Basketball England

Level 3 course resource

Produced by Sport Structures

Contents

This course resource has been produced to exclusively used to support the courses delivered by Sport Structures on behalf of Basketball England.

The resource gives guidance to each of the practical modules delivered on the course and should be used by learners to further develop their coaching. It should also be used in conjunction with the British Basketball Areas of Emphasis. The resource also give coaches some tools that can be used when they go back into their club coaching environment.

We would like to thank Basketball England for their support in developing this resource.

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Coaching Philosophy

Objective

To define, identify and develop a coaching philosophy

1. Why am I coaching?
2. Who am I coaching?
3. What kind of coach do I want to be?

Identifying Your Coaching Philosophy

Your coaching philosophy is quite simply the way you see situations and experiences and the value that you give them.
To answer the first question - Why am I coaching?

We first need to define what coaching is.

Simply, coaching is helping players to prepare, develop and improve their performance.
Coaching is many faceted, involving teaching, training, instructing and more, which impacts on many areas of an individual's life.

To be a successful coach, you have to be well prepared to provide exciting, positive, enriching, encouraging and meaningful experiences to the athletes you are involved with.

To be a coach carries many responsibilities and in many ways is a very privileged position. Players meet sport at the place where (you) the coach present it to them.

As coach you are the architect and in many ways the definer of each of your participants basketball experiences.

So, how do you feel about yourself?

The following exercise contains statements that have been used to describe successful coaches.
Take a moment and complete this exercise by circling the rating you think your players would choose to describe you, **not what you would like for them to choose**.

Mark also those areas where you think you may need improvement.

Developing Your Coaching Objectives

Should you ask most coaches what they want out of coaching, the answers usually include winning, fun and player /athlete development.

All three are important, but which is most important to you? In basketball we firmly believe that the game should be player centred and coach driven. If we can intersperse that with an element of fun (make sport enjoyable for all involved) then the by product of that inevitably will be to experience some success, win some games.

By placing the players' development first, then your charges are more likely to produce better performances with greater consistency and both players and you the coach will derive more satisfaction than by emphasising winning at all costs.

We will talk more about winning later.

Task 1 - Coaching Assets Self Evaluation/Pre-course

There are many factors that will assist in defining your philosophy. And your overall success as a coach will ultimately depend much more on your coaching philosophy than on any other factor.

Coaching Assets	Low	Average	High	Areas of Improvement
Basketball Knowledge	1	2	3	
Well Organised	1	2	3	
Honest	1	2	3	
Exhibits a Professional Appearance	1	2	3	
Well Qualified	1	2	3	
Enthusiastic	1	2	3	
Hard Worker	1	2	3	
Punctual	1	2	3	
Consistent	1	2	3	
Understanding	1	2	3	
Good Listener	1	2	3	
Provides Individual Help	1	2	3	
Builds Player's Confidence	1	2	3	
Motivates	1	2	3	
Good Teacher	1	2	3	
Encourages	1	2	3	
Praises Effort	1	2	3	
Respects Players	1	2	3	
Patient with Players	1	2	3	
Good Sense of Humour	1	2	3	

Before you begin to coach and as you continue, ask yourself these important questions so that you do not lose sight of why you are a successful coach.

What am I trying to achieve for myself, what do I want to achieve with my players, what is my coaching style and what is my motivation for coaching?

Adapted from Special Olympics Coaching Guide; Principles of Coaching (2003) PP6-16

Task 2 - Assessing Your Objectives

The objective of this exercise is to help you get a better understanding of why you coach and identify the areas that are most important to you in coaching. Do you actually focus more on fun, player development or winning when coaching? During this exercise the column with the highest total is the area that is most important to you in coaching and will be the foundation of your coaching philosophy and objectives.

Task Instructions

1. In the first group, read all of the statements and place a "3" by the statement that you feel is most important to you.
2. Place a "1" by the statement that you feel is least important to you.
3. Place a "2" by the remaining statement.
4. Repeat the process for the following five groups.
5. Complete the exercise by adding the scores in each column.

Assessment Statement	A	B	C
The best basketball coaches are those who...			
Encourage team spirit, cooperation and sportsmanship			
Make practices fun			
Have excellent tactics and coach skills with results in mind			
A good coach...			
Gives individual help and is interested in player development			
Practices enthusiasm and FUNdamentals everyday			
Teaches athletes/ players the skills needed to win			
I would like people to say that I...			
Brought the best out of my players			
Looked for the positives in my players			
Am a winning coach			
I would like news story about me to highlight that I...			
Coached a team in which the players enjoyed playing			
Contributed to the athletic development of the players			
Coached to win			
As a coach, I emphasise...			
Teaching skills that players can use throughout life			
Playing games and making sure players enjoy themselves			
Setting individual and team goals that produce winners			
As a coach, I promote...			
Physical fitness			
Having fun, enjoying basketball			
Winning at all costs			
Totals			

1st column: Priority for athlete development; 2nd column: Priority for having fun; 3rd column: Priority for winning

Winning

Be honest with yourself about winning. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Do you at times overemphasise winning?
2. Do you sometimes make decisions that reflect more about winning the game than developing the players?

Many coaches face the issue of winning when developing their coaching objectives.

Society clearly places a great emphasis on winning. However, society also looks to sport as a means to help each participant build character and develop leadership skills.

The balance in the final analysis is in **NOT** about evaluating yourself or your players on the win-loss record.

Striving to Win

Placing your athletes first rather than emphasising winning at all costs does not mean that winning is not important. Striving to win within the rules of sport and the competition is an important objective for both player and coach. Striving to win is essential and is what makes competition enjoyable.

Players and teams do not train to lose or perform poorly; however the emphasis should not be on winning itself but on striving to win. It is the pursuit of victory, the dream of achieving the goal that matters most. Please complete task 3 by ticking the boxes that best describes the importance you attribute to each of the statements.

Task 3 - Personal Reasons for Coaching

Reasons for Coaching	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
To be involved in the sport I like			To
have power			To
be in charge			To
be with people I like			To
put something back in the game			To
gain some public recognition			To
enjoy myself			To
demonstrate my knowledge and skill in basketball			To
travel			To
help players develop physically			To
help players develop psychologically			To
help players develop socially			

Keeping Winning in Perspective

Striving to win is important in sport. The process of winning can bring out the best in people - performance, attitude and approach to life. As coach, it is imperative that you not lose sight of the long-term objectives: of helping each player to develop and improve their skills, create an enjoyable environment and do well in competition. Winning or striving to win is never more important than your players' well-being. **'Keep winning in perspective'**

Coaching Styles

We are now at your second most important decision as a coach –'your coaching style.' This is covered in detail in the Coaching Process resource book. Your coaching style will determine:

- How you decide to teach skills and develop strategies
- How you organise your sessions and competition routines
- How you discipline players
- What role (empowerment) you give to your players in making decisions

Coaches lean toward using a command style and in some cases, submissive or cooperative. In the past, coaches were more widely accepted as and expected to use the command style. In many cases, this is how they were coached and they too adopted the same style.

Today's players are encouraged to ask "why?"

Asking why is good because it allows involvement and input into preparing for performance. The following chart compares the three primary coaching styles references above.

	COACHING (LEADERSHIP) STYLE		
	Command	**Cooperative**	**Submissive**
Philosophy	Win centred	Player centred	No emphasis
Objectives	Task objectives	Social & task objectives	No objectives
Decision Making	Coach makes all decisions	Decisions are guided by coach, but shared	Players make decisions
Communication Style	Tells	Tells, asks, listens	Listens
Communication Development	Little or none	High	None
What is Winning	Judged by coach	Judged by player	Not defined
Player Development	Little or no trust in the player	Trust in the player	Trust not shown
Motivation	Sometimes motivates	Motivates all	No motivation
Training Structures	Inflexible	Flexible	None

Ask yourself – What kind of coach do **YOU** want to be?

As a coach, you want to find a balance in the styles that will allow you to be firm when needed while letting the players have fun and also letting them have a voice in their training and competition experiences. The team has to be well organised in order to function effectively and efficiently. The team or the athlete cannot have a vote in every decision that is made. As a coach, you provide the direction and instruction when it is needed and let the athlete make decisions and assume responsibility when and where appropriate.

Being a basketball player is more than simply displaying athletic prowess. Players have to be able to cope with pressure, adapt to changing situations, keep winning and losing in perspective, show discipline and maintain concentration in order to perform well. By finding a balance within the various coaching styles mentioned, you place trust in the players which helps boost their self esteem and motivation. Players are not motivated by fear but by a desire for personal fulfilment.

Developing a Picture of Your Coaching Style

Three of the most important characteristics in developing a coaching style are:

1. **Knowledge**
2. **Motivation**
3. **Empathy**

There is no substitute for knowing the rules, techniques and strategies in coaching basketball. Lack of knowledge in teaching the skills can risk injury and will frustrate your athletes. Your ability to properly teach and coach the skills within basketball will earn you great respect from the players. They will value you and the experience. This earned respect lends itself to credibility that you can utilise in teaching your players life skills particularly in how to behave away for m the court.

As a coach, you can have all of the skills and knowledge in the world, however this means little if you are not motivated to teach and coach. You must be motivated enough to have time for all the players you work with.

Empathy is the ability to readily understand the players by being aware of their feelings, thoughts and emotions and how they impact on performance. You should always make the effort to understand the players' their joy, frustrations, anxiety and anger.

Now that you have answered the two most important questions, **what are my objectives and how will I coach**, you have begun to create your **coaching philosophy**. The key is to know who you are and to **continually assess** how your coaching experiences fit into your value structure.

Coaching Process

Part One: Basics of the Coaching Process

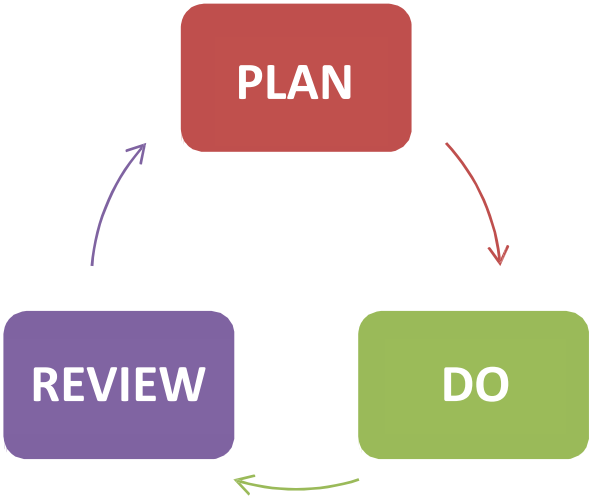
This part of the resource is aimed at providing an introduction to the main areas contained within the coaching process, which should aid in helping you to understand the process and develop a more effective method of coaching. Some of the topics which we will be discussing are;

- The coaches' roles and responsibilities
- Introduction of a coaching philosophy
- Development of an effective method of coaching
- Introduction to the principles and importance of observation, analysis and feedback.

Responsibilities of the Coach

There are a number of responsibilities and roles which a coach needs to undertake in order to make the process of coaching as effective as possible. These main responsibilities are as follows:

- Identify **and meet the needs of each performer:** Firstly, one of a coach's main responsibilities is to ensure that each of their coaching sessions are designed in order to meet the needs of each of their participants as well as serving to meet the needs of the group as a whole. If a coach strives to achieve this, it should in turn lead to the production of fun, effective and interesting coaching sessions for all concerned. In order to be able to do this, the coach will need to identify information concerning the players' personality, age, condition and technical ability as well as each player's knowledge and experience of the sport.
- Improve **each participant's performance:** Each coach has the responsibility to attempt to help a participant to improve their performance in order to reach a level which they are happy with. **Another responsibility is for the coach to ensure that all of this is carried out in a safe and well-organised environment.** This is especially important when conducting coaching sessions where children are the participants.
- Evaluate **the success of the coaching programme:** A coach should strive towards achieving the highest standard of coaching possible; therefore evaluating a coaching programme regularly is an essential tool in making this possible. By undertaking this evaluation process, a coach will be able to identify any areas which have been successful and also areas where there needs to be some improvement. This process will also allow the coach to make an assessment if whether they are actually meeting the needs of each performer, which we have already stated as being one of the main responsibilities that a coach possesses.
- **Creating a motivating environment:** As with everything in life, the more you enjoy participating in something, the more likely you are to continue to participate. Nowhere is this more important than in sport, therefore one of a coach's top priorities is to create a motivating environment as if participants are coached in such an environment, they are more likely to enjoy attending coaching sessions and as a result achieve more from them. The above responsibilities come together in order to make up the three fundamentals of effective coaching. The three fundamentals are as follows:



The Role of the Coach

The role of the coach will inevitably be dependent upon a mixture of who the performer is, what the task is at hand and also on an individual's philosophy. Their role will always include the points mentioned in the coaches responsibilities but may also include undertaking the role of one or more of the following:

- Organiser
- Counsellor
- Record keeper
- Bus driver
- Kit washer
- First aider
- Conflict resolver

It is also important to remember that a coach's role will more often than not change regularly due to the changing of any one of many factors that could affect a session. For example, a more experienced player may require less input from their coach than one of the newer players does and players will pick up different skills at different speeds. So one player who usually picks up things very quickly could be faced with one skill that requires a lot more input than they have ever needed previously. Therefore you can see that it is important that you reassess your role regularly and again strive to meet each individual's specific needs as well as the groups' needs as a whole.

A Coaching Philosophy

> *"A coaching philosophy determines the way we view objects and experiences in our lives as well as the way we view people and our relationships with them"* (Martens, 2004)

Having a well developed coaching philosophy will help you to become a more effective coach. Our coaching philosophy will be dictated by the characteristics, values and beliefs which we live our everyday lives by. One way to help you as a coach to develop a coaching philosophy is being self aware. This is essential as if you do not truly know yourself and the way you think you will find it difficult to truly help your participants develop. You have the responsibility of acting as role model for your participants. If you display desirable characteristics your participants are more likely to adopt these characteristics compared to you telling them how they should behave.

Styles of Coaching

There are three main styles of leadership that can be used when you are coaching, these are :

COMMAND STYLE

This style of coaching is where all the decisions are only made by the coach. This style of coaching can be very useful in situations where you are dealing with beginners or large numbers of players. This style enables you to easily control behaviour so it is possible to keep control especially in situations where the participants may come to some harm if the correct protocol is not followed.

SUBMISSIVE STYLE

within the coaching session. Instead the coach acts in more of a babysitting role as opposed to a coaching role and the players are just left to get on with it. This coaching style is not recommended as the players need input to improve and without a well-structured session you can not ensure that the needs of each participant are being met.

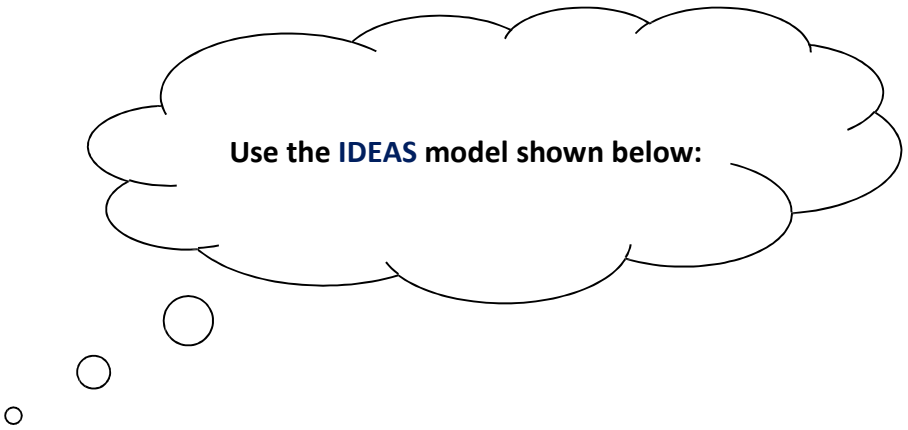
CO-OPERATIVE STYLE

undoubtedly the most successful coaching style but it does take quite a lot of practice for this style to be effective and is not suitable for use with beginners as they will require more structured coaching session.

Within this style of coaching, the coach plays no active role

This third style of coaching is exactly as it sounds, here the participants and the coach share the decision making about the coaching. This is

Model of Effective Coaching



I Stands for the **Introduction** of the skill. Provides the participants with an idea of why they are going to be doing a skill so the practice has meaning for them. They can also understand where in a game the skill can be used. Participants need to be informed of the reason behind the activities as they need to realise why the activity will be beneficial for them.

D **Demonstrations** are a form visual guidance. To increase a demo's effectiveness they should be done silently to avoid confusion, must be relevant to the level and needs of the performers and should be accurate and performed to a high standard. Some problems which may affect a child's attention is their interest level and if they can see the demonstrations clearly.

E Activities which are to be carried out are **explained**. It is important that not too much information is given to the participants all at once. The capacity of the short-term memory is limited and it can only take a few pieces at any one time. It's extremely important not to overload a participant with too much information as leads to confusion and misunderstanding as well as a loss of motivation.

A Involves carrying out of the **activities** which have been demonstrated and discussed. The activities and the way they have been carried out will affect the final stage

S Within the **summary** is where the majority of the feedback about the practice takes place. It is said that excellent coaching sessions generate as much feedback to each athlete as possible (Cross and Lyle, 2000). This stage is important in ensuring that participants learn from their experiences and any mistakes.

Observation and Analysis

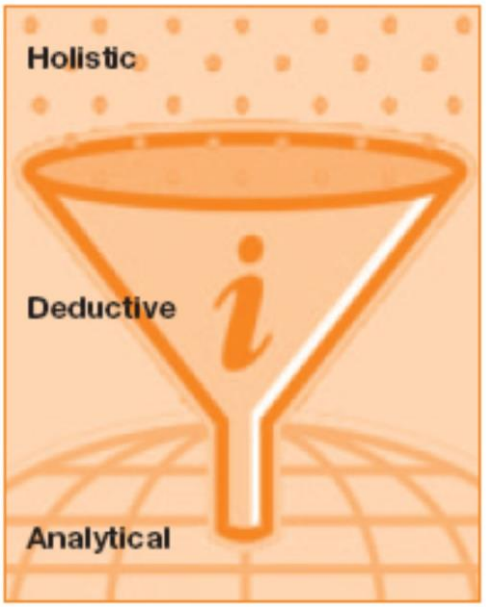
This is an extremely useful and powerful tool for a coach to possess. The process of observation analysis and correction of faults can help with the assessment of their participants' level of skill and also to assess their understanding of what they are doing. Observing participants behaviour and actions will allow a coach to assess if a player copes easily with the session/game or whether they lack the underpinning knowledge or ability to achieve the desired outcome.

