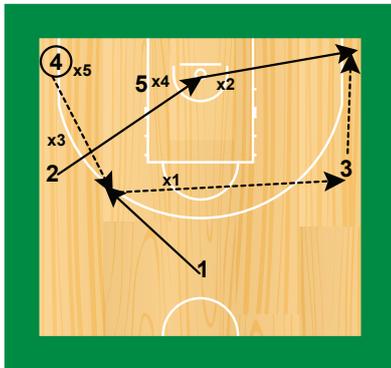
SWING CUTTERS

"Reversing" the ball (passing from one side to the other) can create opportunities to penetrate or get an open shot.

Here as 2 cuts to the basket, 4 passes to 1, who reverses the ball to Player 3. Player 2 follows through to the corner.

Alternatively, 4 could pass to 2 and then "Swing" or cut through to the opposite corner. The cut is often most effective, if they pause in the key and then sprint to the corner.

There are many offences designed to be played against zone defences, and some coaches will create a specific offence for each different zone that they may encounter.

It is recommended, when coaching young people, to have an offensive approach that is more versatile and can be utilized against both zone defence and man to man.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Have you instructed teams to use dribble or on ball screens against a zone defence?
   Do you think that your team could use it effectively? Discuss your view with a coaching colleague.

2. How does your team currently play against a zone defence?

3. Do you think a zone defence would be effective against the teams that you play? What offence do you think they would use?

4. Some coaches prefer to have separate offences for playing against "man to man" and zone offences whilst others have one offence to use against both. Which approach do you prefer?

2.5 OFFENSIVE STRUCTURE FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

2.5.1   BASELINE OUT OF BOUNDS

Basketball is a "fluid" game, moving from offence to defence without any "reset" of the play until the end of a quarter and the start of the next quarter.

This is quite different to many team sports that have:

- Play stopping after a score, to be re-started in the middle of the playing area by the other team (e.g. football);
- Play stops and the team that scored then re-starts play (e.g. volleyball).

There certainly are opportunities where play is stopped (e.g. fouls or violations), however generally play is dynamic and fluid, requiring players and teams to make decisions "on the run" within the context of their offensive and defensive rules.

There are a number of "special situations" where coaches may want to implement a different structure or have different rules. The "special situations" under consideration are:

- Inbounding the ball from the baseline;
- Inbounding the ball from the sideline;
- "Late" Shot Clock - offence when there are 10 or less seconds on the shot clock;
- "Last possession" plays – when a team is down by 3 points or less and has the last possession;
- Defending a Lead;
- "Catching Up" when a team is down with a few minutes left.

There are many books, DVDs and websites devoted to "plays" that can be used in each of these situations and many coaches have "favourite" plays or structures that they employ with their team.

This resource does not attempt to be a source for coaches to find various plays and instead the resource looks at the offensive and defensive principles that coaches must address, whatever "plays" they may ultimately choose to use.

Some coaches have intricate "playbooks" with different rules and structures for each situation and infinite variations. This is not necessary, particularly when coaching junior teams. Often, what is required is simply to emphasise a particular aspect of the team's normal rules of play. Whatever "playbook" or amount of rules a coaches wants to have, needs to be realistic having regard to both the experience of the players and the amount of preparation time the team has.

BASELINE OUT OF BOUNDS

This refers to when the offensive team has possession of the ball and is inbounding from the baseline at the basket where they are attempting to score.

There are a number of principles that coaches should consider in choosing how they want their teams to play the baseline out of bounds situation:

1. Focus on the fundamentals – passing, cutting and catching;
2. Moving away from the ball;
3. Moving to the ball;
4. "Little-Big" Screen
5. Screening the Screen;
6. The "safety catch";
7. Inbound player shooting.

FOCUS ON THE FUNDAMENTALS – PASSING, CUTTING AND CATCHING

The inbound passer cannot shoot the ball and has only 5 seconds in which to make a pass. The focus therefore should be foremost on getting the ball into play, not necessarily a scoring opportunity.

Particularly when coaching children, coaches should focus first on the ability for a player to get themselves open by:

• Changing direction and pace;

• Getting "foot advantage" and / or "sealing" their opponent;

• Cutting toward the ball and not standing still (which can allow a defensive player on the move to intercept the pass).

• Knowing that, once a player has cut toward the ball, if they do not receive the pass, they should continue to move so that there is space for a team mate to cut.

Equally, when coaching the passer, the coach should emphasise:

• "Fake a pass to make a pass" – move the defender's hands to create a passing lane / angle;

• Take a step back from the baseline to create space if the defender is standing right at the baseline;

• Not focusing on one particular pass, but instead looking to make the best pass. This is perhaps the worst aspect of using structured plays requiring teams to follow set movement – players get too focused on the option that is part of the play and may not see an open player;[18]

• Don't let the referee's 5 second count rush the pass – a violation (which allows for defence to be set) is almost always better than an intercepted pass.

MOVING AWAY FROM THE BALL

Quite simply, there is not enough room on the court for 4 players to all cut toward the ball at the one time. Often a player will need to move away from the ball in order to create a space that someone else can cut into.

Young players in particular will often lack an appreciation of how their movement (or lack of it) affects a team mate. This can be illustrated to players through a simple warm-up activity called the Puzzle Game and the game also develops the player's understanding of how to move as a team to create opportunities.

18 See the discussion in the Section Skill Acquisition for Basketball for more information on the desirability of using broad instructions (e.g. "look for high percentage scoring opportunity) instead of narrowly worded instructions (e.g. "pass to Jane cutting off the screen at the elbow).
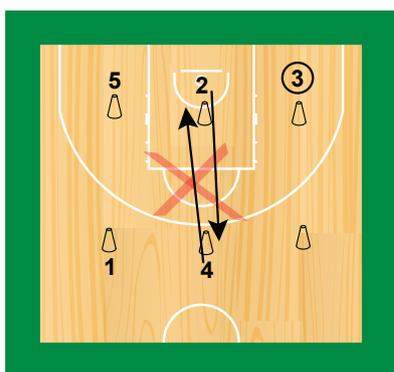
"PUZZLE GAME"

5 players do the activity, standing next to one of six cones. The rules are:

• Player cannot hold the ball more than 3 seconds;

• The ball can only be caught by a player standing at a cone;

• Players can move to the empty cone, but they cannot move past a cone that has a player (e.g. 1 could not move past 4 to go to the empty cone)

• Players can move at the same time but cannot move past one another (e.g. 2 and 4 cannot simply switch cones)
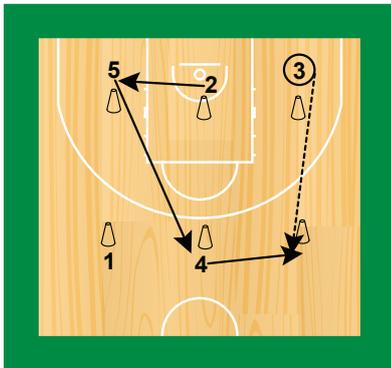
Here is an example of players moving at the same time:

- 4 starts to move toward the empty cone;
- 5 moves to replace 4;
- 2 moves to replace 5.
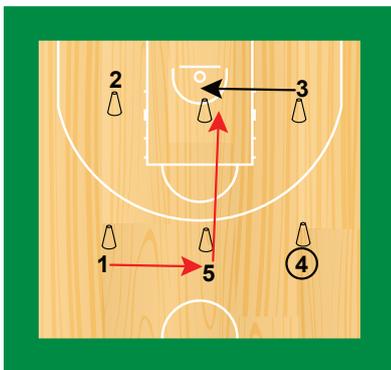
After this movement, the empty cone is now between 2 and 3. If 3 were to move to that cone, 1 would remain "trapped" and unable to move out of the corner.

However, if 5 (or 2) moved to the empty cone, it would enable 1 to then move to replace them. 5 moving is an example of moving away from the ball, to create a space for 1 to cut toward the ball.
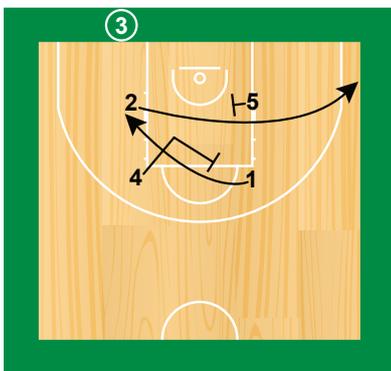
In this example, 2 cutting to the opposite corner creates the space that 1 can cut toward. If 2, for example, "sealed" and tried to receive a pass in the low post position, it would severely limit what 1, 4 and 5 could do.
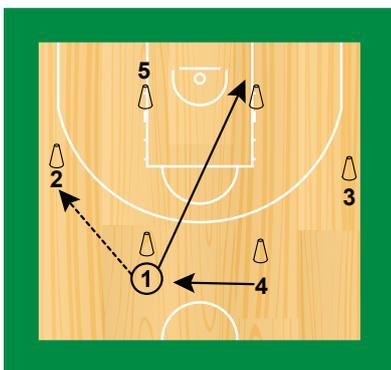
The Puzzle Game can also be used with positions on the court that are more aligned to offensive positions on court.

MOVING TO THE BALL

It is equally important that there are players moving to the ball and looking to receive the ball while they are moving. If offensive players cut and then stop, a pass will often be intercepted by a defender that continues to move.
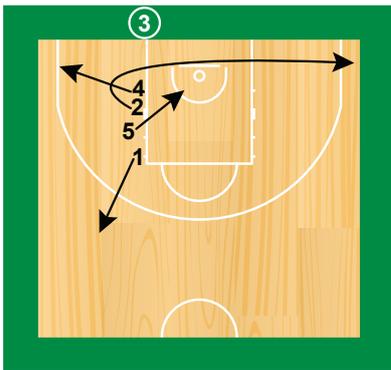
Even though 2 is moving to the opposite corner, by cutting to the basket first, they are likely to get a defensive reaction.

4 then moves away, creating room for 5 to cut to the basket.
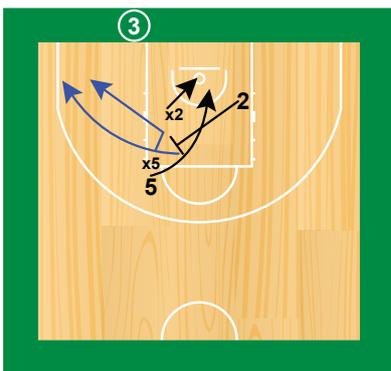
"LITTLE-BIG SCREEN"

Many teams will automatically switch screens on a baseline play. Having a guard set a screen for a "big" in this situation can create a mismatch.

2 screens for 5 and the defence switch. 5 cuts hard to the basket and looks to post against the smaller x2. 2 cuts to the perimeter, looking to isolate the bigger x5.
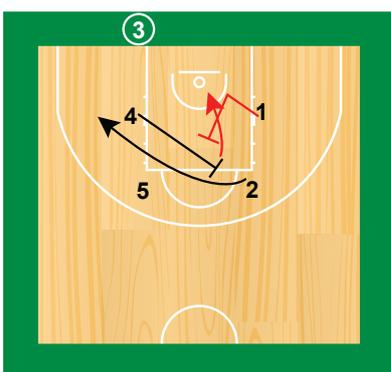
SCREENING THE SCREENER

A common technique in many baseline plays is to set a screen for a player that has just screened – hoping to create confusion amongst the defenders.

Here, 2 creates space moving up to screen for 2, who cuts toward the ball. At the same time, 1 steps toward the ball and then screens for 4 to cut to the basket.