This observation will also aid a coach in analysing any specific areas of a player's game in which requires improvement and will therefore allow an assessment of both individuals' needs and requirements and those of the team. Mawer (1998) describes that to be able to provide effective guidance and feedback to begin with involves being a good observer.

Firstly when observing, it is necessary to look at the situation as a whole in order to assess what needs to be looked into further. After the whole situation has been assessed the focus of the observation can narrow to eventually focusing on something very specific hence producing a funnelling process of observation. There are three specific interlinking methods of observation in the funnelling effect which will need to be practised in order to become proficient at observation and analysis. These methods are as follows:

Holistic Observation: This method of observation describes the widest part of the funnel of observation. This is where the whole situation is observed. This observation will form the basis of your conclusions on anything else which needs to be looked at. Although this is often used as the initial form of observation before more in-depth analysis, it is sometimes not necessary to have to progress further with an observation of a session as some issues are obvious without further investigations because they can be easily rectified.

Deductive Observation: This method is more narrowly focussed than holistic observation. This method requires you to reflect upon your own knowledge and experiences as a coach and a player. This part of the funnel process will narrow down the picture to identify a specific problem and attempt to identify the causes and how to address it. Identifying the possible causes will allow for the final stage of the funnelling process to take place.



Analytical Observation: this final stage is where observation is extremely narrowly focussed and may concentrate on a very minute part of a skill which if corrected could make a huge difference in improving the performance of the participant.

In a practical situation, observation and analysis should take place in the following way.

- First of all we need a mental picture of what happened and what should have happened if a skill was not as good as it could have been. This stage is the holistic observation phase.
- Next you need to decide how you are going to observe and any techniques that you could use. To be an effective observer you need the ability to compare and contrast techniques to solve any performance problems or to give positive feedback to any participants involved. This is the deductive and analytical observation phases.
- Finally to make observation and analysis effective you need to possess the coaching tools in order to make any improvements to performance assessed through observation.

Feedback

This part of the coaching process is one of the most important and effective if done correctly. Cross and Lyle (2000) describe how we only find out information concerning our behaviour and our performance through some kind of feedback. There are a number of benefits of using feedback within your coaching, these include:

- Helping to increase motivation as when a participant is told they are doing something well it can help motivate them to strive to continue to improve.
- To gain knowledge of performance and results, this will allow participants to be supplied with information and reinforcement that can help them to progress their skill level.

When delivering feedback, there are a number of different types which can be used these include:

- **Intrinsic Feedback:** This type of feedback comes from everything that you think, feel and do.
- **Extrinsic Feedback**: This type of feedback comes mainly from what other people say and do and what their reactions to your performance are.
- **Visual Feedback**: This is a form of extrinsic feedback as it comes from external sources ranging from anything from thumbs up from the coach to a score or someone's body language.
- **Audio Feedback**: This feedback is also classed of an example of extrinsic feedback. The main source of this kind of feedback for many people comes from their coach as it is from this person that the participants receives their knowledge of what needs to be improved or of what went well.
- **Kinaesthetic Feedback**: This type of feedback is a type of intrinsic feedback where you gain your knowledge of performance from the feelings you experience whilst carrying out the activity. If an activity is designed to incorporate an opportunity for gaining as much intrinsic feedback as possible it is said to increase a participants motivation. This is seen as a result of them having a greater ownership over their own learning and relying less on their coach for knowledge of performance.
- **Questioning:** Cross and Lyle (2000) state that the most effective coaching sessions contain a large amount of questioning within their feedback. Questioning can help to assess the participant's knowledge and understanding of what they are doing or have just done. Using questioning can also be difficult as it needs to be understood by the participants and it takes some practice to get it right.

As has already been discussed, there are three different coaching styles. As each coach has a different philosophy which will dictate which style a coach uses, each will in turn use feedback in differing ways.

- Command style coaches would provide feedback via auditory methods as this style of coaching involves the coach telling the participants what needs to be done with no joint decision making.
- The Submissive style of coaching which no good coach should be using doesn't use any particular feedback method as the coach who adopts this style lets the participants get on with things themselves.
- Finally, coaches who use the co-operative style of coaching which all coaches should be encouraged to adopt, should be using visual, auditory and kinaesthetic feedback as there should be joint decision making so the participants should be letting the coach know their preferred learning style is.

Summary

As you can see from these notes, a coach's role can alter greatly in different situations and will depend on who the performers are, what task is being undertaken and more importantly on the coach's own coaching philosophy. We have also highlighted how using a coaching model can help you to structure and organise your coaching sessions in order to make them as effective as possible. The skills of observation, analysis and feedback which we have discussed should also help with the effectiveness of your **coaching.**

Part Two: Coaching Philosophy

As discussed in the previous section there are three commonly used coaching/leadership styles. Firstly there is the **Command Style** of coaching where it is the coach who takes the responsibility for making all of the decisions. This style is useful for use with beginners and large groups. The second style is the **Submissive Style** where the coach is only there in a babysitting role and does not take an active coaching role in the session. This style of coaching is not recommended. The third style of coaching is the **Co-operative Style** where both the coach and the participant share the decision making responsibilities and if done effectively is the most successful style of coaching.

Although these are the most common styles, there are others which some coaches use. Mosston and Ashworth (1986) created a teaching style spectrum which took the form of a framework of styles which were ordered A to J.

Style A	**Command**	Teacher makes all decisions
Style B	**Practice**	Students carry out teacher-prescribed tasks
Style C	**Reciprocal**	Students work in pairs: one performs, the other provides feedback
Style D	**Self-check**	Students assess their own performance against criteria
Style E	**Inclusion**	Teacher planned. Student monitors own work
Style F	**Guided**	Students solve teacher set movement problems with assistance
Style G	**Discovery**	Students solve problems without assistance from the teacher
Style H	**Divergent**	Individual Teacher determines content. Student plans the programme
Style I	**Learner Initiated**	Student plans own programme. Teacher is advisor
Style J	**Self Teaching**	Student takes full responsibility for the learning process

This highlights the relationship between the coach and the participants and how much control the participants are given over the session. As you can see, many different coaching styles exist and the best coaches will be able to adapt their style in order to meet the demands of the time, place and coaching situation.

Being able to move between the styles takes practice and should be easier for more experienced coaches to accomplish. **Remember the coaching style utilised should be a reflection of the needs of your participants not centred on what you as a coach prefer** as your main responsibility as a coach remains to ensure that your participants needs are consistently met. The choice of coaching style will also be dictated by your coaching philosophy as your beliefs about coaching will dictate the way in which you coach.

Coaching - A Process

Another area, which will affect the coaching style chosen, is the coaching process. It has been highlighted previously that it is very difficult to describe exactly what the coaching process encompasses but the easiest is to say that the coaching process is everything that a coach does within their coaching practice. Coaching practice will involve communication, demonstrations and modelling, observation, analysis and correction of faults using feedback amongst other things.

It is important to highlight that each coach's coaching process will be different as their individual characteristics and coaching philosophy will affect their coaching practice so it is therefore impossible to formulate a standard framework for coaches to follow as each person will be different. Recent research has highlighted a difference between a linear coaching process and a cyclic coaching process. A linear process is where coaching practice does not flow from one area into another. This linear process seems to be the most used in coaching in the UK.

It has been suggested that better coaches should have a cyclic process which allows certain areas of coaching practice to be informed by other areas. A cyclic process should be encouraged in all coaches as each area of the coaching session should be inter-related. For example, if a coaching session focuses on a specific play, then the game at the end of the session should have to include this play.

"Coaching should be cyclical not a linear process".

In order to continue to meet the needs of your participants, you should base your coaching session on the previous session so that you can highlight specifically what your participants need to work on instead of just concentrating on what the coach wants to do. It is key that you reflect (evaluate) your coaching sessions so as to focus your plans. Reflective practice is covered in the separate reflective practice module. Having knowledge of the areas of coaching practice which will make up the coaching process will help to make your planned coaching sessions more effective and successful.

The Concept of Learning

In order to make coaching as effective as possible, it is important for all coaches to understand the concept of how the learning of a skill takes place to allow them to plan their sessions accordingly. Learning takes place continuously. Everything that we experience in our sport will add to this learning.

These experiences will help to reinforce what has already been learnt. If the situation has never been experienced before this experience will help to begin or continue the learning process. When we encounter something several times or as we practice a skill, this reinforces the learning process to make it easier to recall the skill in the same situation in future. Learning will also be more successful if the practice situation is similar to a real situation where players will be required to perform the skill in future. If the skill is learnt in a realistic situation then the desired behaviour is more likely to be recalled.

The extent to which something has been successfully learnt in your training/ playing environment is measured by its performance in a sport specific situation. You cannot observe learning on its own; you have to observe learning through an improvement in the performance level.

The Phases of Learning

For the learning process to be completed, there are a number of stages which it is necessary to go through for a skill to be fully learned. The three stages of learning are as follows:

- **The Cognitive Phase:** is the initial phase in the learning process. In this stage you are told the basics of how to perform a new skill or set of skills correctly as you require this knowledge before attempting the skill for the first time. The main example of this phase of learning is having a beginner watch a demonstration of the skill which is to be learnt.
- **The Associative Phase:** this second phase or middle phase of learning is known as the practice phase. This is where the skill being learnt has been practised repeatedly and where the fundamentals have been mastered so the participant can repeat them consistently. An example of this would be the players practising a layup or pass.
- **The Autonomous Phase:** this is the final phase within the learning process where as the name suggests, the skill can now be performed without much conscious control. For example, a range of skills which have been learnt are executed successfully by a player in a competitive game.

Another important aspect of the learning process which needs to be considered by a coach is the topic of learning styles. Learning styles refer to the different way which we can receive guidance about a skill to help us improve and to learn.

The term VAK is widely used when talking about learning styles as this refers to Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic guidance.

- **Visual -** something which can be seen. Use of a demonstration where a participant can see what needs to be done which allows them to model their performance on this demonstration. Visual guidance is suitable for usage in all three of the phases of learning but is most useful in the beginning when introducing the skill.
- **Auditory**-verbal instruction from the coach. Used frequently and can be used successfully with different skill levels. Beginners can be given information which is simple and easy to understand and more advanced participants can be given more detailed and in-depth technical information.

- **Kinaesthetic** - guidance is received by performing the movements required and learning from experiencing these movements. For example using a training harness on a trampoline will allow you to experience the movements without the risk of harm when you are beginning to learn a specific skill.

Memory

If a skill is to be learnt it will involve the use of memory, it is important to have a brief understanding of how a persons memory works to enable a coach to plan sessions which allow skills to be stored in the memory for use in the future. Your memory is a system which can help you to predict the future. When you experience a situation which you have encountered before, your memory will help you to recall this previous experience and any problems which may have arisen. This recall may help you to avoid or solve any problems as you will have the knowledge of how you dealt with it last time.

For example, you are playing a match against an opponent which you have played a few times in the past. You can recall how a certain players' body position changed when they were about to perform a certain action. This knowledge from the previous game allows you to predict the action and apply the correct decision to counteract the action. Your memory acts as storage for previous sensory experiences. Your memory allows you to remember past sensory experiences to allow you to compare new sensory experiences to these in order to formulate a plan of action. Through past experiences and learned techniques stored in your memory, you can predict an outcome of an event or an action in a game. Your memory will also aid you in selecting an appropriate strategy to deal with a situation based on previous experience and your learned knowledge.

There are three types of memory systems which you need knowledge of if you are to plan your coaching practice to allow skills to be learned successfully. The three different types of memory which will be discussed are the Short Term Sensory Store, Short Term Memory and the Long Term Memory.

- **The Short Term Sensory Store (STSS)**: where all information is collected at first. The STSS collects all information, which is provided by the senses and can hold extremely large amounts of information but only for a very short amount of time (maximum of one second). If this information is not to be lost it needs to be reinforced.
- **The Short Term Memory (STM):** sometimes referred to as the "working memory" (Atkinson and Shilfrin, 1971). The STM filters and processes information relevant to the task. Compared to the STSS and the LTM, which have a large capacity, the STM has a very limited capacity. It was found in research by Miller (1956) that the short-term memory only has a capacity of 7 +/- 2 pieces of information. Only this amount of information can be held at any one time meaning if a participant has to process too much information it could lead to an information overload. More recent research has suggested that the STM capacity can be as little as 3 +/- 2 pieces of information. It is said that because the short term memory has a limited capacity, the information will be lost after approximately 30 seconds if it is not reinforced by practice, repetition or rehearsal.
- **The Long Term Memory (LTM):** stores significant task information for future comparison and use. It stores information about past experiences including learned knowledge, perceptual skills and motor skills. The long term memory is said to have an unlimited capacity. A performer is able to deal with a task or a situation by using information stored in the long term memory, which concerns past experiences, situations or learned skills and techniques. The LTM is thought to have an unlimited capacity; once information has reached the stage where it is stored in the long term memory, it is stored there indefinitely. To help with the memory retrieval process, a skill should be continually reviewed and practised.

Once information has reached the stage of being stored in the Long Term Memory; the memory retrieval process works in the following way. Certain files stored in the long term memory will be more dog-eared (used more often) than other files. The memory retrieval service will find it easier to select these files and use these to form a response. It is vital that skills and techniques are learnt properly initially as if they are learnt incorrectly and stored in the long term memory; you will get the incorrect movement in response to a situation as this is how it has been learnt.

This is especially true when under pressure as in a practice situation it may be possible to practice a technique and try to correct a fault but when under pressure the incorrect but learnt technique will be reverted to.

'Practice does not make perfect', 'perfect practice makes perfect and permanent'.

Observation and Analysis

Please refer to the Observation and Analysis section in part one above.

- **Holistic observation** the widest part of the funnel where the whole situation is looked at in general.
- **Deductive observation** and analysis has a narrower focus compared to holistic observation. One characteristic of deductive is that you as a coach can reflect upon you own experiences of your sport to identify and attempt to address this problem by narrowing down possible causes to allow for more in-depth and narrowly focused observation and analysis to take place.
- **Analytical observation** is extremely narrowly focused and may be a very minute part of a certain skill.

Observational Learning

Observational learning uses demonstrations and models to increase the learning of participants. Learning can be aided by watching another person's performance, using a coach's demonstration and imitating them and also by basing their actions on other's successful performance. Observational learning can also be used in conjunction with verbal instruction.

Demonstrations and Modelling

It is said that to learn through watching a skill, a participant must pay careful attention to the demonstration (Weinberg and Gould, 1995).

'Demonstrations are a form visual guidance'.

Demonstrations are a part of the observational learning strategy, where the technique to be mastered is performed by a highly skilled performer or the coach so the participant can visualise what the correct technique should look like when performed to a high standard. Demonstrations are a valuable tool when athletes are at the beginning of learning.

If demonstrations are to be as effective as possible, they need to follow the following points as well as ensuring that learners know the importance of the skill to the game, keep participants attention away from any distractions and practice the skill immediately following the demonstration and explanation.

- Clear and understandable
- Real time
- Silent
- Complete
- Relevant to practice (environment and context)
- Be identifiable
- Have a start and end

Modelling is used to highlight specific points of a demonstration where athletes learn through the behaviour of others. This can be good or bad so **it is vitally important that the demonstrator shows the correct movement to stop the participants from learning the incorrect method**. Modelling is very effective when the athlete knows what they are looking at.

Types of modelling

There are three different types of model which can be used within a demonstration.

- **Cope**: this is the use of a peer within the demonstration. The use of this type of model is good for the motivation levels of the group.
- **Expert**: this type of demonstration is usually performed by the coach to ensure that the correct pattern of movement is demonstrated and the participants should be encouraged to aspire to the level of performance displayed by the coach.
- **Video**: this is the use of a video which shows the correct demonstration. This can be either cope or expert model. This type of model can be useful for more complex movements as slow motion can be used. This can also be used as a record of performance.

Demonstrations and modelling are related to memory as they can form the basis for the way skills and techniques are learnt. By watching a model, information from the senses go to the sensory store where the important pieces of information are selected. By watching the demonstration the short term memory processes important pieces of information. As the performers attempt the techniques as they are viewed in the demos, they become reinforced over time and will eventually be stored in the long term memory.

Verbal Instruction

When performed correctly, demonstrations and verbal instruction should work hand in hand. Although demonstrations should be done silently, verbal instruction can be useful to point participants towards important cues for the movement **as long as instruction is clear, precise and not overloaded with information.**

When giving instructions they should be simple and concise so the participants are all fully aware of the knowledge which you are trying to impart on them. The instructions also need to be relevant to the participants skill and experience. If you provide instructions which the athletes do not understand this may confuse them and effect their motivation levels as they do not understand what is required from them. Also, if you talk about the movement in a competition context, the participants need to have experience of the competition context as they will not be able to fully visualise and understand what is trying to be conveyed.

If you give instructions on everything they see in the demonstrations this is likely to confuse them and they will not be able to process all of the information given to them which means they will not be learning what they need. It would be more useful to emphasise the most important coaching points that will have a direct impact on performance if they are not carried out properly. If the important points are taken on board then more finer adjustments can be made at a later time.

Review of Feedback

When providing feedback to your participants you should try to remain positive as much as is possible. This does not mean continually praising the participants. It could mean altering the tone of voice or adapting your body language and you should never criticise your participant. Always phrase feedback in a positive way, for example; if they do something wrong, don't say - "don't do that again", instead say "next time try doing it like this..." It is important that you don't just give verbal instructions just for the sake of it. Always make sure there is a purpose and your feedback is full of useful information which they can use to form future actions. Feedback can also fit with a learners own preferred learning style in terms of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic feedback so it can be absorbed as easily as possible.

Questioning

Questioning can be used as a form of feedback, which will allow the coach to assess both the participants understanding and knowledge levels but also to identify further areas for improvement. There are a number of different types of questions which can be used with a coach's coaching practice. These are as follows:

- **Open Questions:** Good for exploring, allows a range of replies, and provides information about the trainee. E.g. where are the spaces/ gaps in their zone?
- **Closed Questions: Good for collecting specific information directs to a specific area but bad because there can only** be one answer and you don't find out a lot of info. E.g. Who dropped the ball in that activity?
- **Yes / No Questions:** Closed questions which illicit a yes / no response, good for collect specific information but bad as it does not give the participant room to express their feelings or show the depth of their knowledge. E.g. Do you have a kit bag? Do you know the rules?
- **Leading Questions:** Guides towards or away from a specific answer, can lead to false statements and indicates the opinions and attitudes of the coach. (Should be avoided). E.g. I imagine that you're not too pleased with that run?
- **Reverse Questions:** The aim is to increase awareness, responsibility and the students understanding. E.g. Student: What sort of training do I need to do? Coach: What sort of training do you think you need to do?

To ensure that your questioning is as effective as possible you should consider the following points and take time to practice questioning is a skill!

- use the appropriate style of questioning
- be clear about what you want to find out
- be prepared to accept all answers
- try to value all answers - don't dismiss
- ask don't tell

Summary

You should now have an understanding of why it is important that your coaching philosophy is participant centred and how this philosophy will inform the way your coaching sessions are planned and carried out. You should now also be aware of the many different parts that come together to form the coaching process and how having knowledge of all of these parts will help to make your coaching more effective.

Part Three: Individualised Coaching Style

To improve as a coach you need to be able to answer the following questions:

1. What reasons are there behind why you coach?
2. What is your coaching philosophy?
3. What do you aim to achieve with your coaching?

If we want to develop a generation of players who possess all the skills and attributes which are desirable in all good basketball player we need to adopt an individualised coaching philosophy which encourages all of these. As a coach we can act as a role model to our participants. It is very important to only display attributes which we want to encourage our participants to adopt.

To be an effective coach, Miles (2004) states that our coaching philosophy should be participant centred and it should empower the participants to give them a sense of ownership over their activity. A desirable coaching philosophy should help provide opportunities for participants to improve and to build their confidence. Lastly, if you are to become accomplished in the coaching discipline you should have a continued drive for improvement which means reflecting on your coaching to help improve your practice in the future.

There are many different types of coaching styles which can be adopted. The style chosen can be affected by certain factors including a coaches adopted philosophy and the situation in which they are coaching. This is because in certain situations some coaching styles are more appropriate than others. The style chosen will be influenced by the stage of learning which the participants are in. McQuade (2003) states how the coaching style which you use should be the style which allows your participants to learn the maximum amount.

Whichever style you choose should focus on your participant's needs and abilities (This is part of the individualised coaching philosophy). Whatever style you adopt should be participant centred if the situation allows.

As many coaching styles exist, the best coaches will adapt their style to suit the individual, the time and the place. The more experienced coaches should find it easier to move between coaching styles. The coaching style chosen by the coach should be dictated by a the preferred learning style of the player, the coach's philosophy and their overall coaching process as it is this, that forms their beliefs on how sessions are to be run.

Learning - A Review

Learning occurs continuously: Everything which we experience will aid in either the commencement of the learning process or reinforce the learning which has already taken place. It has been widely noted that you can only observe learning has taken place when there has been observable change in behaviour which is permanent. It is important to remember that not all participants learn in the same way so your chosen coaching sessions need to take this into account to allow opportunities for visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners. Information by which the participants learn is delivered by the use of guidance methods. There are three different types of guidance:

1. **Visual** Guidance
2. **Auditory** Guidance
3. **Kinaesthetic** Guidance

Visual Guidance:

From receiving visual guidance a participant models their attempt at the movement on the information they have just witnessed. This method is used a lot and is successful when working with beginners. Positives and Negatives of using Visual Guidance (Wesson et al., 2000):

- **Positives:** Demonstrations must be correct
  Major points of the skill must be emphasised
  Demos should not be too complex
- **Negatives**: Coach needs to be able to demonstrate properly
  Some info may not be relevant
  May need expensive equipment (video)

Auditory Guidance

Participants can be given either general or specific information. Can be very useful when used in conjunction with visual guidance. More effective when used with more advanced participants.

Negatives:

- Less effective in early phases of learning
- Some skills are harder to verbally describe
- Can be boring if too much information is given

Kinaesthetic Guidance:

Here a participant's movement is physically supported or restricted in some way to try to limit or reduce errors and any danger which may be involved in the movement.

Negatives:

- Can be difficult to use in big group sessions.
- Limits the participant's experience of the "feel" of the movement.
- Phases of Learning

As a participant progresses they are said to move through the three stages of learning of. (Fitts and Posner, 1967).

1. **Cognitive Phase:** This is the first initial phase of learning where the participants tend to want to be told what to do. In this phase you receive information through verbal and auditory guidance and through trial and error. Problems experienced in the cognitive phase of learning:
   - Beginners don't know what to pay attention to
   - Participants can suffer an information overload
   - Participants may have uncoordinated movements
2. **Associative** Phase: In this phase the participant is performing techniques with more consistency but they are not yet automatic. This is the intermediate phase of learning where motor programmes are being developed.
3. **Autonomous** Phase: This is the final phase of learning where the skill is performed easily with little or no thought. In this stage performance is almost automatic but small improvements in skill can still be made.

Some factors which are important to remember which can affect learning are: (Wesson et al., 2000)

- Variables associated with the learning process
- Variables associated with individual differences
- Variables associated with the task

- Variables associated with the learning environment

Memory - A Review

Your memory can help to predict the future as it can help you to recall any similar experiences which you have encountered in the past.

Sensory Memory
This is the first stage of the memory process. Every piece of information which we store in our memory banks have to pass through this sensory store as the information is provided to us through our senses. Within coaching this would be anything which a participant experiences in situations ranging from a certain smell to the feel of the ball.

Short term memory
After the initial memory stage of the sensory store, information which is absorbed by the sensory memory will quickly disappear if it is not reinforced. Reinforcement will help to move information from the sensory memory into the short term memory. The STM filters and processes information relevant to the task.

Long Term Memory
A performer is able to deal with a task or a situation by using information stored in the long term memory, which concerns past experiences, situations or learned skills and techniques. To help with the memory retrieval process, a skill should be continually reviewed and practised. Our memory and the way information is stored in the long term memory will affect an athletes' long term development. Memory is closely linked to the phases of learning because as techniques and skills are practised until they reach the autonomous phase of learning, this is where the skill will be stored in the long term memory.

To aid the Long Term Athlete Development Plan (LTAD), skills need to be learnt correctly so they are stored correctly in the long term memory. If a skill is learnt incorrectly it is very difficult to change the way it is performed afterwards. This means that when the skill is retrieved from the memory banks during a game it will be performed incorrectly. Therefore if an athlete is to progress and develop as effectively as possible, we as coaches need ensure that skills are learnt properly first time so that the information stored in the Long Term Memory is correct.

Individualisation

As all participants are different it is important that coaches take these individual differences into account when planning sessions. The way the sessions are planned will be affected by these differences, the goals of the participants and the coaching philosophy adopted. A coach who has a participant centred philosophy will formulate the sessions to specifically work towards the goals set by the participants.

A coach with a coach centred philosophy will plan sessions to perform activities favoured by them when this is possibly not what the participants need to work on.

Coaching programmes should be made to measure and designed specifically around what you as a coach and the participant have decided that you want to achieve. Wesson et al., (2000) describes how "a programme should be balanced yet specific enough to ensure that demands of both the participants and the sport in general are being met".

Structure of the session

The coaching process at its best should be a cyclical process by where you plan a coaching session, deliver the session and then reflect on the sessions' success. This process is cyclical as from your reflection will come points which inform the planning of future sessions so therefore the process is a continuous one. For your coaching to be as successful as possible it is important that you have at least the basic knowledge of all components which make up the coaching process. Miles (2004) states the following as attributes of a good coaching session:

- Introduction and explanation of the technique to be learned
- A demonstration of how the technique should be properly performed
- A section where the participants are allowed to practice the technique to be learned
- A time where the coach can observe and analyse the participants progress while they practice the activity
- The identification and the correction of any errors

Demos and Modelling - A Review

- **Demonstrations:** Demonstrations are a form of visual guidance. Demonstrations are also a part of the observational learning strategy, where the technique to be mastered is performed by a highly skilled performer or the coach so the participant can visualise what the correct technique should look like when performed to a high standard.
- **Modelling:** Modelling is used to highlight specific points of a demonstration where athletes learn by behaviour of others which can be good or bad so it is vitally important that the demonstrator shows the correct movement to stop the participants from learning the incorrect method.
- **The Memory:** Demonstrations and modelling are related to memory as they can form the basis for the way skills and techniques are learnt. As the performers attempt the techniques as they are viewed in the demos, they become reinforced over time and will eventually be stored in the long term memory.

The demo and model is an exceptionally powerful tool as we can portray masses of information in a meaningful way to our players and coaches. If this is then followed up with good questioning we are both engaging and challenging the athlete to think and perform for themselves. If the coach engages the player with the use of demos and models and back this up with good questioning they are portraying a good athlete centred philosophy - remember behaviour and philosophy are linked!

Practice

No matter how good a coach we are and how good the explanation, introduction or demonstration is, if a participant is not given sufficient time to practice the skill being learnt then improvement will be slow. As each individual is different, some will need more practice time than others. We should try to design our sessions to allow for learning at different paces. There are many different forms of practice which we can adopt. The type of practice which we choose will be affected by factors such as age, ability, fitness levels as well as the technique which is to be practiced.

The common types of practice used are:

- **Massed Practice:** In this type of practice, skill is performed over a long period of time where rest periods are short or non-existent.
- **Distributed practice:** Practice is done more in bursts of activity with longer and more frequent rest periods.
- **Blocked Practice:** One technique or skill is performed uninterrupted and is repeated until it is refined. This type of practice is said to be good for beginners.
- **Random Practice:** Useful to participants after the basic skills have been learnt. In this instance techniques are mixed in the sessions.
- **Variable Practice:** More useful when the player is more experienced. Here different techniques are performed in a different way each time it is attempted.

Observation and Analysis - A Review

As McQuade (2003) states “the skilful coach is one who can see what is needed next”. One of the main roles of a coach will be to observe the players during the coaching sessions and analyse what if anything needs to be corrected. This observation and analysis phase is vastly important as if a skill is left to be practice and learnt incorrectly it will be very difficult to implement changes to the technique once it has entered the autonomous phase of learning.

Feedback

Feedback can help participants and coaches. For participants, feedback can be used to highlight and suggest changes to correct errors and to make improvements to skills when they are practised next time. Wesson et al., (2000) describes how feedback can also be used to “reinforce learning and motivate the performer”.

Feedback fits with learners own preferred learning style in terms of Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic feedback so it can be absorbed as easily as possible. Feedback requires changing as the player moves along the three phase model of learning.
When the player is in the cognitive phase of learning they will rely on external/ extrinsic feedback but as they move along the continuum through associative phase to the autonomous phase of learning, the performer will come to rely more on forms of intrinsic feedback. When you are using feedback, you need to consider the players’ current level of skill and the nature of the skill which is being learnt.

As well as the advantages that the use of feedback can have for a player, feedback gained from participants can have the following benefits for coaches: (Wesson et al., 2000)

- “Help the coach to re-establish goals and set new ones for subsequent coaching sessions”
- “Aid the coach in reinforcing and improving the activities that are being used”
- “Help to facilitate a coach’s self-reflection”

Communication and Questioning

Coaches must communicate with athletes in a style they can both understand and interpret correctly. Good verbal instruction and questioning is a powerful tool to enable us to get them to develop their ability. Although we learn a great deal through observation of demonstrations, verbal instruction is very useful as it can provide cues for performance.
When communicating with your participants,

- When giving instructions they should be **simple and concise** so the participants are all fully aware of the knowledge which you are trying to impart on them.
- The instructions also need to be **relevant to the participants’ skill and experience** as if you provide instructions which the athletes do not understand then this may confuse them and affect their motivation levels as they do not understand what is required from them.
- If you talk about the movement in a competition context, the participants need to have ex**perience of the competition context** as they will not be able to fully visualise and understand what is trying to be conveyed.
- If you give instructions on everything they see in the demonstrations this is likely to confuse them and they will not be able to process all of the information given to them which means they will not be learning what they need. It would be more useful to **emphasise** the most important coaching points that will have a direct impact on performance if they are not carried out properly.
- If the **important points** are taken on board then finer adjustments can be made at a later time.

Growth and Maturation

If a coach is not aware of how children grow and what happens at each stage of the process then it will be hard to coach them effectively. Earle (2005) highlights some important points:

- Shortly before a child reaches adolescence and they undergo a growth spurt, they can be clumsy and uncoordinated as their limbs tend to be long in comparison to the rest of their bodies.
- Muscle development will match a child's "physical maturity", so children of the same age may not have the same strength levels, in some cases children may be the equivalent of four years apart.
- Children may experience emotional problems if they are an early or late developer.
- Performance may be hugely affected by puberty.

Some practical tips to remember when taking exercise sessions with children are described by Earle (2005)

- "Never use weights before bone development is complete"
- "Reduce training intensity during any growth spurt"
- "Watch for any signs of distress carefully"
- "Make sure children get enough rest"

Mentoring Coaches

To help less experienced coaches to progress, we should be using a programme of mentoring. As mentors we must place the emphasis on the 'guidance' function of our role. We are there to guide our less experienced coaches upwards and onwards. This guidance should be done **with the mentee not to them**. This will sit hand in hand with our individualised coaching philosophy as the mentoring programme will be learner centred not mentor centred. The key is to reflect and engage in and with the process at critical, as well as practical and technical levels – being constructive in our comments and building a relationship with our coaches. This programme will also help to extend the coaches education by linking everything which they have learnt to their coaching practice.

An effective mentoring programme should:

- Enable coaches to consider differences make mistakes, learn from them and try again.
  - constructing an environment for them to develop at their own pace
- Provide opportunities to test, refine knowledge and skills, make coaching judgements that are situationally meaningful and understand the pragmatic constraints of coaching contexts

We need to:

- Explore the personal dimensions and related anxieties of the novice in the new experiences
- Assist with integrating the coach into the club or institution
- Provide guidance in relation to where helpful coaching resources can be gleaned
- Assist with the preparation and delivery of coaching sessions
- Guide the coach's practical coaching and indicating alternative appropriate strategies within a supportive framework
- Systematically (constructively) challenge novice coaches as they progress through the stages of coaching
- Encourage them to constantly evaluate their understanding of the coaching role and their performance within it

How do we go about doing this?

- The key is the posing of insightful open ended exploratory questions by the mentor to de-mystify the coaching process - put it all together and make sense of it for them – at least encourage them to work with a sense of unease
- Supplying the coaches with the confidence that they can survive and thrive in a very complex environment with differing demands and strains on their personal resources
- Informing insightful learning, particularly in relation to under-standing the holistic and complex nature of coaching

Summary

From this information, it is clear that if a coach is to play a significant part in the long term development of an athlete then their coaching philosophy needs to be individualised. Also, to create an effective coaching programme, it is important to have a working knowledge of all aspects of the coaching process, so as to develop your players and fellow coaches.

Periodisation and LTAD

Periodisation - what is it and what does it mean?

Periodisation is the manipulation of training volume and intensity in order to achieve optimal performance at a specified time of the competitive year and minimise over-training and fatigue.

Traditionally the following cycle is evident in most periodised training programmes. Initially low intensity, higher volume training is performed early on in the periodisation, followed by higher intensity, more specific training as it progresses. This then moves into the competition phase, and finally the transition phase (rest). However, unlike athletics where athletes may be attempting to peak for just one competition, Basketball is different. Players need to play on average once every seven days over a six to eight month period.

It is not possible to achieve optimal performance each week over such a time span, and therefore coaches must not attempt to try and peak players too early in the season. The coach also must be aware that basketball is an impact sport and this will have an effect on effective preparation. Additionally, basketball has several fitness components that require attention and development. It is therefore essential that a coach plans out his/her year in advance in order to identify the strength and conditioning objectives.

This must also tie in with the overall team objectives. Then using scientific principles (periodisation) the strength and conditioning programme is devised to elicit achievement of optimal physical performance in harmony with the overall team objectives.

By the end of this module the coach should be able to:

- Comprehend and use the function of periodisation in planning the training programme.
- Identify the 'phases' of a training year.
- Understand the elements macrocycle, mesocycle and microcycle
- Understand how the components of fitness associated with basketball are periodised in order to achieve optimum physical performance.
- Effectively plan a training session to achieve the objectives set out by the overall programme
- Apply the above for a variety of age groups.

Long Term Athlete Development

In order that a player reaches their physiological potential, training should be structured and appropriate to the level of the player concerned. This philosophy should be adopted from the first time a child starts structured training through to adulthood. As a coach you should ensure that training is planned and, where possible, acknowledges individual differences.

This module is designed to enhance the coach's skills in planning and developing long term training plans. Therefore, given that coaches will potentially be dealing with players of all ages, prior to exploring the issues of periodisation he/she should be aware of the key elements of the growing athlete.

Maturation and Growth

Maturation is seen as the course of becoming fully mature. That is the speed and timing at which adulthood is reached. Whereas growth refers to an increase in body size associated with the first two decades of human life and is usually measured by changes in height (stature). The rate of growth is normally determined by identifying the growth velocity in cm per year and the period of quickest growth during childhood is termed the peak height velocity (PHV). This is the period that is commonly associated with rapid changes in stature and the onset of puberty, Differences in rates of growth differ between boys and girls, with girls (12+/-1year) tending to reach peak height velocity roughly two years before boys (14+/-1 year). Such changes impact on physical performance and at times may explain observed improvements in physical performance rather than

adaptation to a training stimulus. In some instances these changes may also explain deteriorations observed in performance over a short period of time, e.g. a player experiences rapid change in limb length with growth and during the short period of time that the individual adapts to these changes there may be a decrease in running speed.

Biological versus Chronological Age

When dealing with the growing child it is often the case that chronological age does not accurately represent biological age (i.e. how physically mature the individual is). Dealing with age-grouped teams often poses a problem for the coach, particularly in impact /contact sports, in that the bigger, more mature child will often outperform the less mature child. Therefore, it is important that the coach acknowledges why this is and differentiates within the training programme.

It is also important to remember that children are not mini adults and training should reflect the capabilities of the individual or group. However, it is also accepted that the logistical restraints of training in large groups means that the coach cannot provide individualised programmes for all players. Throughout this course attempts are made to differentiate between age groups, identifying the type, intensity and volume of training that is specifically appropriate. It is, however, the responsibility of the coach to understand the concepts of growth, maturation and how these factors influence performance.