After screening for 4, 1 cuts off a screen by 5.
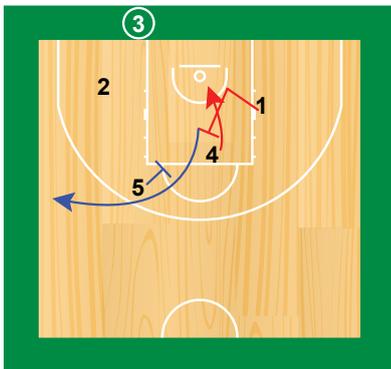
THE "SAFETY CATCH"

In this simple action there have been there has been 3 screens, which will require excellent communication by the defensive team to defend.

Most importantly, offensive players must adjust to what the defenders do – for example, if the defenders focus on stopping 4's cut to the basket, 5 may be able to cut straight to the basket.
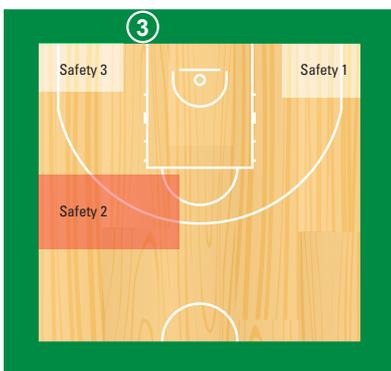
There are three "safety" areas, where players may get open. Defenders are usually most focused on guarding the key.

- Safety 1 – the "deep" corner. This can be a very hard pass for juniors to make. If attempting the pass 3 should step back from the baseline as much as possible.

- Safety 2 – is often thrown as a lob pass, which is again difficult for many juniors.

- Safety 3 – is the easiest pass, although many defences will deny a pass to this area.
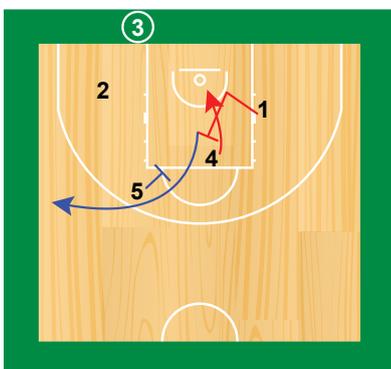
The cut to the perimeter by 1 in the movement shown above is an example of a "safety catch" – presenting an option away from the basket, which is relatively "non-threatening".
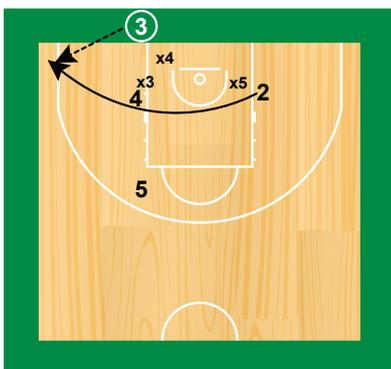
Against a zone defence, an early corner cut can be very effective. If a pass is not denied, then the ball can be entered easily.
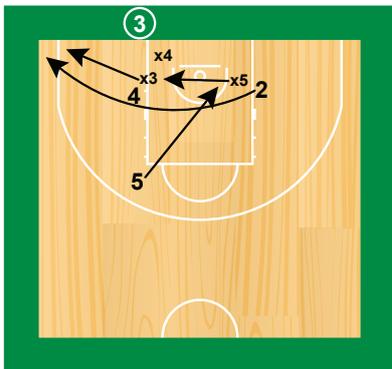
If the pass is denied (x3) this requires a rotation by the frontline (e.g. x5 moving to defend 4) and this can create an opportunity for 5 to cut to the basket.
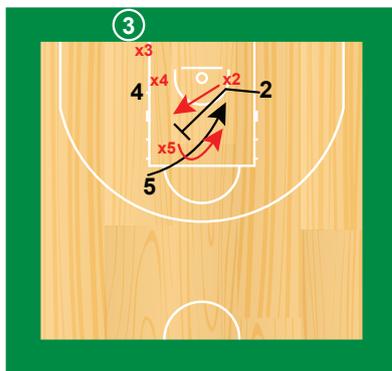
Against "man to man" defence it is often effective for the cut to the near corner to happen a little later.
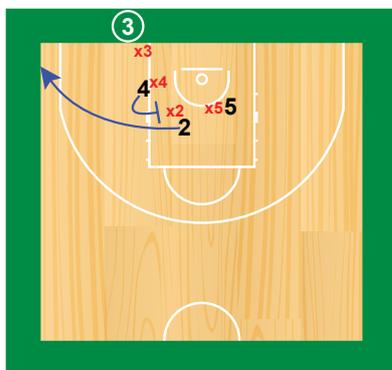
2 then cuts to the corner using a screen from 4.

Having both 4 and 5 in an attacking position near the basket (and they should look to receive a pass) can often draw the defence toward the basket, leaving the pass to the perimeter open.
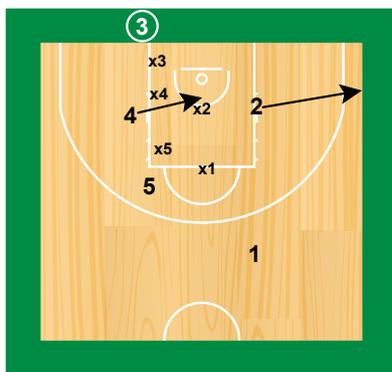
If the defence usually switches on screens, then it can be effective to "clear the space" in the near corner and then have a guard cut into the area.

Initially, both 4 and 2 move away from the ball, creating a space in the near corner.
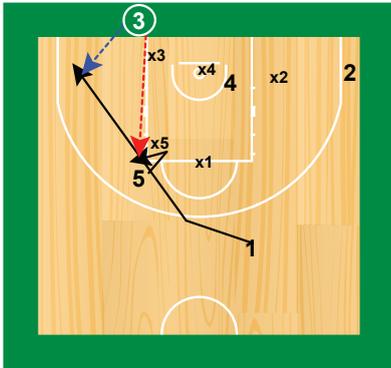
1 can then cut into this space while 5 can look to "seal" their defender to receive a lob pass.

1 could use a screen from 5, noting that 5 would need to find where x1 was - here x1 is at the foul line, not near 1.
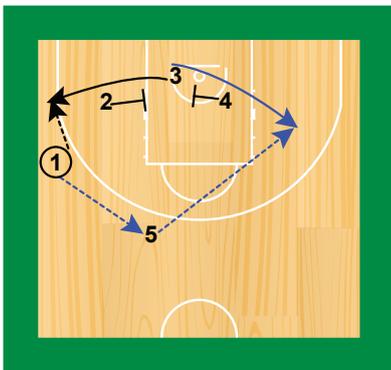
INBOUND PLAYER SHOOTING

This is the final "piece of the puzzle" – determining what the inbound player will do.

It can often be effective to have them move to a shooting position, often on the "weak" side. In this example, 2 and 4 set screens, so that 3 could cut to either corner. 5 also pops out to assist with ball reversal.

2.5.2   SIDELINE OUT OF BOUNDS

Again, there is a considerable amount of material about specific plays that can be used and the same general principles that applied to Baseline Out of Bounds, apply to a sideline play.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Some additional items for consideration are:

- Ensuring that players know where on the court the ball can be passed and, in particular, whether it can be passed into the backcourt. Players need to be particularly aware when passing to a player near the middle of the court, as a badly thrown (or poorly timed) pass may lead to a violation if it is caught by a player moving from the front court to the back court.;

- Knowing from where the sideline pass will be taken, particularly in the last two minutes of the game where an offensive team can call a time-out to "advance" the ball to the front court;

- There is often more scope for defenders to aggressively deny the inbound pass, and offensive players using back cuts can be effective.

SAFETY AREAS

There are two "safety" areas in the context of a sideline play, which, particularly for young athletes will be where most passes are made (see diagram 1) – to the middle of the court or toward the wing on the side of the court the ball is passed from. Few junior players can accurately pass the ball across the court.
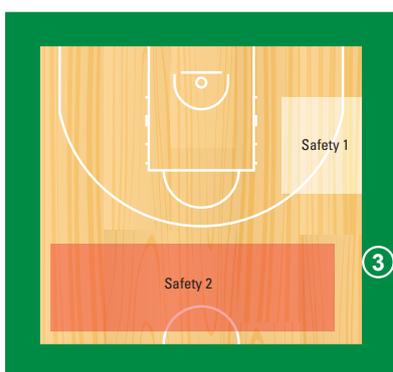
Diagram 1
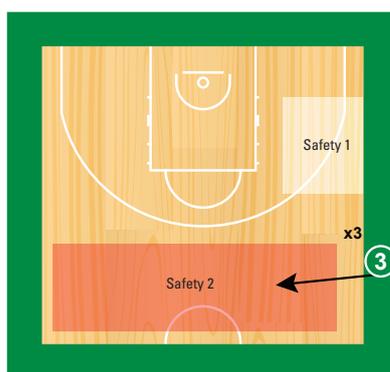
Diagram 2
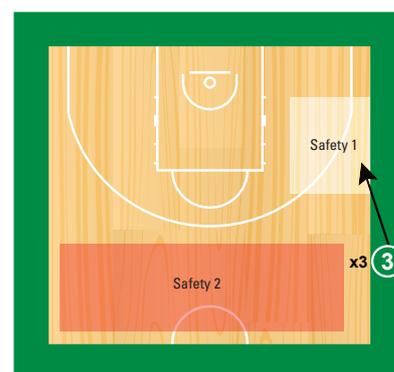
Diagram 3

Players should particularly take note of how the inbounds pass is being defended. In Diagram 2, the defender (x3) has their back to the baseline which means they are preventing the pass toward the basket or wing, so that a pass to the middle of the court may be easier. Whereas in Diagram 3, x3 has their back to the opposite sideline, which makes the pass toward the wing easier.
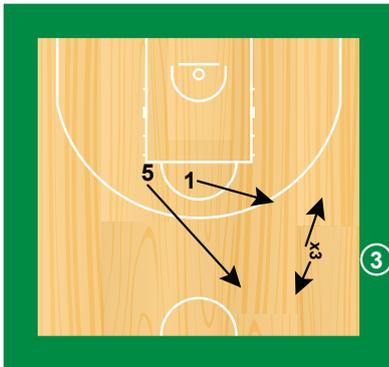
Another defensive method is for x3 to have their back to the inbounds passer so that they can see players cutting toward the ball and can deny those cuts.

This method is often used when the defensive team want to particularly deny the ball getting to one player. Here, x3 may strongly deny 1 from getting the ball, but not 5.

In this situation, having both players cut at the same time can help to have one of them get open.

There are many structured sideline plays, and coaches that want to use a structured play with junior teams should make sure that they emphasise:

• Players should "read and react" to the defence. For example, if a player is meant to set a screen, but their defender loses sight of them, then they should look to receive the ball;

• It is usually more effective for a player to catch the ball whilst they are moving, rather than standing still. If they stand still (or cut toward the ball and stop), the defender will often be able to steal the ball;

• After cutting to the ball, if a player does not receive the pass they need to move away from the area so that another player can lead to the ball.

Below is a simple structure that can be used with junior teams to inbound the ball from the sideline.
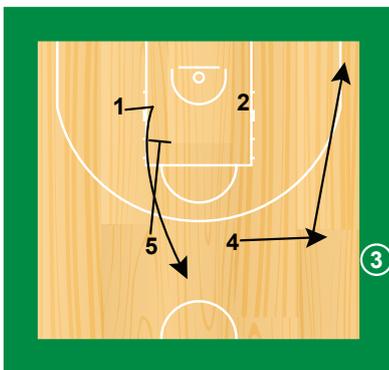
Players 1, 2, 4 and 5 start in a loose"box"alignment.