Adaptation: The main law of training

A well-designed and structured conditioning programme will normally result in the outcome of improvements in physical fitness. As the stimulus (exercise) is altered, and providing it stresses the body appropriately, the response should be that the body alters to cope with this increased demand. This is known as ADAPTATION, for which exercise is a very powerful stimulus. Several factors must be adhered to in order to achieve the desired adaptation with any training programme. These are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 *The principles of training for inducing adaptation in a strength and conditioning programme (Adapted from Meir, 1994; Zatsiorsky, 1995)*

TRAINING PRINCIPLE	**APPLICATION**
OVERLOAD	The biological system, or part thereof, will only adapt to a training stimulus if the prescribed training load stresses it beyond its present capacity.
ACCOMMODATION	The decrease in response of a biological object to a continued stimulus (i. e. physical exercise)
PROGRESSION (Frequency)	Training loads are applied in a progressive fashion (Frequency) and in accordance with the players physiological and psychological potential in order avoid over-training and maximise performance potential.
SPECIFICITY (Type)	Training is based on a needs analysis of the game and replicates the physiological demands players are exposed to during play.
INTENSITY	Training intensity is prescribed at an appropriate percentage of the (Effort) players functional capacity and based on the demands of the game, in order to produce a positive training effect.
VOLUME (Amount)	Training volume refers to the total quantity of work performed.
RECOVERY (Rest)	Recovery periods within and between training sessions are prescribed in accordance with the energy systems restoration and performance characteristics.
INDIVIDUALITY	The programme is designed on the positional demands of play and individual strengths and weaknesses.

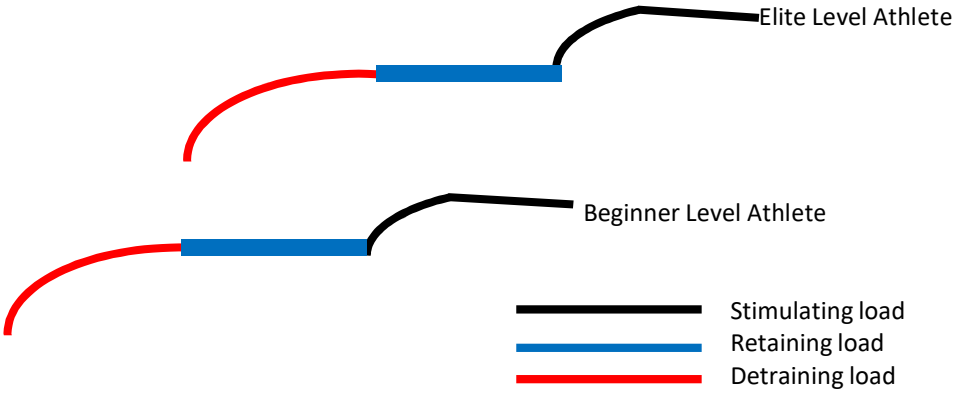
Overload - the main factor

The major principle necessary to evoke improvements in performance for a player is OVERLOAD. This refers to the application of a stimulus or training load to the body that is greater than that normally experienced. Manipulating the principles of intensity, frequency, duration and type of training can induce training overload (Figure 1).

The training load can be classified as (Zatsiorsky, 1995):

- **Stimulating -** the magnitude of the training load is above the 'normal' level and positive adaptation occurs
- **Retaining -** the magnitude of the training is at the 'normal' level and fitness is maintained.
- **Detraining -** the magnitude if the training is below that of the 'normal' level and leads to a deterioration in performance or fitness.

Figure 1
The adaptation curves of physical fitness for beginner and elite level athletes in response to various training loads (adapted from Zats/orsky, 1995).



Based upon Figure 1, a progressive manipulation of the training stimulus will result in a stimulating response, i.e. the player improves their fitness. However, failing to provide the correct stimulus, either by maintaining or reducing the current stimulus, can lead to an unchanged (retaining) or reduced (detraining) level of fitness, respectively.

It is also worthy to note that the response to the training stimulus is dependent upon the level (elite or beginner) of the athlete. The beginner will require much lower levels of stimulation to evoke a training effect. This is in comparison to the elite player whose adaptation will be very rapid.

The elite athlete, who possesses many years of training, will require extremely demanding programmes in order to evoke adaptation and this must carefully considered by the coach.

Planning the Season: Phases of the Year

The training year or season for basketball is usually divided into three main phases, these being:

- **Transition (Off-season) Phase**
- **Preparation (Pre-season) Phase**
- **Competition (In-season) Phase**

As stated before, periodisation of the year is when you are trying to bring the player to a peak, without causing over-training. The length and structure of each phase will be determined by principal factors such as the length of the season, player age, ability and player availability. A major factor for periodisation in basketball is the

length of the competition phase, which in most cases lasts in the region of 7 - 8 months. This has obvious implications in that you cannot expect players to peak continuously throughout that 8 month period. Therefore, as a coach you must decide on the key areas for reaching optima! performance, while also maintaining the players in the best condition as possible each week - a very difficult task indeed' A suggestion is to work backwards in planning your season, starting with your goals and building the structure around that.

Figure 2
The training phases: A typical model for amateur basketball

May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
TRANSITION		PREPARATION					COMPETITION				

The Transition (off season) phase for the basketball player is a period of non-specific exercise and general maintenance of fitness levels, usually following a break after the competition phase. Training is moderate in volume, low in intensity and with little specificity. The coach should try to utilise different approaches to achieving fitness targets in order to provide a psychological break for the player (e.g. hockey, cross- training).

The focus for this sub phase should be:

Age Group	Focus of sub-phase
6 - 11 years	1. Aerobic fitness through games and fun activities. 2. Hand-eye co-ordination development via a variety of games. 3. Generally having fun
12 - 15 years	1. Maintain aerobic fitness and limit unnecessary weight gain through games and various activities, also to include flexibility work. 2. Introduction to resistance exercise - technique work only (1 session per week). 3. Basic ball skills e.g. touch rugby, volleyball. 4. Maintain team cohesion (team building activities)
16 + years	1. Maintain aerobic fitness and limit unnecessary weight gain through games and various activities, also to include flexibility work (1 - 2 sessions per week). 2. Basic strength exercises with emphasis on technique and muscle endurance (1 session per week). 3. Basic ball skills e.g. touch rugby, volleyball. 4. Maintain team cohesion (team building activities)

Strength and conditioning, as the name suggests, is now very much geared towards the specifics of basketball. Intensity now becomes closely related to those associated with the energy demands of the game, as volume decreases and appropriate recovery levels are provided. For the younger age groups there will be few changes in terms of the focus, however, a closer shift towards game specific skills is possibly relevant. The focus for the older age groups should be approached with emphasis on specific movements and intensities associated with the game. The ability of the coach/trainer to think laterally for novel ideas will not only enhance and optimise the conditioning, but will also make it fun for the players involved.

The focus for this sub phase should be:

Age Group	Focus of sub-phase

6 - 11 years	1. Specific skills (relevant to age) 2. Continue aerobic fitness development via fun games 3. Develop body for contact/collisions 4. Flexibility
12 - 15 years	1. Specific aerobic fitness at high intensity (small games/specific movement patterns/ contact) 2. Continue resistance training development 3. Speed and Acceleration (multi-directional movement game situations) 4. Agility development/running technique 5. Flexibility 6. Specific Skills (relevant to age).
16 + years	1. Specific Strength and Power 2. Speed and Acceleration (multi-directional movements/game situations) 3. Specific agility development in game situations 4. Specific Aerobic/Anaerobic fitness [high intensity work] (small games/movements patterns/contact) 5. Flexibility 6. Skills, offensive/defensive.

In the Competition Phase for the older players (16+ years) strength and conditioning is again very specific to basketball. However, as described before it is impossible to peak each week and the major focus should be to maintain the achieved fitness levels while peaking for important matches, with recovery and injury prevention a priority. Intensity is very high with low volume, and the primary focus is on strength and power maintenance, plus game specific speed and agility. There will also be much focus on skills and tactical aspects and where possible the combination of skills with fitness will be significant (see skill-conditioning continuum).

For the younger age groups, the major focus is on maintenance of aerobic fitness and progressive development of sport specific fitness integrated with skills to peak for recognised stages in the season.

Figure 3

General Outline of the training year, showing the various phases, sub phases and cycles

The Yearly Plan (Macrocycle)

Phases of Training	Transition	Preparation							Competition			
Sub Phases	Trans	General Preparation		Specific Preparation					Competition			
Macro cycles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Micro cycles												

Figure 4

Outline of the training year for a basketball team

The Yearly Plan (Macrocycle)												
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
Phases of Training	Transition	Preparation				Competition						
Sub Phases	Trans	General Preparation		Specific Preparation		Competition						
Endurance		Aerobic Capacity	Aerobic Power	High Intensity Specific (<60s)		Maintain						
Resistance		General Strength		Specific Strength & Power								
Speed & Agility		Develop Running & Agility Technique		Specific Sprint & agility Work								
Flexibility		Develop				Maintain						
Skill		Develop				Maintain						
Tactics				Introduce		Refine						
Fitness Tests												
% training time:												
Conditioning		70	60	60	50	30	30	20	30	20	30	20
Skill		30	40	30	30	40	30	40	30	30	20	20
Tactical		-	-	10	20	30	40	40	40	50	50	60

Planning a training session

You must always plan training sessions in advance in order to work in accordance with the aims of the current macrocycle, and more precisely the imminent microcycle. Dawson (1996) states that following should be considered;

- The main objectives of the microcycle
- The date of the next game
- Yesterday's training
- Tomorrow's training

Structuring the session

The session should be presented in a logical sequence (See Table 3). This is particularly relevant to consider when the effects of one activity may adversely affect those of the following activity (on high intensity aerobic conditioning followed by agility/ high skill level based work). The focus of the session will be dependent upon the training phase (general/specific preparation, competition) and the aims and objectives of the meso/microcycle. Placing a time limit on each component will also help to plan the session within the allocated time frame and also aid achievement of the overall aims.

Table 3 Generalised components of a 2-hour training session for basketball

Component	Allocated time (minutes)
Warm-Up	15
Speed and agility work	20
Specific individual skills	50
Conditioning	20
Cool-down	15

This process is even more important when working within particular time constraints where the correct structuring of a session can enhance the effectiveness of your programme. It is also worthy to note that in such situations the ability to integrate skill-based and conditioning-based drills can also optimise the effectiveness of your session.

In this situation you must identify particular skills and fitness elements that need to be focused upon and the degree of emphasis needed on each. The application of the skill-conditioning continuum is helpful in helping to decide whether you are trying to focus on the skill part or the conditioning part of the drill (Figure 5). Implications of this are that in focusing on the skill, the actual training (physiological) effect will probably be dampened as the coach stops and starts the drill to focus and correct players.

On the other hand, a conditioning emphasis would probably result in a lack of focus on the skill elements while the players are asked to maintain pre-determined intensities or movement patterns. As a result, prior to the session, the coach must decide upon the focus of each element.

Figure 5
The skill - conditioning continuum

Integrating fitness testing

Fitness testing will form a small, but important, part of the overall training programme and therefore must be programmed accordingly. The testing can be dictated by the focus of the mesocycle or training phase. For example, if the focus is development of aerobic fitness, assessment of aerobic fitness should be programmed at the start and after the specified

training period. This will allow you to monitor whether the training programme you have used has had any affect during the phase. By planning accordingly you fulfil one of the requirements of testing in that you are repeating the testing in accordance with the training programme.

Is recovery important?

It is important that if you devise a training programme there are regular recovery days integrated to allow recuperation and prevent over-training of the player. During a training week for the preparation phase, players should be training very hard and be encouraged to take one full rest day. As the competition phase progresses, although the volume of training is reduced, the introduction of games along with training should be met with the introduction of two recovery days. Post match recovery days may take the form of very gentle aerobic, non-weight bearing exercise (e.g. swimming) where possible, providing no serious injury is present. Players should be educated towards the purposes and significance of recovery days and encouraged to optimise their training via its application.

The amount of recovery will depend upon:

- The intensity of the training stimulus
- The nature of the training stimulus
- The duration of the training stimulus
- Accumulated levels of stress from training and competition
- The nature and timing of subsequent training or competitive stimuli
- The likelihood of injury from training/technical proficiency

Rushall & Pyke (1990) state that inadequate recovery from previously fatiguing work produces no benefit to the player, they simply learn to cope with fatigue rather than improving in specific aspects of performance.

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Reflective Practice

Introduction

Coach education programmes cover many areas of the coaching process. One area to explore further is the evaluation or 'reflection' of the coach's coaching practice with the emphasis on improving player performance. It is believed that the coach's experience if developed will act as a tool for them to improve their future practice.

If practical experience is to play a major part in the development of coaches, it is therefore necessary to introduce reflective practice techniques to help improve coaching practice.

This section is for any coach who wishes to advance their coaching practice. The aim of this resource is to provide the coach with knowledge of how to do this using reflective practice.

Included in this section is a brief explanation of:

- What is Reflective Practice
- How has it been used elsewhere
- How to undertake Reflective Practice

Each chapter in this section will contain tasks and questions to help you as a coach develop your understanding and to enable you to relate the tasks to your actual coaching practice. This in turn will help you use the tools developed to improve your coaching practice and consequently improve player performance.

At the end of the booklet will be a list of any references used in the chapters and advice on where to get further information on the subject.

Task 1 (Pre-course)

To get you thinking about your coaching, write down if you reflect or evaluate your coaching at the moment.

If so how do you do this?

What is Reflective Practice?

Reflective Practice can be difficult to describe and can involve a variety of techniques and methods.

When talking about reflective practice most people quote Schön (1983) to describe what reflective practice is. This author describes the use of reflective practice as being "Professional expertise" and describes how it can be used to improve future practice.

Reflective practice can be talked about in two ways:

Reflection-In-Action

Reflection which occurs within the practice situation. Decisions are made immediately in response to a given situation.

Reflection-On-Action

Reflection which takes place following the session. Has the aim to improve practice for the next session.

Information from using Reflective Practice could assist you to:

- Plan action for the next session.
- Help identify why you did what you did.
- Identify how you felt.
- Identify what happened during a session.
- Identify why you think it happened.

Where has Reflective practice been used?

Little research has been completed regarding reflective practice and coaching but there is a lot of information showing how effectively reflective practice has been used in other areas.

Reflective practice is widely used in the nursing profession. It is shown in research that it's use has helped improve the practice of trainee nurses (Palmer et al.,1994). Nursing, much like coaching is an extremely applied discipline. If educators from nursing believe that techniques that help improve practice are important, why should coaches not adopt the same approach?

Reflective practice is also widely adopted in the teaching profession as many believe that becoming an effective teacher is a lifelong process (Gibbs and Habeshaw, 1992). The same attitude should be adopted by all coaches as continued professional development will ensure that all coaching is up to date and will help to avoid past mistakes.

Reflection = Learning from your experience

We all learn from our experience even if we don't realise it at the time!

Task 2 (pre-course):

1. Think of a situation, sporting or non-sporting where you have experienced an event and learnt a valuable lesson from it. Write down your experience.

2. Write down any tools which you can use to reflect on your coaching.
E.g. Mentor or assistant coach

Answer 1:

Answer 2:

Types of Reflective Practice

There are at least four ways which you as a coach can reflect on your coaching. These include:

- Face to Face
- Focus Groups
- Diary/ Journal
- Guided Reflection

There are both advantages and disadvantages in using all of these methods of reflection, **REMEMBER**:

It is important that you find a way of reflecting that is best suited to you.

Like every skill, reflection requires practice and therefore it gets easier the more you try it!!

Why not give all of the following ways of reflection a try to see which suits you best?

Face to Face

Speaking to somebody face to face is said by some to be the quickest and easiest way to find out somebody's true feelings by allowing them to express themselves more freely than if they had to write their thoughts down (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). There will be some challenges when reflecting face to face, people's feeling and beliefs and a possible lack of knowledge by the other person may hinder positive reflection. It is important to establish a relationship and set clear objectives for both parties.

Focus Group

Also known as "Action Learning Groups". These can help by pooling ideas and seeking advice from others in a similar situation that are not as involved and may be able to be more objective to help facilitate learning from the experience (Jasper, 2003). A possible disadvantage of using this method maybe that the coach feels that they are being criticised by others within the group and is not in control of the situation.

Diary / Journals

Can allow you to express your true feelings as others do not have access to your Diary/ Journal unless you wish. This can also allow the coach to work through reflection in an order which is most suited to them.

A disadvantage which has been found from research in the coaching domain is that some believe that the process is time consuming and too unstructured as coaches may be new to reflection therefore unsure of what is required (Knowles et al., 2001)

Guided Reflection

Authors from the teaching profession (Ghaye and Ghaye, 1998) describe that when reflection enables thinking and practice to advance, the process is challenging, structured and supported. A simple explanation for this is that if a person is going to do something well, they need to know how to do it properly so it is effective.

Models of reflection can be used to help initiate reflection. There are a number of models which may be useful to help encourage a coach to start reflecting.

Authors from other professions which use reflective practice suggest that for reflection to be as effective as it could be, it may need to be more structured (Palmer et al., 1994)

TASK 3 (Pre-course):

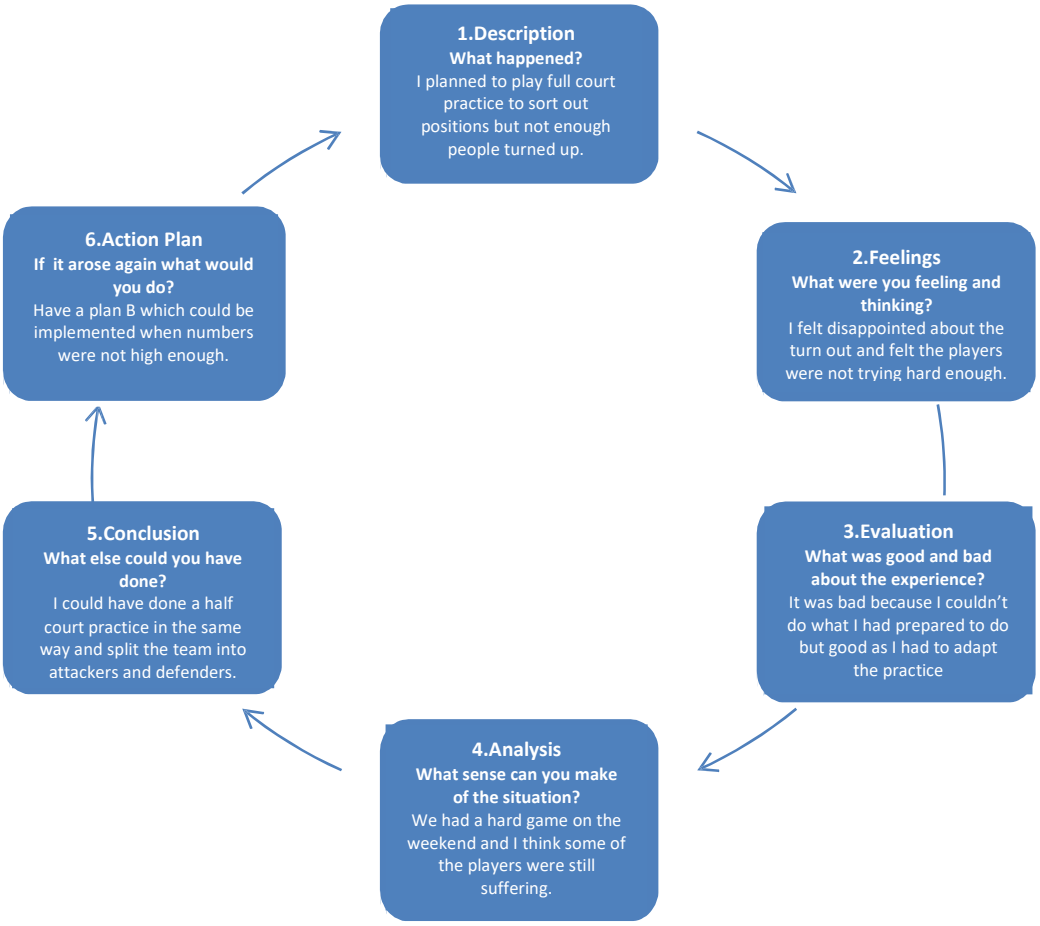
Think of your last coaching session, choose any or all of these methods and try to reflect on your coaching.

- **How do you feel that task went?**
- **Were you uncertain on what to write or talk about?**
- **Did you find your method easy?**

Gibbs' Model of Reflection

This is Gibbs' (1988) model of a reflective cycle, which provides a more structured way of carrying out Reflective Practice for those who may require more guidance on techniques.

This model shows how reflection is a cyclical process and provides short cues to prompt reflection. Below we show the model with a work through of an example of Reflection.



TASK 4 (Pre-course):

After looking at our example, think of a coaching session which took place recently and try to apply the model below to your coaching session.

1. **DESCRIPTION**
   What happened?

2. **FEELINGS**
   What were you feeling and thinking?

3. **EVALUATION**
   What was good and bad about the experience?

4. **ANALYSIS**
   What sense can you make of the situation?

5. **CONCLUSION**
   What else could you have done?

6. **ACTION PLAN**
   If it arose again what would you do?

How did you feel about your first attempt at Guided Reflective Practice?

Johns (1994) Framework

If Gibbs' model is still too unstructured to help you reflect effectively, there are other models which provide a framework offering more in depth questions to help initiate reflection. Johns (1994) created a framework for another discipline which can be adapted to use for coaching. Below are a number of questions based on this model but which we have adapted for use in coaching. For more structured reflection why not try answering the following questions!

Description of Experience

1. Can you describe what happened during the session and what activities took place?

Reflection

2. Was there a preconceived aim set for the session?
3. What led to this choice?

Influencing Factors

4. Did any internal factors influence your choice of activities?
5. Did any external factors influence this choice?

Learning

6. Was the overall aim for the session met?
7. Do you think you could have done anything to improve the session (include other activities)?
8. Are there any obvious advantages or disadvantages for these activities?
9. How do you feel about how the session went?
10. How did the participant feel about the session?
11. How do you know how the participants felt?
12. Has the session highlighted any other areas which need looking at?
13. Considering this session, is there anything you plan on including in the next training session?

Summary

Reflective practice is based on the concept that as human beings we learn from our experience and use these experiences to form future action.

No matter how experienced a coach is, we can all remember starting out on our coaching careers. Would you have benefited from a method to help you learn from your mistakes and what you did well?

Reflective practice could offer a way of relating what you have learnt from carrying out your coaching, to the coaching theory you have learnt on previous courses or from other information sources.

Reflective practice is useful because it's not rocket science. In its simplest form it's just thinking about what happened during your sessions, thinking about the reasons behind what happened and then using this to help form your actions in future sessions.

If coaching is to continue to become a professional and respected discipline, a method to enhance continued professional development needs to be adopted.

With reflective practice well utilised in other applied disciplines, it is obvious that these reflective techniques, whether they be unstructured or highly structured can help coaches (both experienced and inexperienced) improve and understand their coaching practice.

Where Next?

This section is aimed at being a first resource in discovering Reflective Practice. Information in this booklet has been gathered from the following sources. Readers are referred to these sources for more in-depth information.

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Module: Team Offence

Philosophy

The coach must decide on a philosophy of how they want their teams to play on offence.
This philosophy should incorporate the important basic tenets and fundamentals the coach wants to see their players display. There are two basic types of philosophy, 'rigid' and 'flexible'.

The coach must be clear about whether they want an 'up-tempo' style of offence or a 'walk-it-up' more half court oriented offence. Clearly there are several historical examples of both styles proving to be very successful and effective. Many coaches would admit perhaps to advocating a combination of both styles depending upon the game situation.

Another determinant and consideration must be the quality and ability of the players; which 'style' fits them? How will they be most effective and successful? Which 'style' will develop them more as individual players?

Coaches should be able to determine, in the off-season or pre-season, the characteristics and abilities of their personnel and construct the offence for their team based on this factor. It is a case of 'make the offence fit the players' and not vice-versa. This is where the coach, whilst still adhering to and preserving their philosophies, may (will) have to adapt and 'tweak' the strategies in accordance with the relative strengths and weaknesses of the personnel.

Principles

There are several principles that will prevail and are worth noting when constructing an offence.

1. The main function of an offence is to obtain a high percentage shot whilst maintaining adequate rebound potential and making proper defensive transition considerations.
2. Offence should have good timing and continuous coordinated movement which can adapt to any defence.
3. The successful offence must provide coordination of movement of all five players and promote proper execution of individual fundamentals.
4. The offence must be synchronised. All players must understand their role within the offence and also each of the five positions.
5. It must have continuity and good rebounding opportunities.
6. It should be uncomplicated and easy to learn.
7. Players must have patience in trying to obtain the high percentage shot. With proper ball and player movement, this can be achieved.
8. The importance of possession of the ball must be stressed. Eliminate turnovers.
9. Players must know how to play without the ball.
10. Offence must be flexible to take advantage of defensive lapses and mistakes.

In addition to these, it is also important to ensure that the players are well versed in and suitably prepared for adherence to the following principles:

1. Take advantage of defensive lapses or mistakes, take what the defence gives you. 'Read the defence' is the key phrase.
2. Be patient; work for the highest percentage shot.
3. Execute the details of the offence.
4. Keep the ball off the floor as much as possible.
5. Move the defence and exploit opportunities created by their movement.
6. Teamwork is essential; set screens, make the extra pass, get the ball to a teammate in scoring position.

Theory & Practice

PART ONE: OFFENSIVE TRANSITION – THE FAST BREAK & SECONDARY BREAK

PART TWO: MOTION OFFENCE – PRINCIPLES OF PLAY

PART THREE: SET PLAYS (PATTERN OFFENCE) Continuity, Quick Hits & 'Starts'

PART FOUR: ZONE OFFENCE

PART FIVE: OUT OF BOUNDS PLAYS

PART SIX: PRESS OFFENCE /BREAKER

Part One: Fast Break & Secondary Fast Break

The fast break is the ultimate offensive weapon as it implies that the superiority of numbers will promote the highest percentage shot in only 2 or 3 passes which puts pressure on the defence in many ways.

It makes every player a potential scorer which is more 'attractive' to players and spectators alike.

The focus for Level 3 is the Secondary Fast Break phase, also known as 'early offence' or 'quick hit'.

Often, you can utilize the brief period when the defence is still either retreating and / or not quite set in their individual man for man assignments and positions, this momentary lapse in defensive concentration and intensity can be exploited very effectively by the offence.

Considerations:

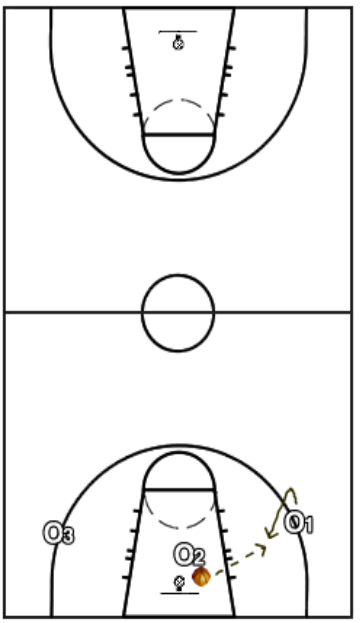
1. The outlet pass and the reception of it:
   - (i) From defensive rebound. (a) 180 degree turn in the air. (b) "Power out" dribble.
   - (ii) From made field goal or free throw. (a) "One hopper".
   - (iii) Area of the court to receive. (a) Below free throw line on the wing. (b)At free throw line. (c) Towards mid court.
   - (iv) Receiver. (a) Point guard. (b) C cut.

2. The routes and cuts:
   - (i) Ball position. (a) 'Create a side'.
   - (ii) Wing men. (a) Sidelines. (b) Arrival in final phase.
   - (iii) First trailer. (a) X cut. (b) Post options.
   - (iv) Point guard. (a) "Automatic". (b) Exchange with opposite wing.
   - (v) Second trailer. (a) Weak-side elbow. (b) Continuity options.

3. Secondary / quick hit / early offence options:
   - (i) All positions / all personnel scoring options. (ii) All positions / all personnel passing options. (iii) All positions / all personnel continuity options.

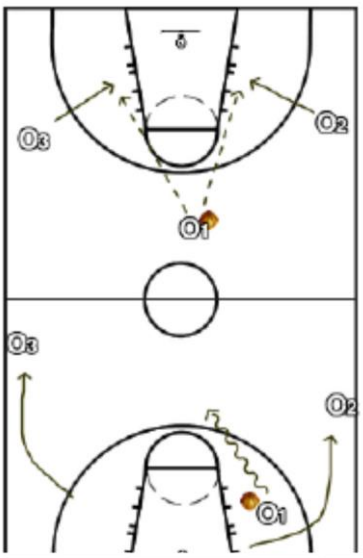
3 ON 0 FAST BREAK SERIES.

A preliminary drill to allow the players to appreciate the fundamentals of the primary and secondary fast break 'options'.

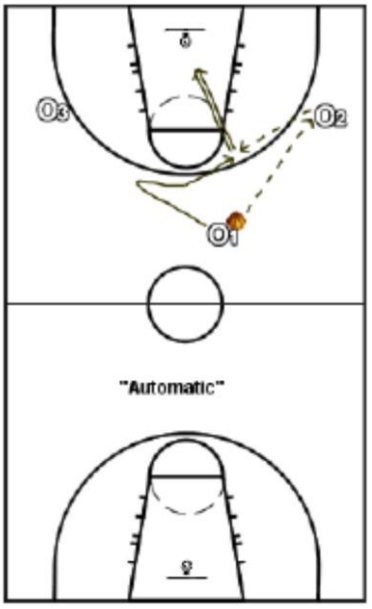


1. 02 rebounds the ball off the glass. 01 V cuts back to the ball for outlet pass. Players progress in the 3 man fast break up the court and execute a layup.

2. Progress to the taking of a bank shot. The other two players must rebound and tip in any missed shot.



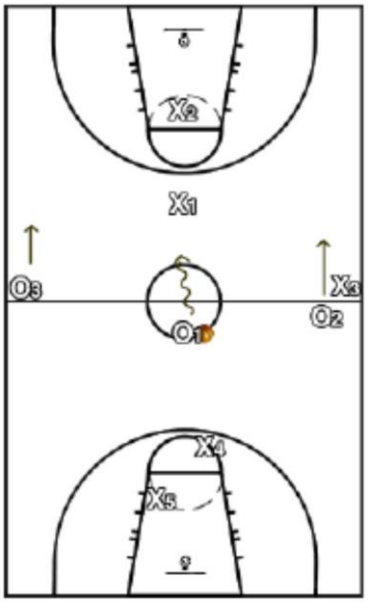
3. Final progression is the 'automatic'. The point guard, or the player in the middle, passes to either wing, wing man must be in triple threat position, fakes away from the pass and cuts back hard to the ball in the elbow area for the return pass and the catch and shoot. (Also take some three point shots).



3 ON 2 WITH TRAILING DEFENCE DRILL

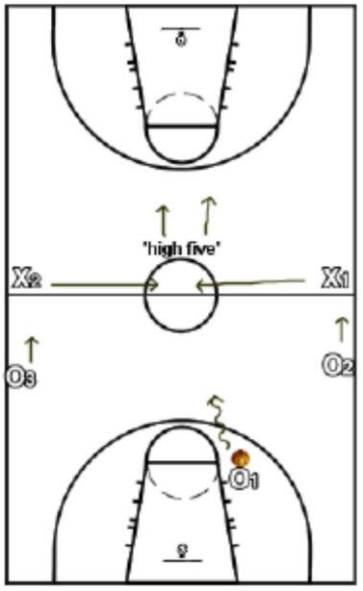
Ideally, 4 teams of 3.

Two are on defence already, when all three offensive players and the ball have crossed the time line, and then the third defender may enter. His route is along the time line, putting one foot in the centre circle then joining his defensive teammates. They play 3 on 2 or 3 on 3, the team that just scored or turned it over, play defence back to the half then leave the court.



3 ON 2, 2 ON 1 DRILL

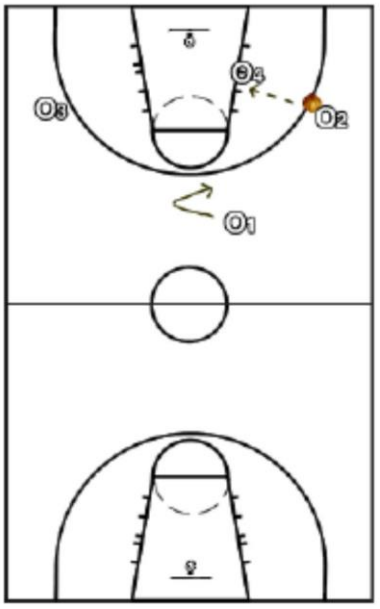
The key to this drill is to pass ahead and read the defence. Spacing is important. All fundamentals, as usual, must be adhered to. The two defensive players must hustle back to the mid court junction, before running into the centre circle to 'high five' and then retreating to defend the fast break.



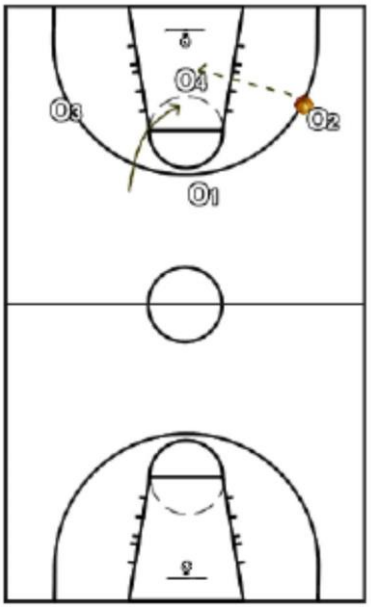
4 ON 0 FAST BREAK DRILL

Emphasis is on the trailer. It is the 'first trailer'.

Option One:
04 will go to the block and post up

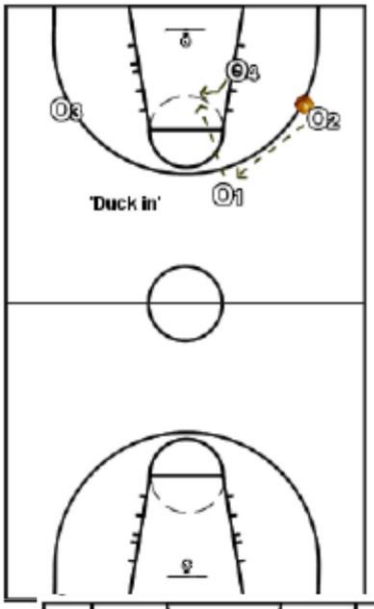


Option Two:
Hit 04 on his X cut, in the paint.

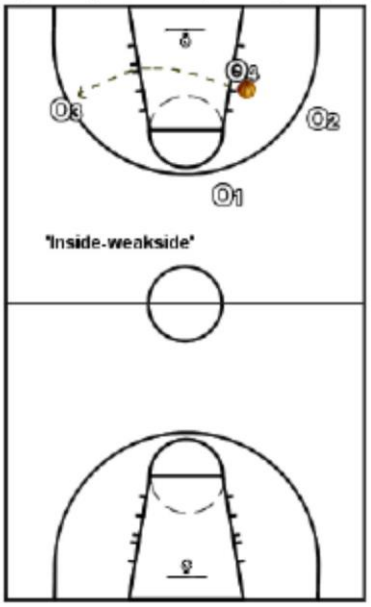


Option Three:

Reverse the ball to 01, 04 must 'duck in', seal defender, and look for the point to paint pass.

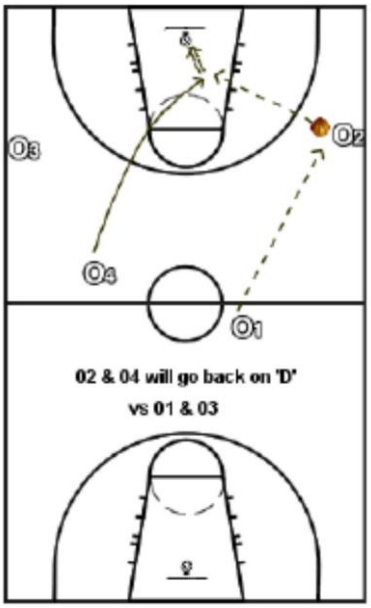


Option Four:
Inside - weak-side pass. 04 skip pass to 03 for the catch and shoot.



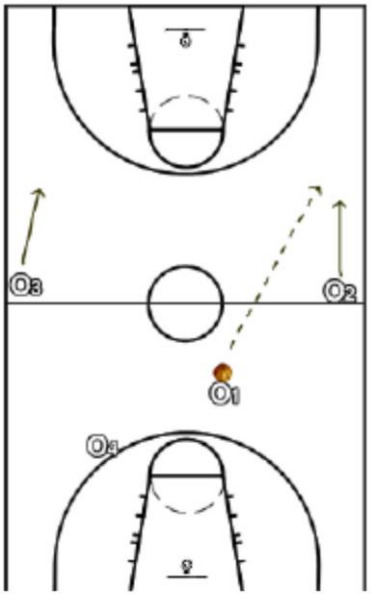
4 ON 0, 2 ON 2 DRILL

Players will go up the floor and execute one of the options of the four man secondary fast break; the Coach may yell out what option he wants them to execute. The shooter and the player who made the assist, will then come back on defence vs the other two players.