4 cuts hard toward the ball, while 5 screens down for 1.

1 cuts off 5's screen and 4 moves to the corner (to give 1 space to cut into).
This movement away from the ball will often provide the opportunity to pass to 4.
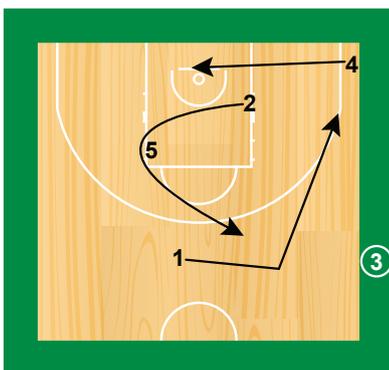
If 1 does not receive the pass cutting to the ball, they also move toward the corner, and 4 moves out of the corner.

2 cuts to the ball, and may move around 5 to create some "traffic" that may make it hard for their defender to continue to deny the ball.
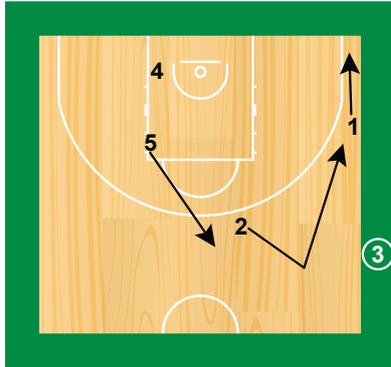
As 1 moves to the corner, and 2 moves toward the wing, 5 cuts toward the ball. This pass is often open because the defender on 5 is not as adept at denying a pass. If they do deny the pass then 5 can stop and "seal" to receive a lob pass.

2.5.3   LATE SHOT CLOCK

A "late shot clock" play is generally regarded as when there are 10 (or less) seconds remaining on the shot clock.

With the recent change to the shot clock only being reset to 14 seconds on an offensive rebound (instead of 24 seconds) the number of times in a match when an offensive team may be in a "late shot clock" situation is likely to increase.

In preparing teams for "late shot clock" situations, coaches should consider:

- Developing the awareness that players have of the shot clock;
- Offensive structure - what shot they want to get

DEVELOPING AWARENESS OF THE SHOT CLOCK

There are many "little things" that coaches can do to help to develop the awareness that players have of the shot clock. It is probably too late if during a game the coach has to yell "shot clock" as it gets below 10 seconds!

Some things that can be done are:

1. Use a shot clock in practice, preferably one that is visual not just a countdown by the coach. iPads or other tablet devices may have a countdown timer that can be used.

2. Have drink breaks at practice that are timed to be 24 seconds – helping players get used to the 24 second time frame;

3. Have players close their eyes and start counting on the coach's signal. They open their eyes when they feel that 24 seconds has passed. Most will raise their hands early;

4. Use a shot clock during scrimmage and reset it at random times. Whilst it is important that players learn the rules as to when a shot clock resets, they also need to be used to checking what is on the shot clock, and then communicating that to team mates. Some coaches place this responsibility on the point guard, however all players should develop it;

5. "Time and score" scenarios – have teams specifically practice "late clock" situations. This can be done by either:

   a. Setting a scenario at the start of a scrimmage such as, there's 12 seconds on the shot clock and the ball is on the wing;

   b. Starting a scrimmage with the rule that the team cannot shoot until the coach starts to count down from 10 – with this the coach can vary where the ball is (both location on the court and who has it);

   c. In any scrimmage, having a 14 second "shot clock" on any offensive rebound (this could also be reduced to 10 seconds).

OFFENSIVE STRUCTURE

Some coaches put in place a specific structure when the team is in a late shot clock situation, such as:

- On ball screen;
- "Flat" – ball to the point guard, other four players along the baseline;
- Dribble penetration and either shoot or pass to the perimeter for a shot;
- Get the ball into the key (either dribble penetration or pass to a post), attack the basket and try to shoot
- Ball reversal (to try to create opportunity for either dribble penetration or a shot).

COACHES MANUAL

What a particular team chooses to do will depend upon their level of experience and skill. With a young team, an on ball screen might be disastrous as it only creates a situation where there are now two defenders near or on the ball!

With young teams the rule may be as simple as if you have the ball and are in a position to shoot, then shoot!

Part of the offensive structure might also be for designated rebounders to move toward the key, as a shot will happen soon.

With more experienced teams, the most important element is to get the ball into the hands of whichever player will make the best decision of what to do – whether that is shoot themselves, penetrate or make a pass to a team mate.

Teams also need to know who they want to shoot the ball - which player has the best chance of scoring. This will obviously depend upon the skill of each player but may also depend upon what "mismatches" exist.

2.5.4   LAST POSSESSION PLAYS

"Last possession" plays are where a team is down by 1, 2 or 3 points and has possession of the ball and there is time for "one possession" – up to 24 seconds. There are two different situations:

(a) There are literally only seconds left and a shot needs to be taken very quickly;

(b) There is more time and teams will often "run down" the shot clock until there is 5-7 seconds to go before shooting. This allows some time for an offensive rebound and second scoring opportunity.

Either situation can occur in general play (e.g. taking a defensive rebound and the new offensive team having the last possession) or with the ball to be inbound from either the baseline or sideline.

Whatever the situation, all players on the team need to know how the team is approaching the situation, whether that is a structured play or the application of a rule (e.g. dribble penetrate into the key).

In designing a structure for a team to use, or deciding what to do in a particular situation, coaches should take into consideration:

• Have options for 2 point and 3 point shots. In each situation, make sure that every player knows what the game situation requires. When a team is three points down, the defence may "give up" a two point shot (to avoid fouling and giving the offence a possible "3 point play");

• Have more than one option to receive a pass;

• Make sure options are realistic for the players that you have. Particularly with junior teams, do they have the physical strength to throw long passes? Will a lob pass be effective if players are not able to "play above the ring";

• Have options that are a realistic "catch and shoot" as well as having various elements (e.g. dribble penetrate and pass or reversing the ball). The amount of time left will dictate what options are realistic;

• Choose who should be the passer based on your particular players, not what a particular "play" might say. Often a taller passer may have an advantage, particularly if the passer is defended by a taller player (a common tactic);

• Be confident and believe you can score. The best way to practice that is to practice "time and score" situations.

These considerations are demonstrated in the following simple structure:
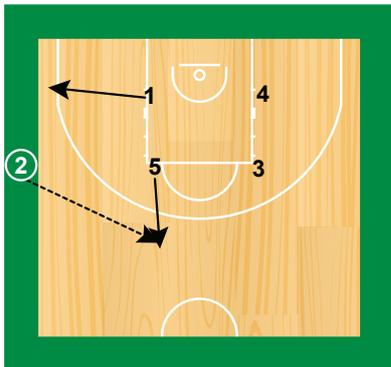
INITIAL ALIGNMENT

Players initially align in a "box".

5 cuts hard to the perimeter and 1 cuts hard to the corner. If there is only time to "catch and shoot" for the two players in these positions to be able to shoot from the perimeter.
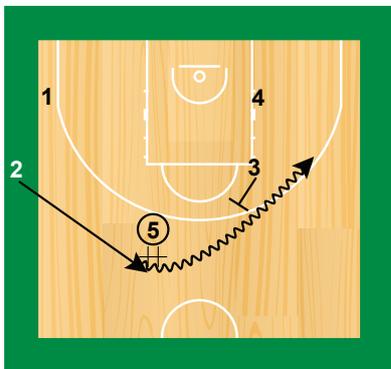
If the ball is passed to 5, 2 can sprint past for a hand-off from 5, looking to shoot off the dribble. Once they have the ball, 2 can also dribble off a screen from 3.
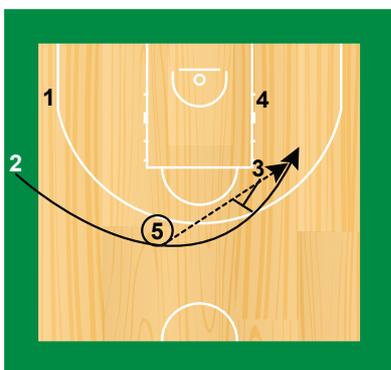
Alternatively, 2 can cut off 5 and a screen from 3, to receive a pass at the wing.
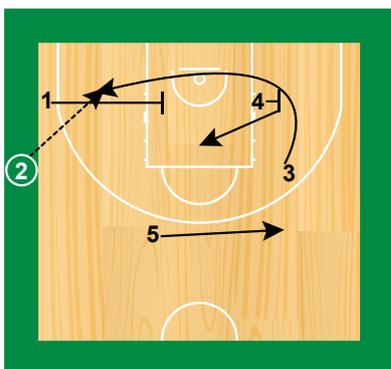
If the ball is not initially passed to either 5 or 1,

3 cut to the corner, off a staggered screen by 1 and 4.

After screening, 4 turns and steps toward the ball. 5 moves to the side.

3 should cut to where they want to shoot – it may be a 2 point shot or it may be a 3 point shot.
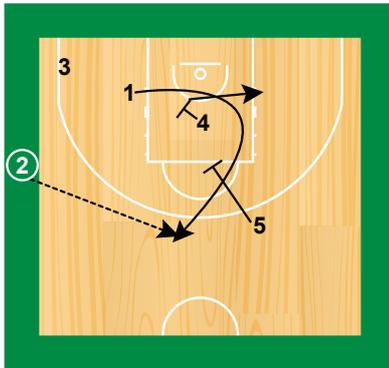
1 now comes off a staggered screen by 4 and 5.

After screening, 5 moves toward the ball and 4 moves to the opposite low post.
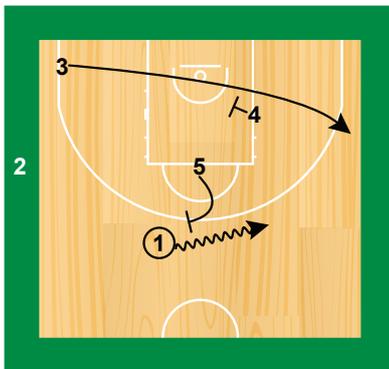
If the ball is passed to 1, they can come off a ball screen by 5, whilst 3 again cuts the baseline off a screen from 4.

2 steps into play and may receive a return pass for a shot.

How much time is left will determine to what extent the options shown are implemented. If there is little time, it may simply be that whoever catches the inbound pass needs to shoot.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Does your team have an automatic rule for offence in a "late shot clock" situation?
   Discuss with coaching colleagues what they do.

2. How often do you think your team gets a good scoring opportunity from a baseline inbounds play?
   Have someone record this at your next game – was your expectation correct?

3. Do you have a sideline offensive play? Discuss with other coaching colleagues their approach?

4. Who on your team would you want to take a "last second" 2 point shot or 3 point shot?
   Discuss with a coach that has watched your team play who they thought would take those shots.

CHAPTER 3

MANAGEMENT

3.1   LEAGUE COACHING

3.1.1   CHARACTERISTICS OF LEAGUE COACHING

Coaching in a league typically means that your team:

- Plays in a competition that is played over a relatively lengthy period of time (the exact period very much depends upon the league). The season generally has four distinct phases:
  - Pre-season;
  - Regular season ("home and away" games);
  - Play-offs (finals);
  - Off-season (when players may continue to work with the team or may be involved in other programs (e.g. other leagues or national team commitments) or may take a break;
- Plays half of their games at home, which may include a greater variety of distractions to preparation than when the team is "away";
- Plays the same opponents a number of times during the season;
- Generally has a number of days rest between games;
- May be required to travel between games and this travel may be immediately before the game or be over significant distances;
- At the conclusion of the season in addition to overall "wins and losses", the record against a particular team may determine the team's position on the ladder.

The extent of preparation that a coach does will very much depend upon the team. A junior team may only practice once or twice a week, compared to a professional team where players are at the club every day.

Despite these differences, the context of "league coaching" (as distinct from tournament coaching) does need to be considered.

RECRUITING AND SELECTING A TEAM

A coach must seek clarity from the club about what level of control the club will have over the selection of players. In some contexts (e.g. a professional team) the coach may be actively involved with recruiting players, while other coaches (e.g. a junior team) may not actively recruit and instead must select a team from the players that express an interest in playing.

When recruiting, the coach should:

- Avoid promises of "court time" that the player will receive;
- Discuss with prospective players the role within the team that they believe the player might undertake;
- Consider involving players to assist with recruiting;
- Consider what stage of development the team is at (is playing in finals realistic in the near future?) and develop a strategy (approved by the club) to balance experienced players with young players that are identified as having potential to excel in future years, but not necessarily immediately;
- Determine the style of play that they believe will be successful in the league and recruit players that will excel in that style of play;
- "Recruit people, not players" — take time to get to know the personalities of prospective players, and recruit players that will fit the culture of the club and the personalities of the coach and the team;
- "Listen to the opinion of others but make their own decision" — coaches should seek the opinion of other coaches, managers and administrators regarding potential players, however ultimately the coach must make their own decision as to whether they want to recruit the player.

The biggest difference between recruiting and selecting a team is that the coach that is recruiting can be more targeted in identifying players to fit a particular style of play. If selecting a team it is often prudent to choose the game style after the team is identified.

When selecting a team, coaches should:

- "Not select players based on what they can do now but select them on what the coach believes they will be able to do" – this will include considering how "coachable" a player is and how they will fit within the team culture;

- Clearly state the selection process (and comply with it!);

- Use uncomplicated contested activities as much as possible – many coaches run "complex" activities or patterns of play, which may favour players that have previously been involved in the programme;

- Be methodical and take notes to ensure that all players have been evaluated;

- Seek input from other coaches;

- Spend more time with the players that they have not previously coached (some clubs will have an initial trial that is specifically for players that have not previously been involved).

Particularly when selecting a team, coaches must be prepared to provide some feedback to players that are not selected, and with junior players, this should involve areas for the player's continued development. In giving feedback, the coach should avoid making comparisons with other players and should keep comments in relation to that particular player.

PRE-SEASON PLAY

The length of a pre-season will vary from team to team. Often it is simply the period between team selection and their first game!

A pre-season is an important time to:

- Build aerobic fitness;

- Implement a basic offensive and defensive structure, including:

  - Transition – offence and defence;

  - Half Court – offence and defence;

  - Breaking pressure – offence.

- "Experiment" with different styles of play or different roles for players. It can also be a good opportunity to evaluate new team members as well as see which players have "developed" their game;

- Start to "scout" opponents, particularly what style of game they may prefer and the characteristics of their key players.

Particularly with junior teams the offensive and defensive structure can be very simple. For example:

- Offensive transition may simply be (a) "run the lanes" (as fast as possible), (b) pass the ball ahead and (c) 2v1 and 3v2 play.

- Similarly, defensive transition might be (a) "Jam" the rebounder (make it hard for them to make a quick pass), (b) defend the basket first and (c) then put pressure on the ball handler.

PREPARING THE TEAM – 'WHEN' IS AS IMPORTANT AS 'WHAT'

Given that leagues are played over a number of weeks or months, often much longer than any pre-season period the coach has with the team, it is not necessary for the coach to have "put everything in" before the first game. In their plan, the coach should identify when each of the various concepts will be introduced, and this may include leaving some until the season has started.

It is a mistake for coaches to work first on structured offensive sets without ensuring that the players have the necessary fundamentals to effectively execute those sets.

Obviously the system and structures that the coach can have in place prior to the start of the league will depend upon the skill and experience of the team.

Some coaches also choose not to use various aspects of their playbook in the initial part of the season, so that teams "scouting" them do not see all the strategies that they may have in place.

This is a legitimate tactic to use, however, coaches should also be conscious that often when a team plays in a competitive situation, the coach will recognize different things that need to be worked on, beyond what they see in practice. This may be because at practice all players know what the team is doing and accordingly "cheat" or react not to what is happening but what is meant to happen.

Therefore, if the coach does want to keep some aspects of their play "secret" early in the season, they should look for other competitive opportunities to practice it – perhaps bringing in another team, or some other players, against whom they can to practice the strategy.

PREPARING TO PLAY AN OPPONENT MULTIPLE TIMES

Because teams play opponents a number of times during the season, league play provides an opportunity to be well prepared. However, it is important not to assume that an opponent will play as they did on the last occasion, because:

- They may be implementing patterns of play throughout the season;
- They may change tactics based upon what worked (or didn't work) on the last occasion;
- The last game may have been particularly good (or bad);
- The roles of individual players may have changed due to injury, form (good or poor) or other factors.

Accordingly, coaches should still scout an opponent, even if they have played them before, using video, statistics as well as notes taken after the last game (or series of games).

When preparing to play an opponent again, the coach should review:

- What worked well on the last occasion (e.g. particular screening action, type of defence);
- What tempo did the opponent prefer and how did they attempt to influence the tempo;
- How did the opponent defend key parts of the team's offence;
- Where there any particular "match-ups" where the team either had a particular advantage or disadvantage.

At the end of the season ladder position may depend upon the "split" between teams. Coaches must be familiar with the particular rules of their league, however often if the teams are otherwise equal (e.g. same number of games won-lost) the team that won the most games between them, or has the best points differential between them, will be ranked higher on the ladder. This adds additional importance to each game.

REVIEWING PERFORMANCE AND CHANGING TACTICS

Coaches will constantly review the performance of their own team and should spend at least as much time on their own team as they do "scouting" upcoming opponents. Their review should not simply look at ladder positions or "wins and losses" and instead should look at how the team is performing and how each player is performing.

When a team is not playing well, the coach must form a view on whether:

(a) The tactics chosen for the team are appropriate (but not necessarily performed to standard); or

(b) The tactics for the team need to be changed.

Some factors that need to be considered in reaching this decision are:

- Any injuries that the team has had;
- The player's comprehension of the tactics;
- The physical attributes and skill level of individual players on the team (particularly comparative to other teams in the league);

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• The objectives for success for the team – is the focus short term (i.e. win the championship this season) or longer term (i.e. preparing the team to be competitive within a certain timeframe);

• How long does the coach have to make any changes (this includes both; at what point in the season the team is, as well as how often they train).

There is no definitive guideline to determine whether or not a coach should change tactics nor what changes they should make. Changes do not have to completely "throw out" what the team had prepared and instead the coach can consider:

- Changing the starting line-up or substitution pattern;

- Being more prescriptive about what options the team is to use and at what point in the game they will do so (for example, using a particular "start" before moving into motion offence);

- Changing the roles of players (e.g. moving a point guard to the shooting guard position);

- Preferring a particular option within their team's offensive and defensive schemes (e.g. opting to "go under" when defending ball screens).

PLAY-OFFS

Different leagues will have different formats for the finals (or "play offs"). Teams may play a "sudden death" game (e.g. winner of one game proceeds to the next stage) or they may play a series (e.g. first team to win 4 games proceeds to the next stage).

Whatever the format, it is likely that you will be meeting an opponent again that you have already played a number of times and accordingly, in preparation need to consider:

- What worked well against them previously (e.g. individual match-ups, tempo or patterns of play) and what adjustments they might make;

- In what areas did they have an advantage previously (e.g. individual match-ups, tempo or patterns of play) and what adjustments can be made to negate this;

- Has the opponent introduced any changes to how they play since the team last played them;

- What is the recent form of the opposition players and, in particular, is it likely that players will have different roles (either time played or positional role) than when previously playing against them?

When preparing for play-offs coaches need to anticipate what changes to tactics the opponent may make and, whilst there may be objective data (e.g. observation of what the opponent has done in other games) it also includes an element of speculation. In addition to watching the opponent's previous games (which, particularly with junior teams, may be difficult), the coach can consider an attempt to identify possible changes of tactics:

- Looking for opposition players that average more shots per game when playing against other opponents – they may take more shots in the play-offs than they did when played against them in the regular season;

- Which teams in the league are most similar and how did the opponent play against them – any difference in tactics may also be used in the play-offs.

OTHER FACTORS THE COACH SHOULD CONSIDER ARE:

- Keep the routine in the play-offs the same as during the regular season as much as possible – consistent preparation leads to consistent performance;

- "Control the controllables" – play-offs often involve short recovery time between games, more travel, more media commitments and these can easily become excuses for poor performance. Elite teams, however, do not let things out of their control impact performance and do not allow any team member to suggest otherwise.

PEAK PERFORMANCE

A season (including pre-season) is often very long and it is often difficult (if not impossible) to play to maximum potential for its entirety. Indeed, a measure of an elite performing team is often how they manage to win even when they are not playing well.

Obviously the team wants to be playing at its best at the end of the season, however coaches should avoid placing too much emphasis on it, after all the team must first qualify for the play-offs! Importantly, part of preparing a team to "peak" for the finals is to expect that performance will vary during the season and to remember that one poor performance does not constitute a "slump".

Some techniques that will assist to prepare a team to "peak" at the end of the season are:

• Use of objectives and measures that are within the control of the team to evaluate performance. For example, a defensive team cannot control how well an opponent shoots the ball, however they can control whether or not every shot the opponent takes was contested. The team may lose, but have contested every shot, or conversely win, but have contested less than half of the shots.

"Confidence" is perhaps the most important element in determining whether or not a team (or player) is successful, and feeling "in control" of performance is very important to confidence.

• Give players physical rest during the season, which should be done in conjunction with advice from conditioning staff;

• Have conditioning staff work with players that are playing minimal minutes to work on all attributes of their fitness in an effort to keep the players "match fit";

• Make sure that players understand the importance of "physical recover" and that they undertake appropriate activities (whether on their own or as a team);

• Respect the differences between players some players will want to be at the club all day, every day. Others will do the "minimum" but equally value time away from the club;

• Encourage players to have interests outside of basketball and give them sufficient time that they can pursue such interests (including family!);

• Give players psychological "rest" during the season. Have assistant coaches or senior players lead some sessions (both on and off court) and schedule adequate breaks in the schedule;

• Incorporate "cross training" activities during the season, where players do non-basketball activities. For example, many principles of play are similar in other invasion sports (e.g. hockey, soccer) and using such activities can continue to develop the team but also give them a "break" from the long season.

SCOUTING YOUR OPPONENTS

"Scouting" is simply finding out some information about an upcoming opponent. In a league, one of the most effective ways to "scout" an opponent is to play against them and the coach should make notes at the end of each game that can be reviewed prior to playing that opponent again.

There are three distinct parts to scouting an opponent:

1. Getting information about them;

2. Deciding what your team will do in view of that information;

3. Presenting "the scout" to your team.

GETTING INFORMATION ABOUT AN OPPONENT

There are many ways to get information about a team, such as:

• Speaking to colleagues that are coaching in the league and have played them;

• Reviewing statistics and game results;

• Reports in newspapers or information provided by the league (e.g. on a website);

• Asking your own players – they may know some of the players from the other team

• Watching the team.

Which of these you will be able to do depends very much upon the league your are in, the resources that your club has and how much time you have. Most coaches (if they have the time) prefer to see the opponent "live".

Video does not always capture the whole court (particularly a TV telecast which often focuses on the ball) and it is also difficult to hear what coaches or players are saying during the game (e.g. calling a play).