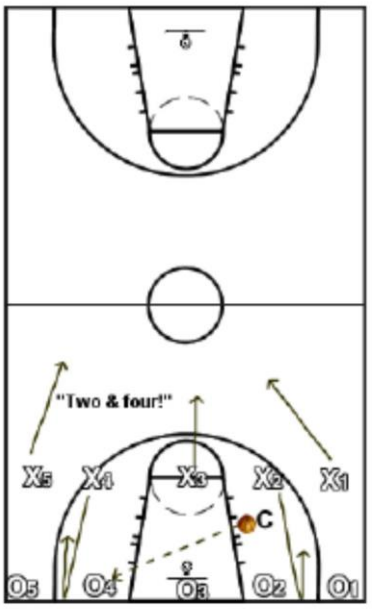
4 TRIPS DRILL

Players will go up and down the floor, 4 times, executing the options for each player.



5 ON A LINE TRANSITION DRILL

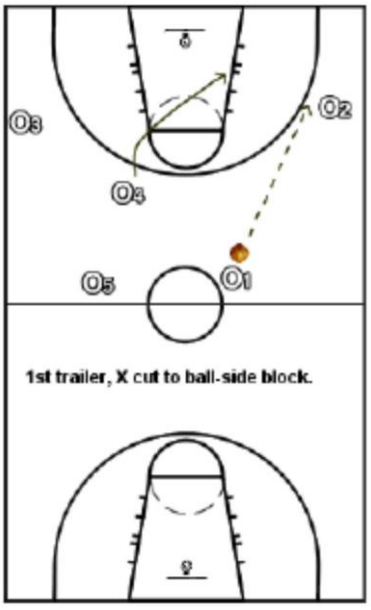
Players line up as shown. Coach will toss the ball to any one of the offensive team, at the same time he will yell out a number or two or three numbers...the players whose numbers are called must run to touch the baseline at this end before joining their teammates who have retreated back on defence versus the offensive team who have organized their fast break and early offence. Keep score. Have e.g. 3 trips each then change over.

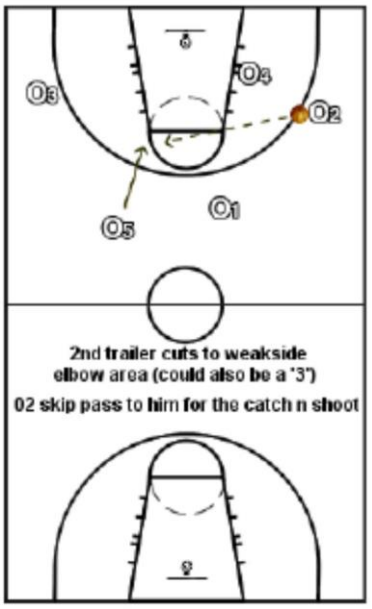


5 Tr**ips Drill**

The players will go up and down the floor five times. Each player will get his shot from the designated spot / option, within the five man secondary fast break. The options are:

1) Perimeter players: Catch and shoot.
2) Shot fake and drive.
3) First Trailer: X cut open on cut, catch and power.
4) Go to ball side block, post up and low post moves.
5) Duck-in on ball reversal.
6) Second Trailer: Cut to weak-side elbow area, catch and shoot.
7) Shot fake and drive.
8) Shot fake, one dribble & shoot.





6 TRIPS DRILL

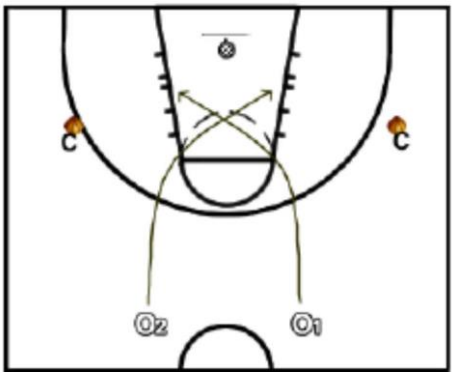
This is the drill to practice not only the Secondary Fast Break options but also now the continuity.
If the ball is reversed to the weak-side either by a skip pass form one perimeter player to the other, a reversal via the point or an inside-weak-side pass from the strong-side low post player, or the ball is with the 2nd trailer at the elbow area, the continuity of the secondary is as follows:
1. Give and go.
2. Wing and low post 2 man game.
3. Pick and roll.
In this drill therefore, the players will perform the 5 trips drill (options) and then on the 6th trip they will execute one of the above continuity options. The action on the weak-side is a 3 man motion.

BREAKDOWN DRILLS FOR TRAILERS

Each element of the secondary break requires teaching and drilling. Here are some drills for the trailers.

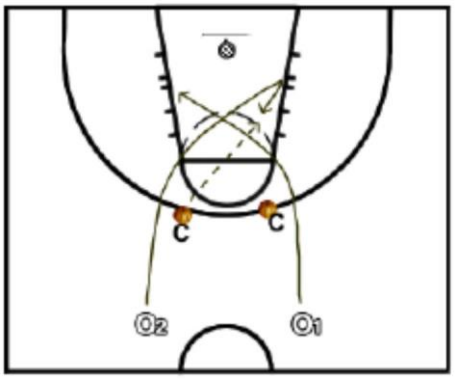
X CUT DRILL:

01 and 02 will perform the X cut.
Coach will pass them the ball either at the low post post-up or in the paint on the cut itself. Players perform the move/shot, collect the ball, pass it back to the coach, then jog back and rejoin the opposite line.



DUCK-IN DRILL:

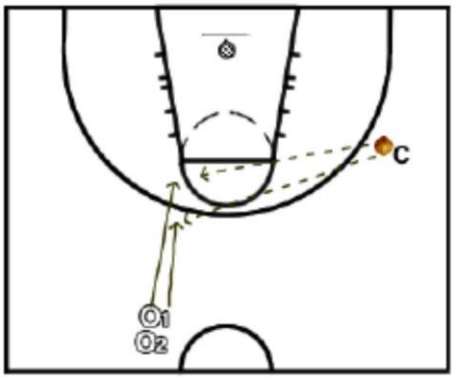
Players now make the X cut, post up, duck-in move. (Correct footwork required).
Power shot, recycle and rotate.



SECOND TRAILER DRILL:

Options are:
1) catch n shoot.
2) shot fake & drive.
3) shot fake, one dribble left or right, shot.

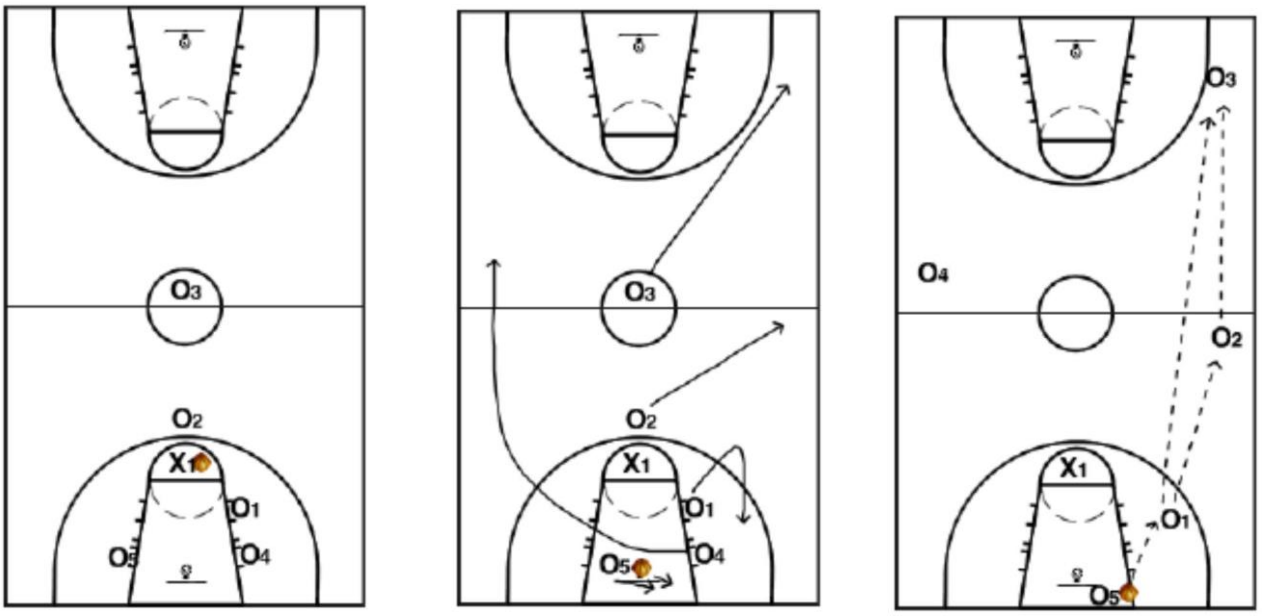
Take or make e.g. 10 shots from left, then change sides.



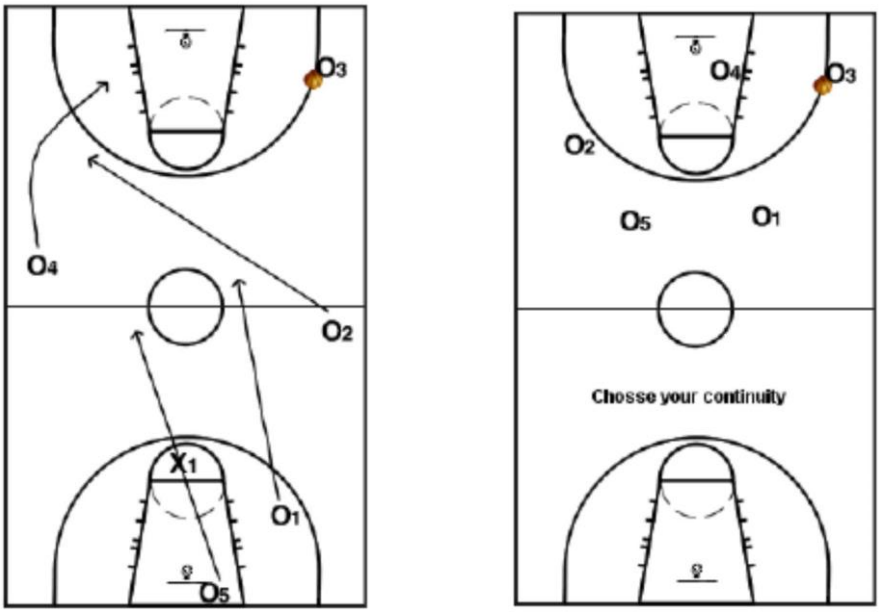
SIDELINE FAST BREAK

Not very common but used by some coaches is the slight variation of the sideline fast break. This is particularly efficient after an opponent's made free throw.

05 will take the ball out of bounds. 04 will sprint opposite lane. 02 goes to mid court,
03 goes to ball side corner deep down the floor. 01 must get open.
Here are the routes for the passes. 02 must be very careful about a potential back-court violation.



These are the routes for the players. Oftentimes 04 will be the man that is open on the sideline fast break. The next man that is often open is 02.



Part Two: Motion Offence

Motion offence or the passing game, if taught properly, will take you a minimum of two years to teach, and therefore the learning and performance curve for the players is a slow one.

However, because of the basic fundamentals required to execute and understand the offence, the carry-over of these skills to any other type of offence is extremely relevant and highly desirable. Hence, the players who will have benefited from this teaching will be highly effective within and be able to adapt to different offence throughout their careers.

Rules/concepts:

There are certain concepts that must be considered namely; movement without the ball, screen execution, decision-making, spacing and court vision.

Never stand still for more than 2 seconds.
Pass and screen away.
Pass and cut.
Fill an empty spot. Maintain court balance.
Dribble with a purpose: (a) "Dribble out" or "dribble at". I.e. dribble towards a teammate who is being denied/ overplayed. This teammate cuts backdoor. (b) Penetrate and kick or dish. (c) Pick and roll, or pick and pop.

"Readandreact".

Many coaches who teach this type of offence will instigate some 'rules' to help the players understand what they can do and where on the court they can do it from.
The advantage of motion offence is that it does not (always) necessarily rely upon having the classic 'athlete-by-position' scenario. I.e. you do not need to have a big centre or a super-quick point guard.

Depending upon how the coach wants to teach it, the offence is a multi-opportunity, non-position one, which means that all players need to acquire and refine all (basic) skills for all positions and possibilities.

'Moving with a purpose' is something that must be taught and drilled. This will rely on the player understanding how, where and when to move according to and after the 'read and react' decision has been made.

He/she can:

1) Cut and replace their self.
2) Cut and fill an empty spot.
3) Screen away.
4) Screen on the ball.
5) Cut backdoor.
6) Give and go.

Screen execution is vital in the motion offence / passing game.
The 'headhunting' of the defensive player, making contact, the angle of the screen are all the basic pre-requisites.

What happens after the setting of the screen is also an important consideration. The screener can:

1) Roll to basket.
2) Open and cut to the ball.
3) 'Pop' or fade to perimeter.
4) 'Stay' and open to ball.
5) Re-screen for same cutter.
6) Screen again for another teammate.
7) 'Slip the screen' (screen and go move).

Again, the player must be aware of other teammates as they should not 'get in the way' of a cutting player going to the basket for a sure lay up, for example.

Footwork is a hugely important fundamental here, as it is in all skills, but crucially also for the cutting player using the screen. This player has to read his defender (and often the screener's defender too), then react and make a decision involving usually one of the following:

1) Cut over top of screen to the ball.
2) Cut backdoor.
3) Curl off and back around the screen.
4) Flare or fade off the screen.
5) Cut up and inside the screen ('I' cut).
6) Curl off and go to basket.

The use of the dribble in the motion offence is an important point of emphasis for the coach.
Players only need to dribble in the following situations:

"Dribble at" a denied teammate on the perimeter.
To improve the passing angle.
To regain or maintain court (or floor) balance.
To drive to basket.
To penetrate, draw defenders and dish or kick to open teammates.
In the on-the-ball-screen situation (pick and roll).

Increasingly in the modern game, the screen on the ball is being made use of, often to great effect, as it is difficult to defend.
This is not traditionally a feature of the motion offence however and perhaps should not be included in the early stages of teaching / learning.

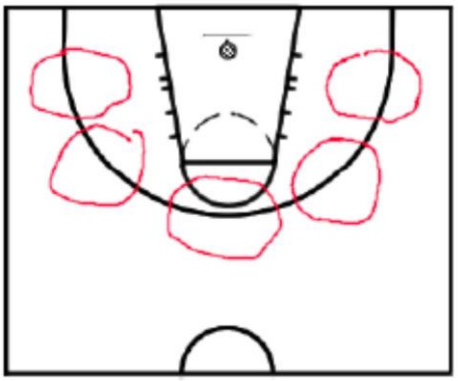
The coach needs to also make a decision on what structure or framework his/her motion offence / passing game will be based.
The choices are:

1) 5 out or "open motion".
2) One in, four out. I.e. one player remains in the post areas, 4 perimeter players.
3) Two in, three out.
4) Three in, two out.

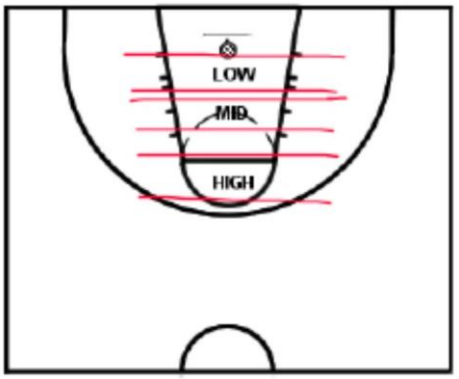
As mentioned earlier, 'rules' are usually put in place to accompany the above opening sets, for example, for the post players. E.g. Post player can only step out and set a back pick for a perimeter player but must the cut back into the post.

Whatever 'shape' or 'set' is chosen, the spacing of the 'spots' – these are the areas on the court which afford the best and maximal spacing between players, so as to extend the defence – must be identified and made clear to the players.

COURT SPACING



The 5 traditional (teaching) 'spots' on the perimeter.

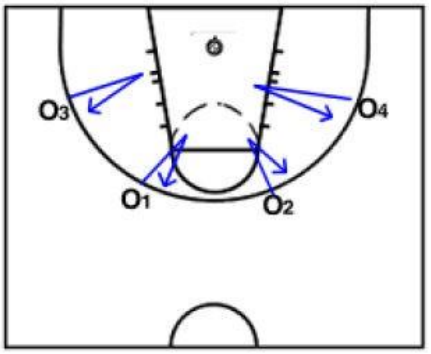


The three post areas:

Through a series of drills and the teaching progressions, the players in the motion offence will become skilled in knowing and recognizing these 'spots' and where, when and how to occupy them or leave them. When all five players can do this in a coordinated, symbiotic and harmonious fashion, now you have the beauty and impact of pure motion offence.

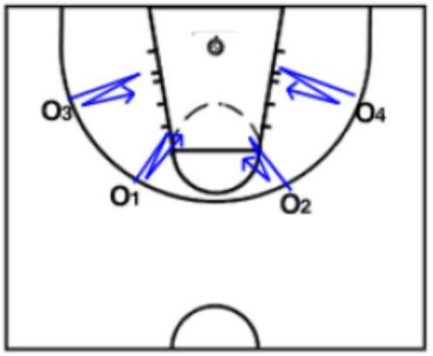
4 SPOT V CUT DRILL

As an introductory drill - teaching and emphasizing footwork and the concept of spacing. Players will execute the V cut and then rotate one spot clockwise to continue the drill . Progression will be to introduce the back cut and explain the reasons why players should be ready to execute this .

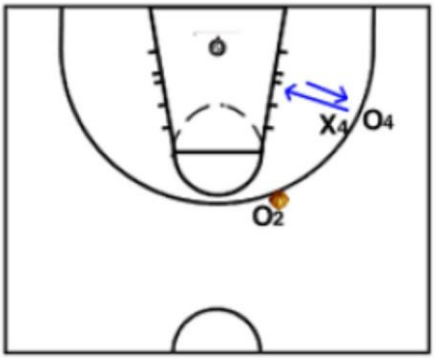


4 SPOT V CUT / BACK CUT DRILL

Progression: Set up this 2 on 1 drill and now the offensive player will have to read the defence and execute accordingly. You can go 1 on 1 upon receiving the ball, if you desire. Rules for 1 on 1 play! i.e. 5 seconds, 3 dribbles, alternate possession!