Below are a number of things to take into account when watching an upcoming opponent:

DO	
	Watch the team warm-up. It's a good way to find out which players are left or right handed and an indication of how well they shoot from the perimeter
	Make a note of which players start each quarter and the first one or two substitutions each quarter
	Watch the game initially without taking too many notes – focus on tendencies that the team has (e.g. what defence do they play and is it aggressive?)
	Prepare a simple "scouting" document, so that you can take notes quickly ("ticking" boxes as you see tendencies or concepts of play).
	Use time-outs and other breaks in play to write notes
	Make a note of any particular game situations and what their response was (e.g. 10 points down with a few minutes to play, they went to full court press)
	Listen and see if you can hear what any plays are called

DON'T	
	Be a "fan" – simply observing and analysing the game

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When scouting you must consider first, what is the team doing?
Secondly, what impact it may have upon your team? An example scouting form:

OPPONENT		FOR US TO CONSIDER?
TEAM DEFENCE		
"MAN-TO-MAN" DEFENCE		
aggressive or passive?		
pressure on the ball?		
get to the "split line"?		
rotate to "help the helper"?		
"block out"?		
double team post players?		
deny passing lanes		
release early to trigger fast break		
guard ball screens (switch, double, through, over or push)		
guard off ball screens (switch, through, under or over)		
ZONE DEFENCE		
alignment		
trapping?		
do they deny foul line area		
do they deny short corner		
are they easily screened		
PRESS DEFENCE		
alignment		
pick up point		
trapping areas		
trigger (free throw, time-out, score)		

This table is designed so that the coach may "tick" the shaded box when they see a particular defensive strategy or can make a very short note (e.g. "½" may be written in the shaded box if the pick-up point of a press is half way).

In the final column the coach can write notes about what their team might do in response to that defensive tactic.

A similar table could be used for team offence, particularly taking into consideration:

- Fast Break – do they look to break? What triggers it?
- Half Court – what alignment? How well do they move the ball? Do they cut well?
- Offensive sets – do they play any particular set or action (e.g. "Flex" or "Horns"). How do they signify what play to use (verbal or visual signs)?
- Tempo – are they a controlled team or do they prefer a quick tempo?
- Do they chase offensive rebounds – guards, forwards?
- Are they organized against a zone defence – do they look for inside shots or outside shots?
- What screens do they use? Do they "screen the screener"?

In relation to individual players, the coach may note:

- Which is their preferred hand?
- Are they a "shooter" or a "driver"?
- Do they look to pass?
- Which direction do they prefer to drive (often a right hand player may prefer to drive to their left)
- Do they "block out" in defensive rebounding situations? Do they chase offensive rebounds?
- Are they a screener or do they receive screens?
- Do post players turn to their left or right or face the basket?

DECIDING WHAT YOUR TEAM WILL DO

After watching the opponent play, the coach may have some initial thoughts on match-ups or particular principles of play (e.g. playing zone defence or looking to isolate a particular "match up" in offence").

The level of sophistication that the coach can use will depend upon the experience and skill level of their team. For example, the coach may have observed that their upcoming opponent did not play well against a zone defence. However, if their own team has not practiced a zone defence that may not be a strategy that they can use.

The coach's game plan should draw upon what they have been working on with their team. It may also prompt the coach to introduce some principles of play that they were not going to do until later (e.g. if an opponent plays a pressing full court defence, the coach may need to cover team strategies to "break the press").

PREPARING THE SCOUT

In a league situation, a coach will generally have some time to prepare and present their "scout" to the team – to be most effective it is recommended that the scout focus not on the opponent but on what the team will do.

The coach should resist the temptation to tell everything they know about the opposition (as this may overwhelm some players) but instead, need to present as little information as possible.

The Scout can be presented in a number of different ways, and the coach should be conscious of the different learning styles that their players may have.

PRESENTING THE SCOUT

With all information presented, the coach must be careful not to scare their team, even where the coach may believe that their team is unlikely to win the game. In this situation, identifying some key objectives (other than the final score) can be beneficial.

For example, the coach may set targets for rebounds, forcing turnovers or other elements of the game. Indeed, setting a goal such as to be within 4 points of the opposition every 5 minutes, can be a good focus. In the game it will enable the coach to "reset" every 5 minutes, irrespective of the overall game situation.

If a goal of being "within 4 points" every 5 minutes was achieved, the team may still lose by 30 points, however they will be able to gain confidence from achieving the goal.

WRITTEN SCOUT

The coach may prepare notes for their players about the upcoming game which can include information about the opposition or particular players and must include what their own team will do (including any match-ups that the coach may prefer). The level of information included will depend upon the experience of the team – the more experienced the team, the more information they may want.

The coach may work through the report at a pre-practice meeting, but should not simply read the document – the players can read it themselves. The coach should give some key information and then hand out the report, which substantiates those key points.

VIDEO

The coach may have been able to obtain video footage of the opponent and may wish to show some of the tendencies that the opponent has (either as a team or particular individuals). In preparing this footage the coach should make sure that they don't make the opponent seem better.

With experienced athletes they may even prefer to watch the game (either on video or live) or part of the game themselves. If doing this, the coach should then arrange a time to have the athletes talk about what they observed (this can even be done at half time of the game). In this discussion, the coach can make sure that any points that they observed are also included, but should let the athletes do most of the talking.

With junior athletes though, the more effective video may be of their own team, showing examples of where the team has performed the concepts that will be required against this opponent. Such a video should have a balance between successful examples and those where execution was poor.

Video sessions should be kept short and may be more effective with small groups rather than the whole team. Even then, 7-10 minutes would be the extent of concentration of most players.

WHITEBOARD

The coach may simply talk to the team about the scout, perhaps using a whiteboard to show any particular principles of play. Again, this should be kept short and its focus must ultimately be on what the team is going to do, not on their opponent.

"WALK THROUGH"

At practice, the coach can use activities to practice the particular tactics that they want to employ against the opponent. In doing this, it is obviously necessary for the team to also play like their opponent is likely to. However, rather than spending time teaching "this is what our opponent will do", the coach should present that activity based upon "this is what we will do".

A "walk through" session is most effective if it is reinforcing concepts that the team has previously practiced. Introducing a new concept during a walk through is unlikely to be effective, particularly with junior athletes.

SCOUTING YOUR OWN TEAM

It can be useful for a coach to "scout" their own team or have a colleague do it as this can provide useful information on the progress the team is making toward their overall objectives.

If the coach has an assistant coach, it can also be useful to arrange a practice game and let the assistant coach take the team while the coach observes from the spectator seating. This can provide an opportunity to give feedback to the assistant coach, which can be good for their development. It may also be that the assistant coach will make some different decisions that the coach would, which may allow the coach to observe players or the team in a different situation.

If getting videos of your own team, the coach should ask whoever takes the video, not to make comments during the game (which the video often also records). In replaying the video to the team, the coach should always turn the sound off, just in case there are comments heard on the video that may be upsetting to a player.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Discuss with a coach from another sport (that competes in "league play"):

   a. What tactics do they want in place before the season starts;

   b. Do they introduce tactics during the season;

   c. How do they ensure their team is performing at its best at the end of the season.

2. What records do you keep after a game? Do they help you to prepare the next time you play that team? Discuss with other coaching colleagues their approach.

3. What goals would you set a junior team when they are playing an opponent that beat them by 30 points earlier in the season? What goals would you use if your team beat an upcoming opponent by 30 points earlier in the season?

4. Discuss the following statement with coaching colleagues With junior teams (up to age 15) your focus should be on how they play not on changing tactics to suit particular opponents.

3.2 TEAM PREPARATION FOR (LONG) TOURNAMENT PLAY

3.2.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF LONG TOURNAMENT PLAY

"Long Tournaments" are typically played by representative teams, with players chosen from a range of other teams (e.g. national teams).

"Tournament Play" is unique in many aspects and is characterized by:

- The team being likely to have had limited preparation together and may consist of players that are all "starters" on their other teams;
- Being played in a short time, no more than 2 weeks;
- The team having relatively little rest between games (perhaps 24-48 hours) and in junior tournaments may play more than one game on one day;
- Teams being grouped into "pools" and results in the initial 2-3 games may determine where the team are placed at the tournament. Regularly, a team may lose only one game (quarter final) and not gain a place in the Top 4;
- Variable game times, with games in the morning, afternoons and at night;
- Playing each opponent only once.

"Tournament Play" will often have many distractions for athletes, which are not present throughout a league, such as:

- Living away from home;
- The tournament may be a part of a "multi-sport" event with different sports finishing at different times (typically, basketball continues throughout the event);
- Changes to diet, sleeping routines (with different game times) and possible social interaction problems caused by "living together".

In preparing a team, the main things that a coach must consider are:

- Selecting the team;
- Selecting assistant coaches and "support staff"
- The Team's "Playbook" – preparing for what they will do on court;
- Organising the "off-court" – putting the tournament together;
- Understanding the Tournament Rules.

3.2.2   LONG TOURNAMENTS - SELECTING THE TEAM

A team competing at a tournament is often called an "all-star" team, however it is not simply a matter of selecting the 10 or 12 "best" players.

The coach must consider:

- The style of play they want for the team;
- The team having a "balance" (guards, forwards and centres);
- The selection policy and criteria set by whichever body is responsible for the team.

The coach will have a limited number of sessions with players in order to pick the team. These sessions should allow the players to "play", giving them an opportunity to demonstrate their skills. Most of the activities should be contested, whether that is 1x1, 4x4, an "advantage / disadvantage" situation (e.g. 2x1) or 5x5. The coach may do little teaching during the session, although they are trying to make an assessment of how "coachable" athletes are.

Typically, the coach may "set up" what they want done in an activity (e.g. ball reversal, with down screen) and this may reflect or include concepts that they wish to use with the team in the tournament.

The coaching staff need to assess each athlete in terms of what contribution they can make to the team at this tournament. This will include making an assessment of the player's:

- skill level;
- versatility to play a number of roles within the team;
- attitude – will they "accept" their role on the team, particularly if their role is likely to be as a "non-starter";
- understanding of team concepts and how responsive they are to coaching.

Ideally, the coach will have had the opportunity to watch the player play prior to the selection session, although more likely they have seen some but not all of the athletes. This makes selection particularly difficult because the coach may tend to prefer the athletes that they are familiar with.

The selection policy will include a process that the coach must follow. It is recommended that coaches:

- seek input from a "panel" of coaches;
- that all coaches involved in the selection process make brief notes on each athlete;
- in the selection meeting, work through the complete list of athletes being considered and group them into the role they could play on the team (guard, forward, and centre). Every athlete must be put into a category and this ensures that no athlete will be overlooked. An athlete may be included in more than one category;
- coaches should discuss each athlete after each session, working through the list logically (e.g. alphabetically) as this will help coaches to identify if there are athletes they want to see "more".

3.2.3   LONG TOURNAMENTS - PREPARING THE TEAM PRIOR TO TOURNAMENT

A coach will often have very limited preparation time with a team prior to a long tournament, perhaps as little as a few days.

During the period leading up to a tournament a player may be involved in another team or may be in an "off season" break. In either event, the coach should arrange to keep in contact with the athletes prior to the tournament.

The coach should keep in contact with athletes to:

• Check on their fitness, particularly to understand the progress of any injury rehabilitation or treatment for illness;

• Ensure that the player understands what role the coach wants them to play with the team at the tournament;

• Information about the tournament (e.g. game schedule, accommodation arrangements, travel arrangements etc) – often this may be provided by a team manager.

Whilst social media can be an effective way to keep in contact it is often better for the coach to regularly speak with them as this will help to build a rapport with the player. This may also be shared between the head coach and their assistant coaches, although many players prefer to have contact with the head coach.

Prior to the tournament, the coach may also share technical information with their players, such as:

• A "playbook" of what strategies and tactics the team will use at the tournament;

• Scouting information on likely opponents (both teams and players);

• With senior athletes, the coach may seek their input into team tactics or scouting.

3.2.4   LONG TOURNAMENTS - SCOUTING

SCOUTING OPPONENTS

"Scouting" an opponent in a tournament is similar to scouting them in league play, but there are significant differences:

- Less opportunities to scout them before you play them;

- There is less time to prepare "the scout" and present it to the team;

- At the start of the week, you will not know who you are playing at the end of the week – there may a number of teams that it could be – do you (can you) scout them all?

During a tournament, coaches will spend a lot of time at the competition venue, watching possible opponents. You may be able to get video-footage of these opponents. How useful that is will depend upon what resources the coach has:

- Does the coach have a TV / computer to watch videos on?

- Does the coach have software that enables the video to be broken down into small segments? Does the software do this automatically (by "coding" the video) or is it a manual process?

- If games are on TV, can they be recorded? If recorded, how is it put into a format where the software can break it down?

- Is there an assistant coach that can assist or take responsibility for preparation of the video?

- Do the coaches have time to prepare the video? They may be able to do some, but not all, games.

In most circumstances, the coach will scout an opponent by watching them play.

During a tournament, a coach may have less than 24 hours between knowing who their opponent will be and the game being played. It is not possible in this time to prepare lengthy "scouts", nor would the players be able to absorb that information.

The focus of presenting the "scout" to your team should be on what your team will do. You may set specific objectives that relate to what you have observed of your opponent (e.g. an objective for defensive rebounds, when an opponent is a good offensive rebounding team). You may also choose particular tactics (e.g. play zone, play a trapping defence) based upon observation of the opponent.

Whether or not a team will practice, or "shoot around" during the tournament is up to the coach (assuming that a venue is available) and will be influenced by when games are being played and whether or not the players would be better served by resting. If the team does practice, it provides an opportunity to walk through the specific tactics the team wants to use in the upcoming game.

3.2.5   LONG TOURNAMENTS - KEEPING PLAYERS FRESH

Long tournaments will be both physically and mentally tiring for both coaches and players and the coach must try to ensure that players are in good health at the end of the week.

Some key considerations are to:

- use physical recovery techniques during the tournament;

- ensure that players get enough rest during the week, including both getting enough sleep as well as resting during the day. Often choosing to go to the movies (which is sedentary) may be a better activity than "sightseeing, which may involve a lot of walking;

- give the players "time off" from basketball;

- allow for the players to have time with family or fans (this is particularly important for junior teams) but not so that it distracts the players;

- provide good meals for the players, keeping the food, where possible, similar to what the players are used to eating;

- only train when necessary (or if the players prefer to train) and to keep sessions short with minimal physical and psychological load.

Coaches should also consider the amount of time that players are involved in games and to provide rest, where possible, for the players that are playing the most time. For example, when winning by a large margin the coach may rest some of the "starters". In addition to giving players physical rest, the coach may also want to give all players in the team some court time, so that if they are called upon to play (e.g. due to foul trouble or injury of other players) they will have some confidence on court.

However, when considering giving rest to players, the coach must also be conscious of the effect that it may have on the team's performance or "momentum" in the game. Specifically, the coach should consider:

- rather than resting all "starters" at the same time, it may be better to rotate players in so that some starters continue to play;

- "win the game and then rest" is a maxim that many coaches follow. Even if an upcoming opponent is thought to be an "easier" game, making large changes to the starting line-up or substitution patterns may disrupt the team's performance. Accordingly, some coaches prefer to establish a good lead and to then make changes to substitution patterns;

- margins of victory can determine placings later in the tournament where teams are otherwise tied on "win-loss" ratio. Accordingly, the coach must make sure that they understand the tournament rules and do not compromise their final placing by having a reduced winning margin (or losing a game) when changing substitution patterns.

3.2.6 LONG TOURNAMENTS - COACHING STAFF

SELECTING ASSISTANT COACHES AND SUPPORT STAFF

Hopefully the coach will, at the very least, have input into who is appointed as assistant coach for the team as well as team managers and other support staff (e.g. physiotherapist).

Overall, the coach should look for an assistant coach that complements their own strengths and weaknesses and broadens the skill set of the coaching staff. For example, coach Phil Jackson utilized Tex Winter's experience and knowledge of the "triangle offence" with both the Chicago Bulls and Los Angeles Lakers.

It serves little purpose to have an assistant coach that will simply agree with everything that the coach proposes. The assistant coach must be prepared to provide feedback and comments to the coach that may offer a different perspective or to suggest a different course of action.

Once a decision has been made, the coaches must be consistent in how that is communicated to the players, even if the assistant coach had disagreed in the private conversations with the coach.

The coach should designate specific roles for the assistant coach to perform in games, at practice and throughout the preparation for the tournament and the period of the tournament itself. This should include the assistant coach having a role "on court" during the preparation period and at practices as this is important for them to build a rapport with, and the trust of, players.

Similarly, the roles given to the assistant coach in the game must be meaningful – if the assistant is to keep a record of certain statistics then the coaches ought to review those statistics and, when appropriate, provide feedback to the players drawn from the statistics.

3.2.7   LONG TOURNAMENTS - ORGANISING THE OFF-COURT

UNDERSTANDING THE TOURNAMENT RULES

The coach must understand the rules of the tournament, particularly if they vary the game rules (e.g. limit the number of time-outs that can be called).

Other rules the coach needs to understand:

- When teams are tied, how is their placing determined;
- Which team wears "light" and which team wears "dark" uniforms in a given game;
- Which changing room the team uses?

In regards to teams that are tied, the placings are usually determined by:

- If two teams are tied – whichever team won the game that they played against each other;
- If three or more teams are tied – Points Difference, but only for the games involving the teams that are tied.

Accordingly, coaches may be conscious in a game of the significance of a potential "points difference" however it is paramount, and FIBA expects that all teams will play within the Spirit of the Game.

There are a number of things that the coach must consider in preparing for each game in the tournament:

- "Scouting Opponents";
- Relationship with the Referees;
- Setting Objectives;
- "Player Satisfied" Index;
- Keeping Yourself Well;
- Delegate Responsibility.

3.2.8 LONG TOURNAMENTS - OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

RELATIONSHIP WITH OFFICIALS

During the tournament it is likely that teams will have the same referee officiate their game on a number of occasions. Coaches should strive to have excellent relationships with all referees. This starts with speaking with them before each game.

There is no "magic" secret to having a good relationship with referees – it is simply a matter of treating them with respect. Ask them how the tournament is going for them – engage them in a short conversation. Ask what trends they are seeing, they may have even officiated your opponent. The more a coach builds a rapport with referees, the easier it is to raise an issue if that needs to be done.

Each player should shake hands with the referees at the end of the game and do so sincerely and consistently. No coach would like to have players swear or yell at them, and nor should they accept a player yelling at a referee (and the coach must not either).

SETTING OBJECTIVES

In a tournament, there is little time between one game and the next and there may be emotional "highs" and "lows" that need to be forgotten and for the next game to be the focus. By setting specific objectives for each game, the coach helps the players to remain focused on the next game.

The objectives may be consistent throughout the week (e.g. keep opponents to less than 10 offensive rebounds) or they may be specific to that game, and that opponent. These objectives provide the foundation to evaluate performance in the game and this can be important to "forgetting" an exceptionally good or bad performance earlier in the week.

FOLLOW-UP

1. What are the main differences between tournament play and league play?

2. What activities would you use in a selection trial for a team to compete in a tournament?
   What differences would you make if selecting a team for league play?

3. Once the team competing in a tournaments is selected, how would you communicate the structure with the players?

4. Discuss with a coaching colleague who has coached at a tournament:

   a. If they trained during the tournament;

   b. What "scouting" of opponents they did and how they did it;

   c. What adjustments the coaches made during the tournament to either the roles players had or structure of play?

5. Watch a game and get a video of it if you can. Limit yourself to 6 hours to prepare a presentation to your team to and prepare them for a game against one of the teams.

CHAPTER 4

GAME COACHING

4.1   FINISHING THE GAME

4.1.1   DEFENDING A LEAD

DEFENDING A LEAD

Having the lead with a few minutes left in the game is what every team aims to do. In many games the offensive team will seem to have a comfortable lead and the game will finish relatively quickly.

However, as anyone that has seen the video of Reggie Miller scoring 8 points for the Indiana Pacers in 9 seconds of play against the New York Knicks[7] knows the game is not over until the final siren sounds.

Many teams seemingly find it difficult to defend a lead when their opponent starts to catch up.

At its simplest "defending a lead" is just continuing to do whatever it was that got the lead! Obviously, the opponent can only get back into the game if they are able to outscore the opponent. This places maximum importance on both teams getting the best shot opportunity that they can each possession. An excellent activity to practice this is the Two Halves Scrimmage:

- Designate two teams (3x3, 4x4 or 5x5) who will play against each other for two periods (e.g. 3-5 minutes each half). They play in the half court and the coach can stipulate any particular "rules" in order to change the emphasis of the drill;

- After the defence get the ball, either through a steal, rebound or an offensive score, the defence goes to the other end to score unguarded. They can shoot a two point shot or a three point shot and continue shooting until they get a score;

- The defensive team then return the ball to the offence and play to again play contested in the half court;

- At half time of the scrimmage, the defensive team should have a lead – as they scored on every possession! Teams switch in the second half, so that the team that was on offence is now on defence.

- Pressure is placed on the new offensive team (who most probably have a lead) because they know that every time the defensive team have the ball they will score.

As important as "shot selection" is, there are a number of other things which the coach should consider when preparing their team (and also coaching during a game) for preparing to defend a lead.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FREE THROWS

Commonly, a team that is down will foul their opponent so that little time is taken before the team that is down next get a possession. If the team that is fouled makes the resulting free throws, it is harder for the team that is down to catch up.

Teams need to practice free throws every practice and need to do so under "game-like" pressure, such as:

- Taking free throws when tired (e.g. after running);

- Only taking a small number of shots (1, 2 or 3) at a time;

- Imposing a penalty when shots are missed (e.g. have a drink break if made, sprint full court if missed);

- Activities where every player must contribute (e.g. the team must make 10 shots in a row, each player shooting once). This type of activity can seemingly place more "pressure" on the shooter as the team gets closer to the goal.

- Shooting while there are distractions (e.g. playing loud music, allowing players to yell and try to distract the shooter)

Coaches should also be conscious of who are the better free throw shooters in the team and look to get the ball into their hands so that it is more likely to be them that is fouled and has the free throws.

RESTING PLAYERS

Once a team has established a lead it is often an opportunity to rest some starters and to give more court time to players that do not usually play as much. This can be particularly important during a tournament in order to give key players a rest and it is also for the development of the other players.

However, the danger is that the opponent may "catch up" whilst the substitutes are on and then that team has the momentum even when the starters come back into the game. Some coaches avoid any problems by not changing their substitution pattern. This is not the recommended approach as it will both increase fatigue of the "starters" and is also a missed opportunity to develop the other players.

The development of all players on the team must be a key focus for any coach of a junior team. Whilst the coach may plan to use only 6 or 7 players, injury or foul trouble often require other players to play.

The preferred approach is to rotate substitutes in with starters. By all means, once a lead has been established use the opportunity to give substitutes more court time but keep 1 or 2 "starters" on at the same time.