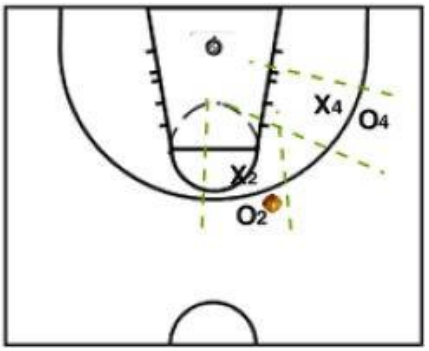


2 ON 1



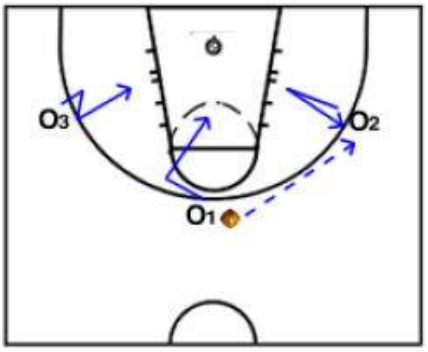
2 ON 2

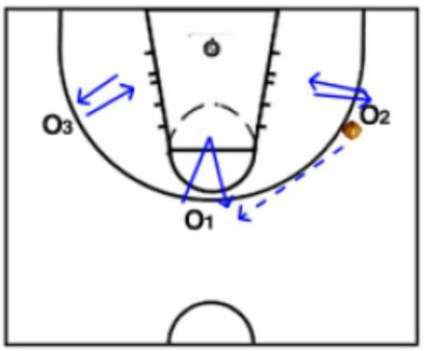
Next progression is to introduce the 2 on 2 drill and the players must appreciate and understand spacing, the ability to get open, the utilization of the give and go. No dribble to begin with.



3 ON 0

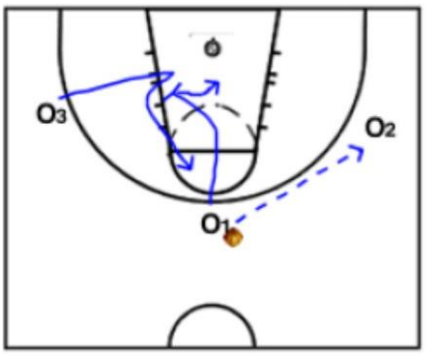
Now, progress to 3 man drills.
First one being the 3 on 0 V cut, back cut, give and go drill.
Players execute and rotate one spot clockwise and repeat.



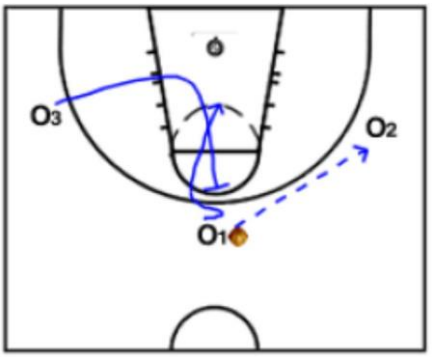


Next, the 3 on 0 replace yourself drill.

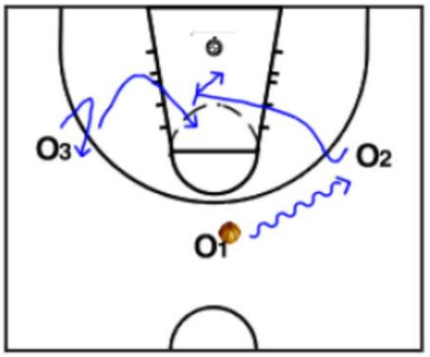
Next, the Pass & Screen Away option.



Next, the Back Screen option.



Next, the Dribble clear, lateral screen option.



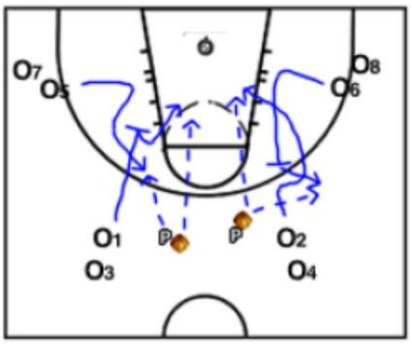
Having introduced and drilled many of the motion offence options and cuts etc. Now is the ultimate drill/test, 3 on 3. Play 3 on 3 with conditions etc. - up to the coach, and help the players to understand reading the defence and reacting in the appropriate way, spacing, and individual fundamentals.

3 ON 3

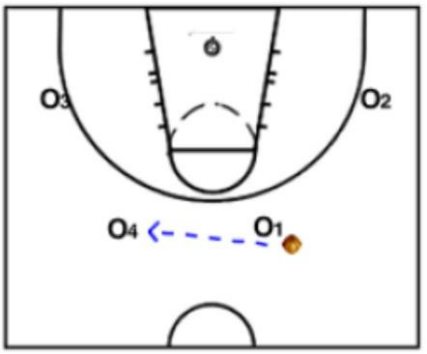
Here are some additional drills to further the knowledge for motion offence.

Up & Down Screen Drill

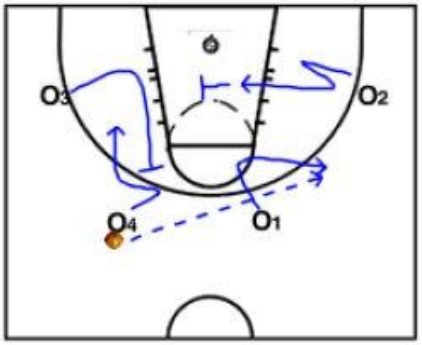
Down screen, use topside, roll.
Back screen, use outside, pop.
Passer can pass to either.



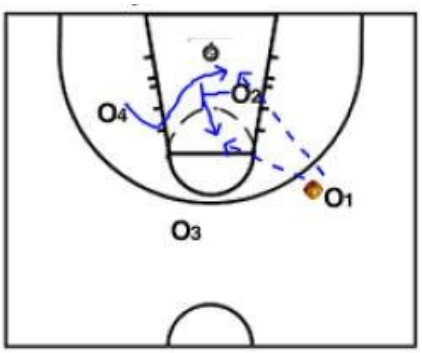
In this drill, 01 has executed an L cut; 02 has performed a V cut and a back cut;
03 has set a perimeter back screen.



Further continuity involves 02 continuing through and setting a lateral screen for 04 who has just come off 03's screen.



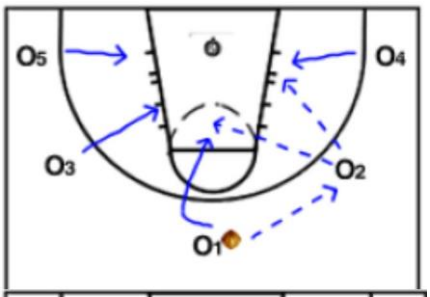
This drill is designed to allow the players to explore and understand continuity of movement / options that may be available in the game situation.



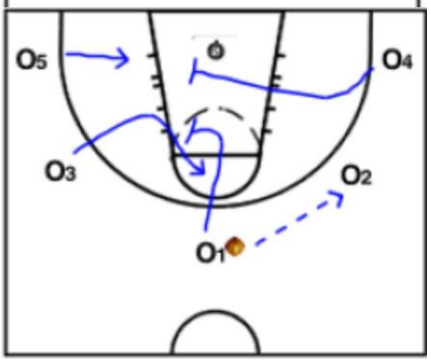
You must now progress to the 5 man 'real' situation. Begin with the 5 on 0 drill where all 4 players without the ball are working to get open in their motion spots.

5 ON ZERO

First 'option' could be the Give and go.

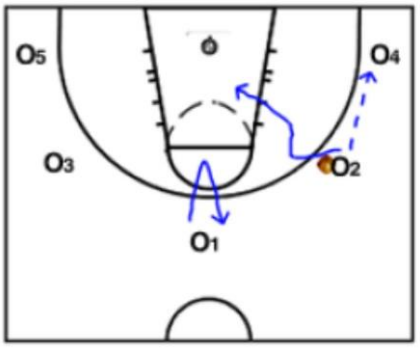


Next, try the Pass & screen away. Continuity of this phase of the drill would be to reverse the ball screen away, then reverse it twice or three times and screen away before a shot. You can authorize the screens to be made at different angles and spots on the floor also.



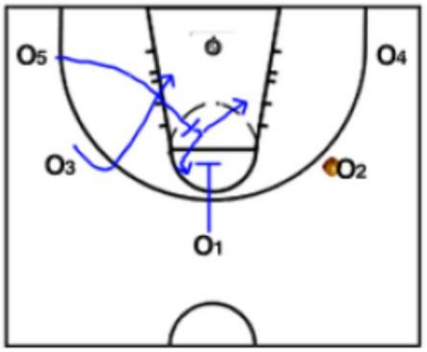
Next option:

On pass to corner, cut through. Players must rotate and fill a spot on the perimeter to keep the balance and spacing.

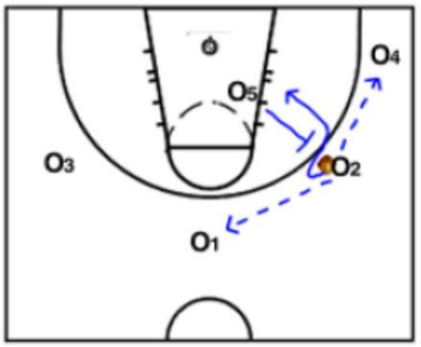


Next, getting a little more sophisticated. Pick for the picker options.

01 has picked for 03. 05 now comes and sets a (back) pick for 01.
A motion offence 'rule' could be, back pick a perimeter player; often the best guy to back pick is the man who has just passed the ball.

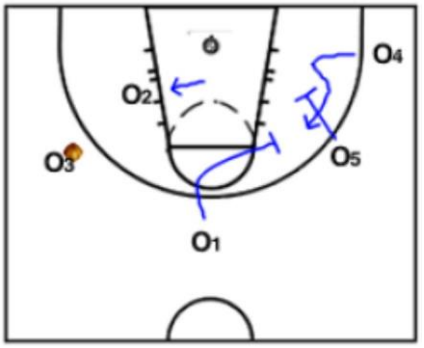


Explore all the possible options after this back pick has taken place.

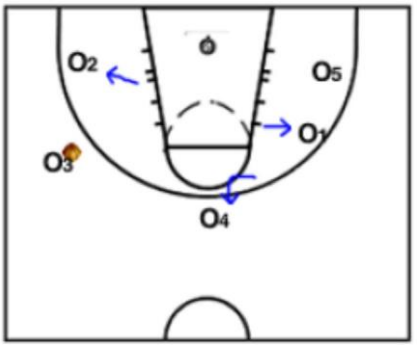


Upon the reversal of the ball by 01 to 03, look at some of the further possibilities within your motion offence.

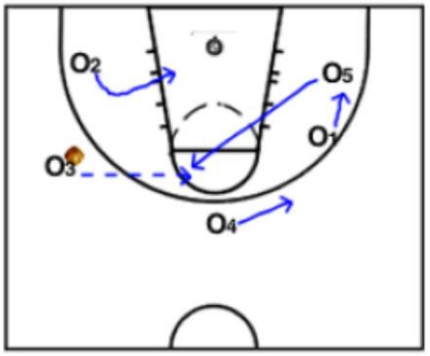
02 can post up



Maintain floor balance etc .



Flash to the high post.
A useful option to introduce and incorporate within your motion 'set'



Off this option, the weak-side player 01, could cut backdoor;
01 & 04 could perform a 'split the post';
04 could fade to 3 point line on the wing;
02 could duck in and post up down low.

The above drills, if practised and mastered in almost sequential priority, will give your players a sound knowledge base to be able to go into a game and execute a decent motion offence.

You could start in virtually any 'set'; the above displays a 1-2-2 set; you could promote a 'no position' philosophy, i.e. everyone can play everywhere and anywhere the best option for young players! Provided there is good spacing and floor balance. Do not think this will 'just happen' - it takes hours and years of repetitious practice with a strict adherence to and the correct execution of, at game speed, the fundamental skills and also of the 'read and react' essential.

Further reading: Alan Lambert articles on www.bbhighway.com

Part Three: Set Plays

The alternative to motion offence would be to utilize a pattern offence whereby all passes, cuts, screens and shots have been previously choreographed and pre-determined. Set plays therefore define where, when and how the players will execute the skills involved in order to produce the particular desired scoring opportunity or option.

The advantages of this type of offence are that:

1. It is easier and quicker to teach and learn than motion.
2. The players know exactly what they have to do within the offence.
3. Provided you have the proper execution, most of the time the pre-designed and practised scoring opportunity will present itself.
4. All players should be organized and in the correct spots for good spacing, scoring options and rebounding.
5. The offence can isolate a particular type of shot and / or a potent or 'hot' player / scorer at any given time.
6. It allows the coach, and also the players, to have more control at the offensive end of the floor.

Some disadvantages are:

1. Easier to scout than motion offence.
2. Certain scoring options can be eliminated by the well-prepared defence.
3. May inhibit the decision-making processes of the players, as they rely solely on the pattern and cannot adjust or adapt if the 'options' are countered by the defence.
4. Can be slow and too methodical, thus creating shot clock problems and / or allowing more time for the defence to read the offence and take counter-measures to cause further problems.
5. Relies on the pre-determined routes of passes, cuts, dribbles, screens. If these are not or cannot be performed, often the offence 'breaks down'.
6. Is not usually a 'democratic', multi-opportunity offence.

One of the important coaching points to stress in this type of offence will be brawn from the principles of motion offence.
That is, read and react.

It is vital that the players who are executing within a set play are taught to continually read the defence and 'take what the defence gives you'; therefore, they may (have to) come out of the pattern at any time in order to take advantage of scoring opportunities that present themselves due to defensive lapses or mistakes.

The coach must identify these situations and must ensure that his/her players are aware of where and when these opportunities may occur and he/she must encourage the practical application of this empowerment within the offence.

By their very nature, many set plays or patterned offence are fairly static, but as has already been mentioned, the well coached player will be constantly moving and reading the defence, albeit within the parameters of the offensive pattern, and he/she will be ready to exploit and take advantage of possible defensive lapses / mistakes. This will result in either one on one opportunity or players without the ball getting open for passes and open shots.

There are many set plays or pattern offences that can be used. Some are simple, others complex with many options and continuity options. With the 24 second shot clock, there is not much time to allow for an exploration of several of the offence's options; invariably with most teams at all levels of play, the offence will yield a shot after either the first, second or at most third pre-determined and pre-designed scoring option.

Of course, it may not be the highest percentage option and as with any offence, the success and outcome will be as a result of the proper execution by the players.

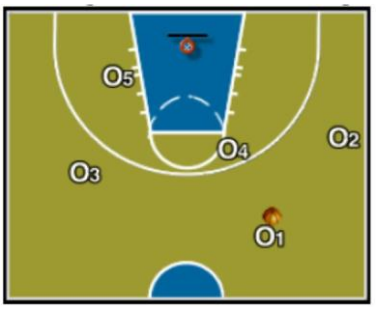
Before a few examples, another consideration for coaches would be the question of does one fit the personnel to the offence or vice versa? If you do not have the type of players best suited to playing the particular offence that you, the coach, favours, then clearly the offence is not going to be successful nor efficient.

Most coaches would agree that the converse is true, that is, you have to select your offence based on your personnel; what type of players do you have and in what offence are they likely to be more efficient, successful and effective? Only then can the coach make a decision and select the team's offensive strategy.

UCLA HIGH POST

What follows is the basic offence plus all the subtleties that make it work. It can be used as your total man for man offence or you could utilise part of it as one of several plays you like to call.

Diagram 1: Initial Set: 1-4 High.
These positions could have been established by e.g. 2 & 3 crossing and 4 & 5 flashing high from baseline.



The original offence was set up like this:

Diagram 2: Entries may be made to either wing.
2 & 3 must get open (preferably, foul line extended).

#1 pass to #2.

Diagram 3: #1 make UCLA guard rub cut.
#4 is used as a back screen. He will be just above the elbow.

Option 1: #2 passes to #1 if open on cut.

Diagram 4: #1 may post up on low post block (momentarily).
#4 step out to 3pt. line.

Option 2: #2 pass to #1 in low post.

Diagram 5: #2 passes to #4.

Option 3: #4 can shoot. On the pass from #2 to #4, #1 come and set back pick for #2.

In the original offence, when 04 received the pass, he was about 19" - 24" above the elbow; 05 would then post up and duck in at the weak-side low post.

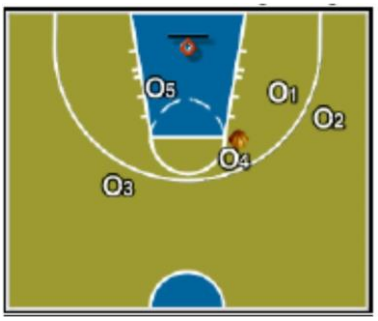


Diagram 6: #2 cut backdoor.

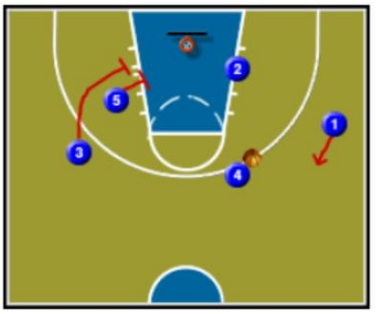
Option 4: #4 passes to #2.

Option 5: #1 pop to wing after screen, #4 pass to #1 for shot.

Diagram 7: #2 could also post up.

Option 5a: #4 or #1 passes into post.

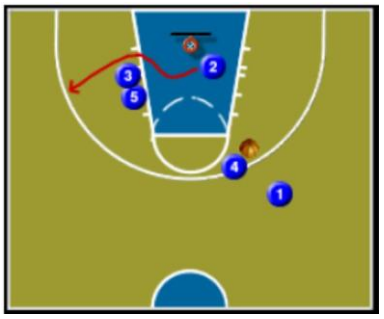
Diagram 8: #3 & #5 make double stack on opposite block. #2 will cut off this double.