FOCUS ON DEFENCE

Once a lead has been established if the team that is leading stops the opponent from scoring again, they will win. As simple as it is, this should not be overlooked. A number of the strategies discussed here for defending a lead relate to offence, but great defence can be the most effective way to defend the lead!

This does not mean that teams in junior basketball that have a lead, particularly a substantial lead of 20 or more points, should continue to play "high pressure" defence for the whole game. Once a lead is established, junior teams should revert to a half court defence, but it does not have to be a passive defence.

Coaches can give players goals that are based on good defence, such as:

- Containing the dribbler;
- Intercepting passes;
- Denying the ball getting into the key (either by dribble, pass or rebound);
- Stopping shots being taken from particular areas (e.g. low post, corners).
- Forcing 24 second violations by the opponent or 5 second violations by an individual player

The coach should then give specific feedback on these goals, if possible having an assistant coach keep some statistics to demonstrate success. Sometimes the coach may give a particular goal (e.g. "let's get 5 possessions where they don't get the ball into the key") but equally just keeping track (e.g. knowing how many times a defender stopped dribble penetration without needing help) can be worthwhile.

MORE PATIENT OFFENCE

Some coaches will ask a team to be more patient in their offence – perhaps not taking a shot from outside the keyway unless it has first penetrated into the keyway (either by dribble or pass to a post player). The reason for this is because the quicker a shot is taken the more time that the opponent has for their "come back".

If this is different to how the team usually plays, the instruction can be misunderstood or misinterpreted by players. The coach should therefore make sure that the team has practiced whatever "slow down" rules they want to have in place.

Particularly for junior players, it can be hard to understand that the same shot (e.g. 3 point attempt from corner) can be either a good option (e.g. after "penetration and pitch") or a bad option (within 5 seconds of offence starting, without any rebounders in place).

To avoid such confusion, coaches should define "good" and "bad" not by reference to the shot itself (e.g. 3 point attempt) but by reference to the "process" factors (e.g. "after ball reversal", "after post touch").

KEEP DOING WHAT GOT THE LEAD!

This approach may at times conflict with wanting a more "patient" offence and if a team is playing a fast tempo game they need to realise that continuing to play at that tempo increases the number of possessions that an opponent has.

Often when an opponent mounts a "come back" the team that had the lead loses confidence and this can have the impact of making them play worse, giving more momentum to the "come back".

Often the "come back" is the result of the team with the lead changing what it is doing offensively (e.g. taking more shots from the perimeter), particularly if different players are on the floor. In this circumstance the coach needs to re-focus the team to what was working.

At other times, the change may have come about because the defensive team has adjusted to what the team with the lead was doing (e.g. the defence may have started to "double-team" a post player or play zone instead of man to man). In this circumstance, the coach should acknowledge what change has occurred defensively and then make any necessary changes to their offence.

PRACTICE "TIME AND SCORE" SITUATIONS

Similar to the "Two Halves Scrimmage" discussed above, practicing various situations (e.g. having a lead of 5, being down by 10) will give teams confidence that they can successfully "defend the lead".

In doing this the coach may also be able to institute some "rules" so that in a game they do not need to call a time-out to implement a specific strategy (for example, if a team has three possessions without scoring, the next position might run a specific play). This is particularly difficult for a team to scout.

In practicing "time and score" type situations, the coach should consider dividing their squad evenly, not playing the starting 5 against substitutes. The coach could also consider using 5x7 to really increase the pressure on their team.

SLOWING TEMPO

Where a team is trying to catch up they will often increase the tempo of the game, for example by playing full court defence or taking shots more quickly than they may usually do.

The team with the lead may deliberately attempt to slow the tempo, having players take a "5 second" or "8 second" violation rather than throwing a bad pass that could be intercepted. Walking the ball up the court, instead of quick transition (if the defensive team allow it) also slows the tempo, although the offensive team need to ensure that they allow sufficient time to get a good shot.

DON'T LET THEM STEAL SECONDS

A common tactic used by teams trying to catch up, is to make an inbound pass and let it bounce a number of times before picking it up – the reason for this being that the game clock does not start until a player in court touches the ball. Whilst this may not seem to make much difference, a team can easily "save" 2 to 3 seconds on a possession, which is 8 - 12% of a 24 second shot clock!

This is simply avoided by having a defender up court so that the pass needs to be caught immediately and dribbled up court, with the shot clock running!
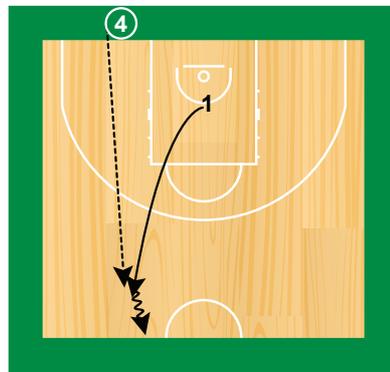
Allowing a team to "steal" seconds.
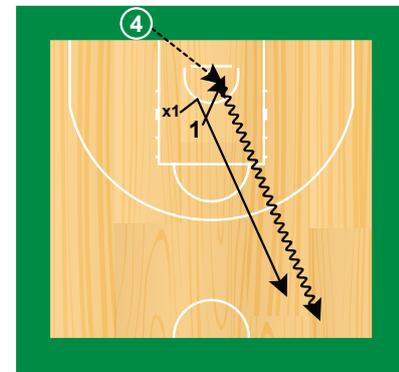
Having a defender up court prevents this.

4.1.2   CATCHING UP - REDUCING AN OPPONENT'S LEAD

"CATCHING UP"

No team wants to fall behind, however basketball is a fast moving and fast scoring game so that relatively large leads can be overturned. It's very important for a team to have the confidence that they can make up the deficit. Coaches can build that confidence by:

- Practicing "time and score" scenarios so that they have done it at practice;

- Evaluate performance by reference to "process" objectives, not just the score. For example, the team may have been successfully trapping the low post, or getting shots inside the key (even if they were missed).

Some specific factors that coaches should consider in preparing the team for situations where they have to "catch up" in a game are:

QUICKEN THE TEMPO

The clock is the enemy of a team that is behind. Accordingly, if that team can speed up the game, it gives them more scoring opportunities. The tempo can be increased by:

- Introducing full court defence or a high pressure defence;

- Quick inbounds pass and look to push the ball up the court as quickly as possible. There may be a particular guard that does this better than others on the team or it might be putting two guards on the floor so that if one is defended the other can get the ball;

- Some teams will have a specific play structure that is used to create a quick tempo (e.g. early dribble penetration off a ball screen or after a ball reversal);

- "Going small" – having five players on the floor that run the floor well;

- Running "quick hitters" early in the team's offence – for example screening action to get specific shots. These may be specific plays that the coach has or may be a particular option within their usual offensive structure.

There are many examples of "quick hitters" and coaches should choose what they want to use based upon what is suitable for the players in their team.

Some examples are (overleaf):
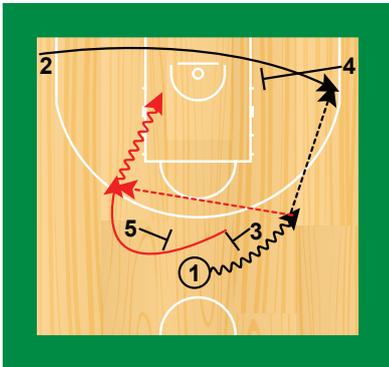
"HORNS" SET

This is run to get a shot for either 2 or 3.

1 dribbles off the screen from 3, who then cuts across the key off a screen by 5. At the same time, 4 sets a screen for 2 on a turn out cut.

1 has the option of passing to 2 or 3. 3 can catch and shoot or drive to the basket.
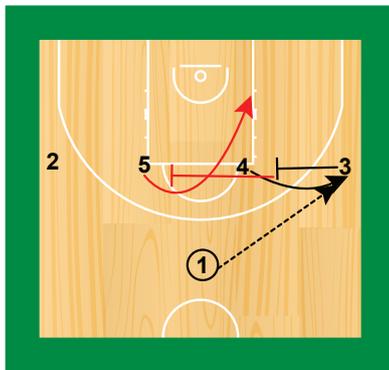
LOW POST ISOLATION

Offence starts in a "4 High" alignment. 3 screens for 4 to cut to the wing and then screens for 5. The screens must be placed relative to where the defender is.

5 cuts to the low post.
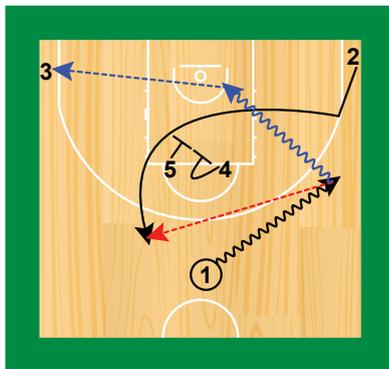
DOUBLE FOR SHOOTER

1 dribble entries to the wing, as 2 cuts off double screen from 5 and 4. 1 looks to pass to 2 for a shot. This screen could also be set as an "Elevator" screen, where 2 cuts between 5 and 4.

Alternatively, 1 can penetrate to the basket and then pass to 3 in the corner or pass to inside players.
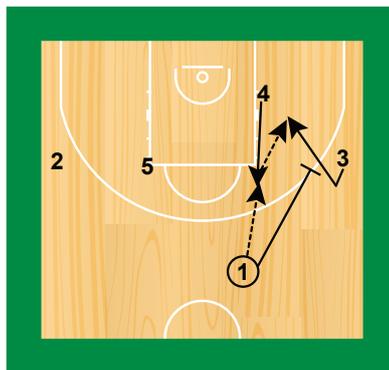
HIGH FLASH

This can be run on either side of the floor.

4 cuts high from the low post and receives the pass from 1. 1 sets screen for 3 who may fake cutting off the screen and instead cut back door to receive a pass from 4.

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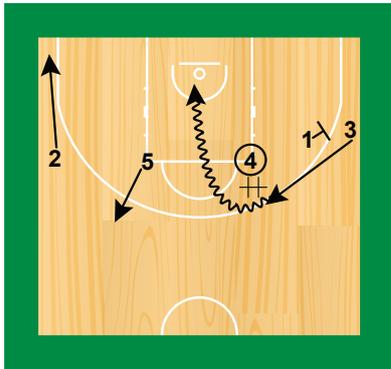
If 3 cuts off 1's screen, they receive a dribble hand-off from 4 and then look to drive to the basket.

If the defenders of either 5 or 2 attempt to help on this penetration, 3 can pass to the open player (e.g. if x2 helps , Player 2 is open).
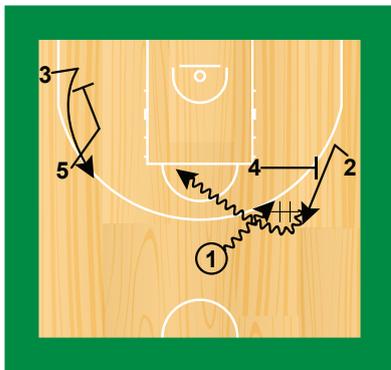
DRIBBLE HANDOFF

1 dribbles towards the wing and 2 cuts off screen from 4 to receive dribble hand off.
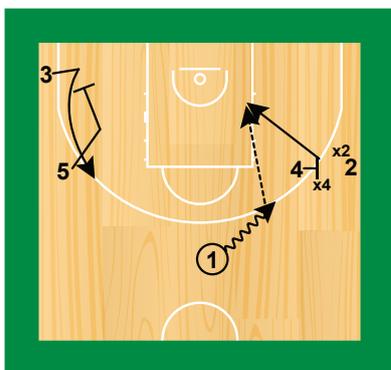
Offence should react to defence:

- If 4's defender helps defend 2's cut, 4 dives to the basket
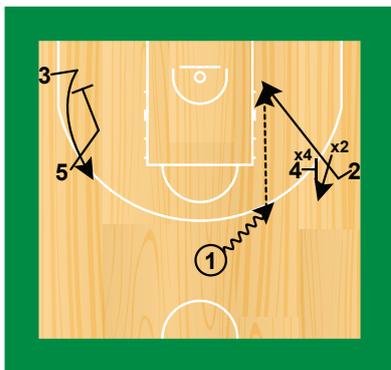
If 2's defender fights over the screen, 2 may cut back door to the basket.

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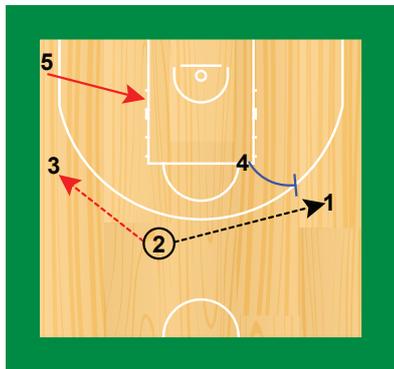
If 2 gets the hand-off but cannot penetrate to the basket they can pass to either 3 or to 1.

If 3 receives the ball, 5 steps into the low post.

If 1 receives the ball, 4 can set an on-ball screen.
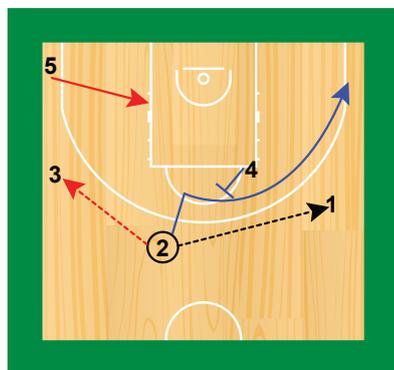
Alternatively, 4 can back screen for 2 to cut to the corner, regardless of which player 2 has passed to.
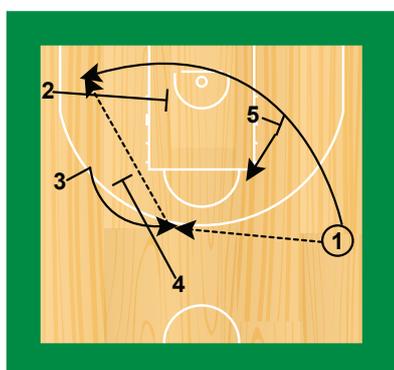
TRANSITION

In transition, 4 (who is "trailing") sets screen for 3. 1 passes to three and then cuts off staggered double screen. An option is a shot in the corner for 1.
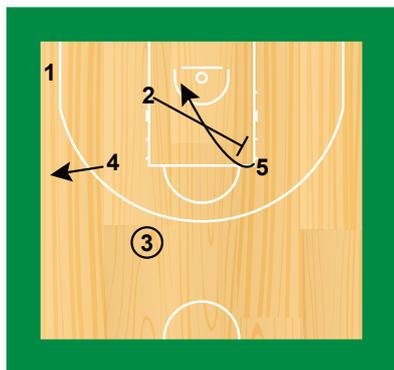
If there is no pass to 1 in the corner, 2 sets screen for 5 to dive to the basket.
If 3 still has the ball, they may need to pass to 4 or 1 for better passing angle to 5.

If no pass to 5 on the cut, look to isolate 5 in the low post, with the overload
(3 offensive players on one side) taking away any help.

PUT THE OPPONENT ON THE FREE THROW LINE

This is perhaps the most commonly seen tactic (and is really a defensive tactic) and is also the most misunderstood. Often teams that are trying to catch up will foul their opponent to give their opponent foul shots. The benefit of this is:

- Very little time comes off the game clock;
- The opponent may miss one or both shots.

The tactic is most appropriate when the score is quite close, there is less than 2 minutes left or an opponent is a poor foul shooting team. Professional teams usually shoot between 70-80% and within the team some players will be better than others.

INTERCEPT THE PASS

Another defensive tactic (that is included here because it can help to create a fast break) arises because the defensive team has an advantage when their opponent is inbounding the ball from either the baseline or sideline – the defensive team have 5 players defending 4.

Accordingly, players should be instructed to attempt to intercept the pass, rather than simply fouling as soon as the pass is made.

If teams are looking to foul straight away, they need to be conscious that it may be called as a technical foul (which means the opponent gets one free throw and the ball back) if fouling players before the pass is thrown in.

GET TO THE FREE THROW LINE.

Scoring while the game clock is stopped can be effective to help a team catch up. Accordingly, getting to the foul line is an important tactic, which is often best done by penetrating the ball into the key (either off the dribble or passing into a post player).

MAKE 3 POINT PLAYS

Many teams trying to catch up resort to attempting 3 point shots and, if they make them, may catch up, but if they miss them it can simply make the deficit greater. Teams should not overlook the 3 point play that can be made by making a basket and making an additional free throw when fouled.

Perimeter shooters rarely get fouled, so for a team to get to the free throw line, they need to penetrate the ball. The other advantage of penetrating the ball is that this can also create good scoring opportunities on a pass back out to the perimeter.

ATTACK THE OPPONENT'S "WEAKEST LINK"

What is an opponent's "weakest link" will be relative to the strengths of each team. It may be a particular "mis-match" between players (e.g. a defender may be slower and unable to defend a player on the perimeter) or it may be a player that is in foul trouble or is prone to fouling.

The role of the coach is to identify where their team has a relative strength and to attack that.

REBOUND THE BALL

Former USA and NBA coach Chuck Daly famously said "No rebounds, no [championship] rings", referring to the importance of rebounding to the success of any team. The nature of basketball is that possession can be equal. One team has possession, shoots and then the other team has possession. If the game goes according to this fashion, both teams will have approximately the same number of possessions.

What disrupts this is offensive rebounds – gaining an additional possession without allowing your opponent to have a possession. Accordingly, a team that is trying to catch up can help their cause by:

- Limiting the team that is in front to one shot every possession;
- Gaining as many offensive rebounds as possible.

To gain offensive rebounds, teams may have an additional player contest the rebound. The risk is that the opponent will still get the rebound and will be successful in transition, however without taking some risk the team that is behind is very unlikely to make up the deficit.

FOLLOW-UP

1. Have you had a team that led by more than 10 points during the final quarter and then lost? What factors influenced the result of that game? Discuss with other coaches their experiences.

4.2   EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS

4.2.1   ASSESSING TEAM EFFICIENCY

It is important that the coach evaluates the performance of the team and also the effectiveness of the particular strategies and tactics that they have put in place.

Broadly there are two types of analysis that a coach may use to evaluate performance:

- "Tracking" performance; and
- Measuring statistical effectiveness.

TRACKING PERFORMANCE

Tracking performance records what the team has done and the outcome that occurred. For example, a coach may record the number of instances where a certain offensive play was used and whether or not the team scored. With junior teams, a measure of whether or not a "good shot" was the result may be more appropriate than whether a score was made.

Any particular coach may have particular things that they wish to "track", some commonly tracked occurrences are:

- Use of a particular play or the particular options within a play (both offensively and defensively);
- Whether or not the team "reversed" the ball (moved the ball from one side to another) in offence prior to shooting;
- When in the shot clock shots were taken (e.g. first 6 seconds, last 6 seconds or within 7-18 seconds);
- The number of times an opponent "reversed" the ball prior to shooting;
- Whether the ball was passed or dribbled across half way;
- "Post touches" – whether or not a player in a post position handled the ball prior to the team shooting (regardless of whether the post or another player took the shot);

- The number of times that a team (either offensively or defensively) commenced offence from a particular part of the court (e.g. left side, right side or top).

From these types of indicators the coach can identify trends in how a team plays (either their own team or an opponent). For example, it may identify that the team starts offence on the right hand side of the court most of the time. These indicators can also identify what is more effective. For example, most teams will score more often when they have reversed the ball than when the ball stays on one side.

Typically, these types of measures are not recorded in the standard basketball statistics (standard statistics will, for example, record where a shot was taken and whether or not it went in, but not the "action" that led to it being taken). Accordingly, an assistant coach or parent will need to record these measures if the coach wants them. If the coach is doing a video review, they may also wish to "tag" the same statistics so that the video can be easily obtained.

Using the measures the coach can also determine indicators of success. For example, if a team scores more often after they have reversed the ball in offence, the coach can set targets for ball reversals, knowing that increases the likelihood of scoring. In this way, the measures often allow the coach to set "process" rather than purely outcome goals. The process goals are based upon the impact that "process" has been measured to have on outcomes.

MEASURING STATISTICAL EFFECTIVENESS

Depending upon the level of competition, statistics may be taken and these may also be available during the game. These allow the coach to see individual and team performance in points, rebounds, assists, steals, and turnovers.

The coach can quickly conduct other comparisons:

- How well a team is rebounding defensively using the following equation, which identifies how many of the total rebounds at the defensive end they have taken:

Team Def Rebs / (Team Def Rebs + Opponents Off Rebs)

- "Ball Control" using the following equation, which gives an indication of how often the team has turned over the ball.

Turnovers / (Field Goals Attempted + Turnovers)

- "Shooting Efficiency" can be calculated with the following equation, which adjusts for the impact of a 3 point shot:

(Field Goals Made + (0.5 x 3Points Made)) / Field Goals Attempted

- "Tempo" of the game can be estimated by the following equation and coaches should know the tempo they wish to play at. For example, in a 40 minute game if one shot was taken every 24 seconds (and there were no turnovers), there would be 100 possessions:

Total Possessions = Total Field Goals Attempted + Total Turnovers

- Free Throw Conversion is calculated simply as Free Throws Made / Free Throws Attempted.

- Compare direct player "match-ups". For example, the coach may have assigned a defender to particularly restrict the number of shots taken by an opponent and this can be assessed.

Basketball is a game of alternating possession, which is only distorted by offensive rebounds (where a team gets two possessions in a row, without their opponent having a possession). It is often more meaningful to assess performance "per possession", rather than just as an absolute number. For example, the points scored from one game to another may vary widely (depending upon the tempo at which the games were played), however the "points per possession" is a good measure of effectiveness.

In most competitions, scoring 1 or more "points per possession" is a good performance. Equally "points conceded per possession" is also important. "Points per possession" is often provided in computerised statistics, however it can also be estimated by:

Points per possession = Total Points / (Field Goals Attempted + Turnovers)

Points conceded per possession = Opponent's Total Points / (Opponent's FGA + Opponent's Turnovers)

Similarly, when comparing the performance of players adjusting statistics to give a "per minute played" analysis may be useful.

The efficiency of players is sometimes evaluated by using a Points Adjusted Win Score (PAWS), which is:

((Points + Steals + (0.5 x Assists) + (0.5 x Blocks) – Field Goals Attempted – Turnovers – (0.5 x Free Throws Attempted) – (0.5 x Personal Fouls)) / minutes played) * 48[19]

In the NBA, the league average player has a PAWS score of 0. Anything above zero is an above average performance and equally below zero is a below average performer.

Whilst statistics can be meaningful they can equally be misleading. What is most important is that the coach develops some method for evaluating performance.

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19 48 is used for NBA games, where 12 minute quarters are played. Use 40 in FIBA games.

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FOLLOW-UP

1. How do you assess the effectiveness of your team's offence and defence?

2. Discuss with other coaches (including coaches from sports such as hockey or football) how they assess effectiveness.

3. How do you get the data you want to assess effectiveness?