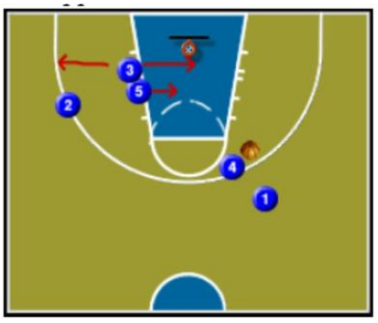


Diagrams 9 & 10:

Option 6: #4 passes to #2 for shot. As soon as #2 has gone past #5 will make duck-in move into the lane.

Option 7: #4 passes high-low to #5.
#3 reads the defence and cuts to open spot as shown.





Diag. 10: If nothing, reverse the ball to #2 and #2 & #5 execute '2 man game' options.

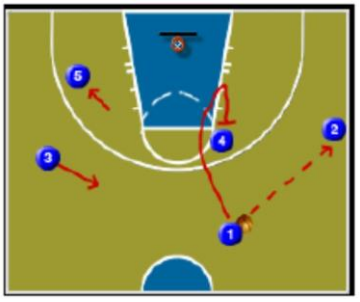
Or, you can use a 1-2-2 motion offence as continuity.
#5 screen away for #4.
#1 screen away for #3 etc.

Problem Solving

On the initial set, if #4 is being overplayed, he should take one or two steps towards half way line then back cut hard to the basket.
If #2 still cannot get him the ball, #3 should become available at the point area -reverse the ball and go 2 man game.

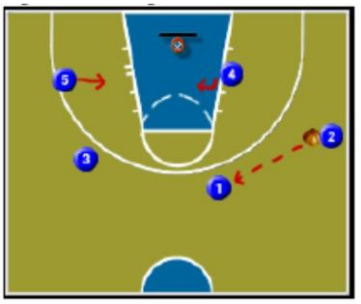
(For further options see 'Dribble entry' and 'Strong-side options').

After running the regular cut a couple of times, point guard #1 begins to make the regular UCLA guard cut but then buttonhooks to set a back screen on #4's man. (You should have a signal for this play as #5 needs to clear out).



#4 comes off the screen using an 'I' cut and goes to post up.
#1 pops out after setting screen.
Option 1: #2 pass to #4 on post up
Option 2: #2 pass to #1 for shot.

If pass is made to #1, #4 will duck-in and seal in the paint.
Option 3: #1 pass to #4 inside.
If nothing, reverse ball to #3 and again continuity is 2-man-game or motion offence.



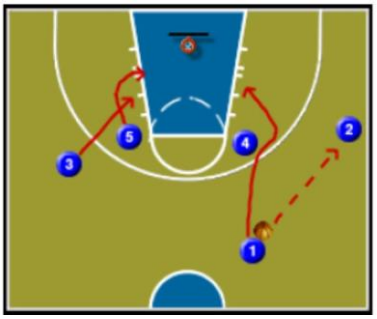
#1 now fakes the UCLA cut and replaces himself.

#4 will now screen down for #5 who may use the screen topside or baseline side (after reading the defence).

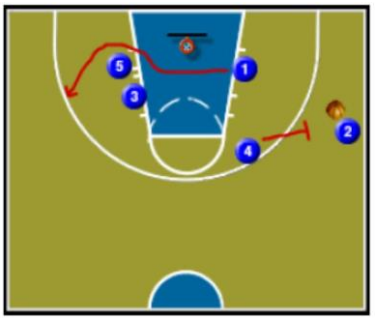
Option 1: #2 hit #5 inside.
Option 2: #2 pass to #4 at high post.
Option 3: #2 hit #1

If nothing, as usual, reverse the ball and #3 & #4 can go 2-man-game.

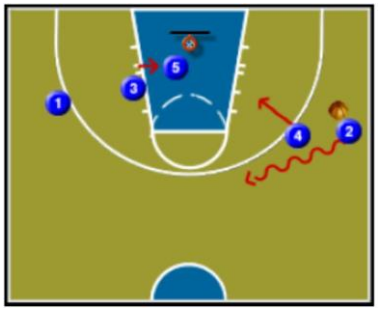
This is a pick & roll on the strong-side of the offence.
You will need to signal this play somehow.



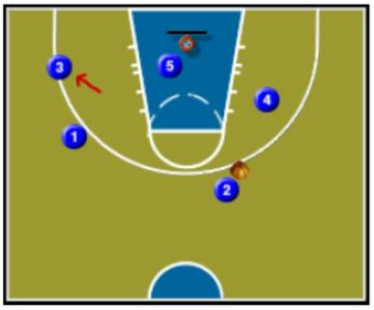
#1 makes usual cut. #5 & #3 stack low.



#4 & #2 pick & roll.



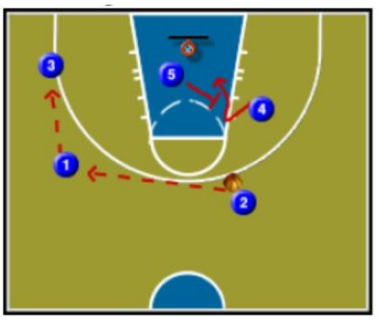
#1 comes off stack. #5 duck in to paint.



Option 1: #2 hit #4 on roll or spot-up.
Option 2: #2 hit #1 for shot.
Option 3: #2 hit #5 inside.
Option 4: #2 go to basket off pick & roll.

If nothing,

#2 reverses to #1.
#5 back pick #4.
#1 passes to #3 and cut through.
#5 flashes to high post.

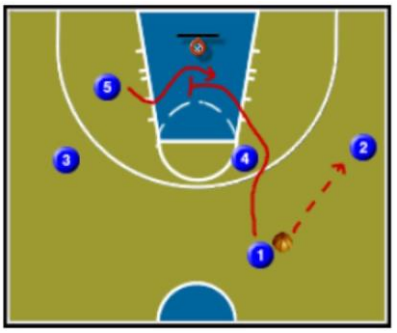


Option 5: #3 & #4 2-man-game.

Further option which again needs to be signalled;

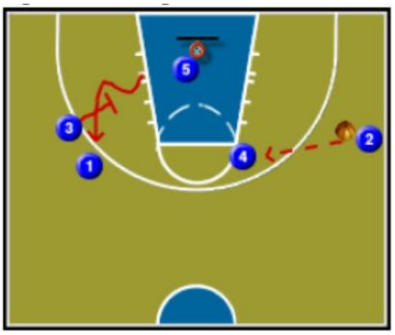
#1 makes usual cut, but now screens for #5.

Option 1: #2 passes to #5.

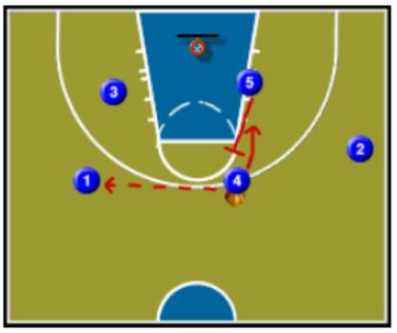


#3 down screen for #1.
#2 passes to #4.
#5 re-post / duck-in.

Option 2: #4 shot.
Option 3: #4 high-low pass to #5.
Option 4: #4 pass to #1.



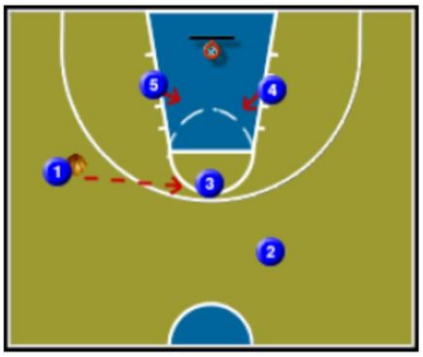
#5 back pick for #4.
Option 5: #1 & #3 2-man-game.
Option 6: #1 lob pass to #4.



#3 pick for the picker #5.
Option 7: #1 1 on 1.
Option 8: #1 & #5 2-man-game.

Option 9: #1 passes to #3.

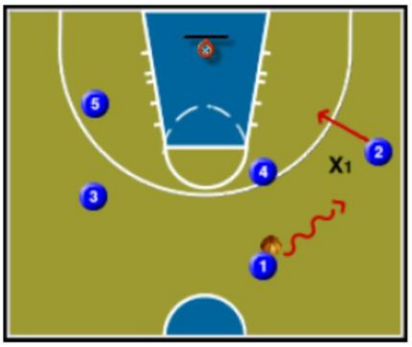
#4 & #5 duck in.
#3 passes or shoot.

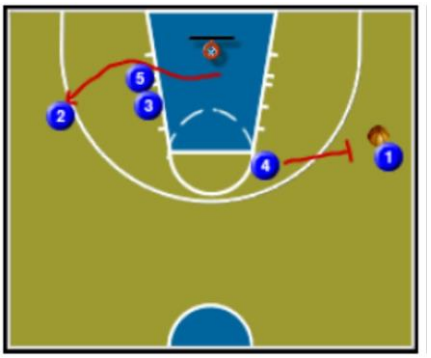


Trouble-shooting&Alternatives

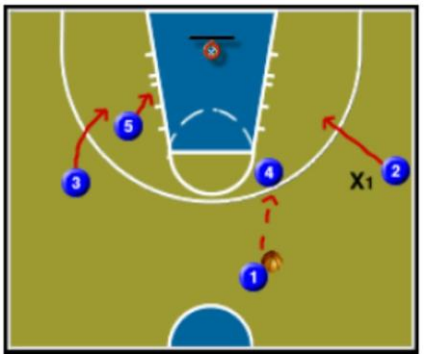
If the wing entry is being overplayed, use dribble entry. #1 will dribble-clear #2. #2 cuts from the wing & depending on what option has been called can make appropriate moves.

Here, it is the pick & roll option.

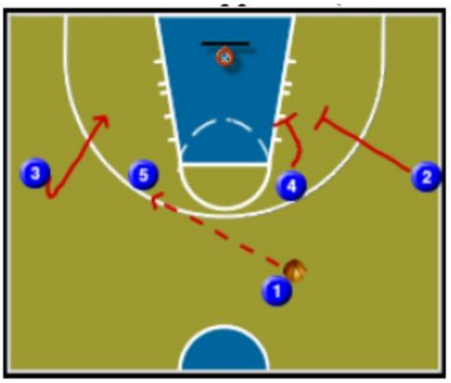




Here, it is the up-pick for strong-side high post.

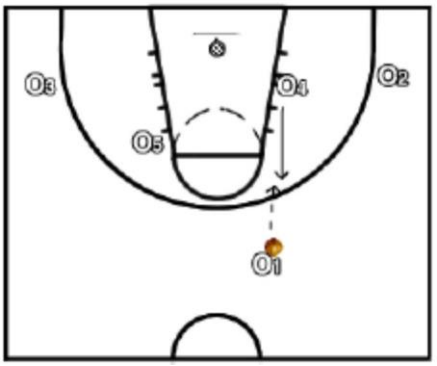


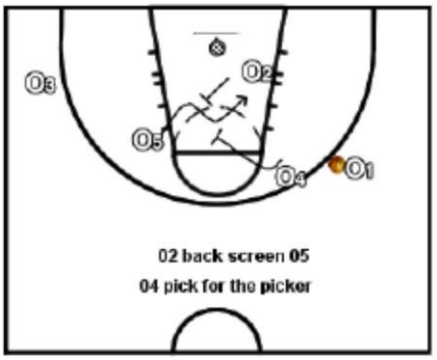
High Post Entries:
If #2 is being overplayed, #1 can enter directly to high post #4.
#2 will go backdoor.

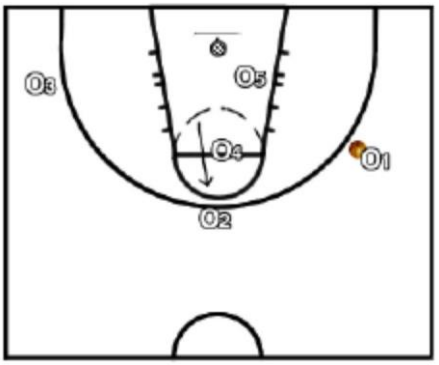


Continuity is as previous.
If #1 enters to opposite (weak-side) high post #5, #3 goes backdoor etc.

U CONN QUICK HIT

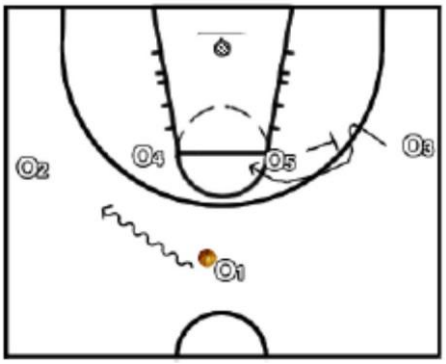


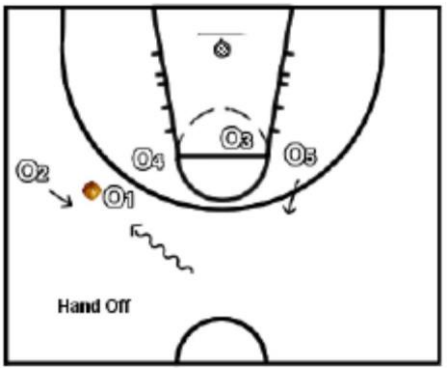


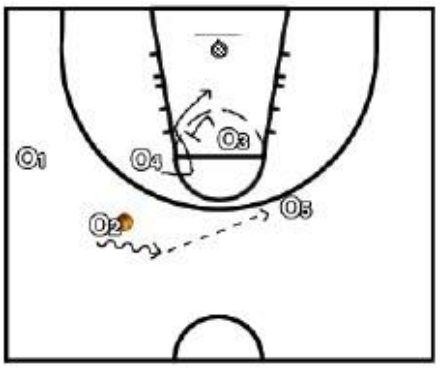


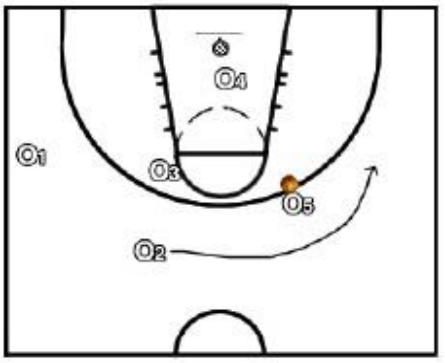
QUICK HIT

A useful early offence or quick hit play as used by Memphis Grizzlies.







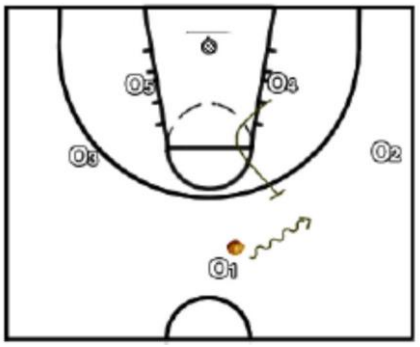


Euro / Yugo Offence

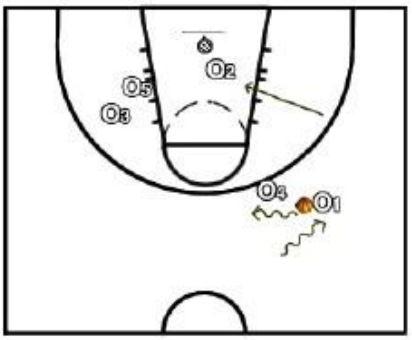
A common 'theme' utilized by many of the top teams in Europe the past few years has been the high pick and roll. Difficult to defend and with so many good shooters on most teams, the options are numerous.

Here is an example for you:

The angle of this screen is very important. It needs to be ideally set in between the line of elbow and mid court corner.
02 has been dribbled at, so he will 'clear' and begin his cut just as 01 begins to come off the screen.

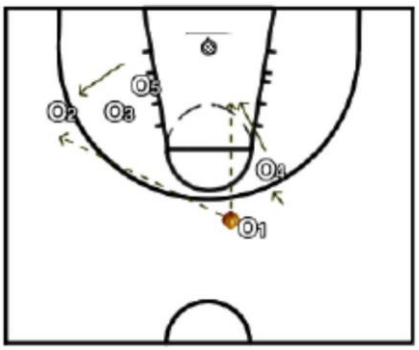


05 and 03 will execute a staggered screen. 03's baseline foot needs to be in line with 05's top side foot.



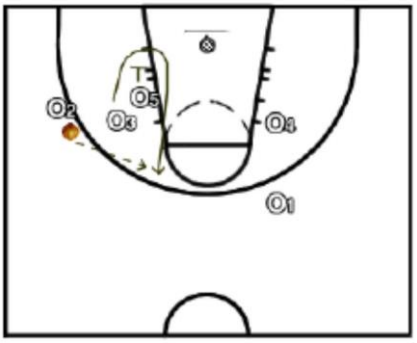
01 could pull up and shoot, can pass to 04 who has rolled to basket, hit 02 for the catch n shoot.

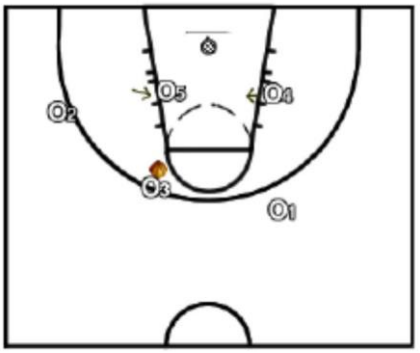
04 could also pick and spot up.
02 must read their defender; as doesn't always have to come off the screens like this; he could button hook back (if his defender is cheating over screens).



Continuity:

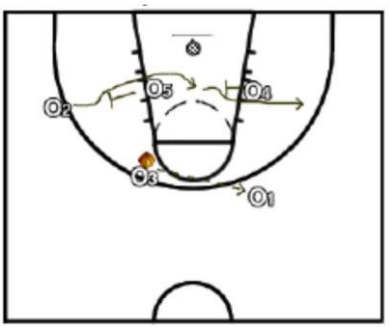
03 could shoot; 05 and 04 duck in, pass down to this post up.



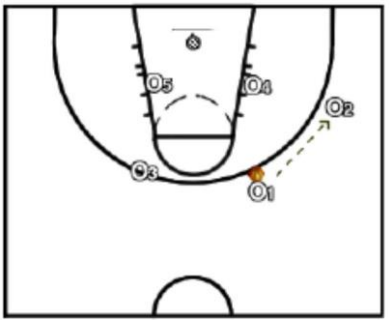


More continuity:

02 can go under and over the two screens, can button hook or pop up the lane depending on and reading his defender all the while.



Pick and roll (02 & 04) or screen away motion (04 for 05 and 01 for 03).

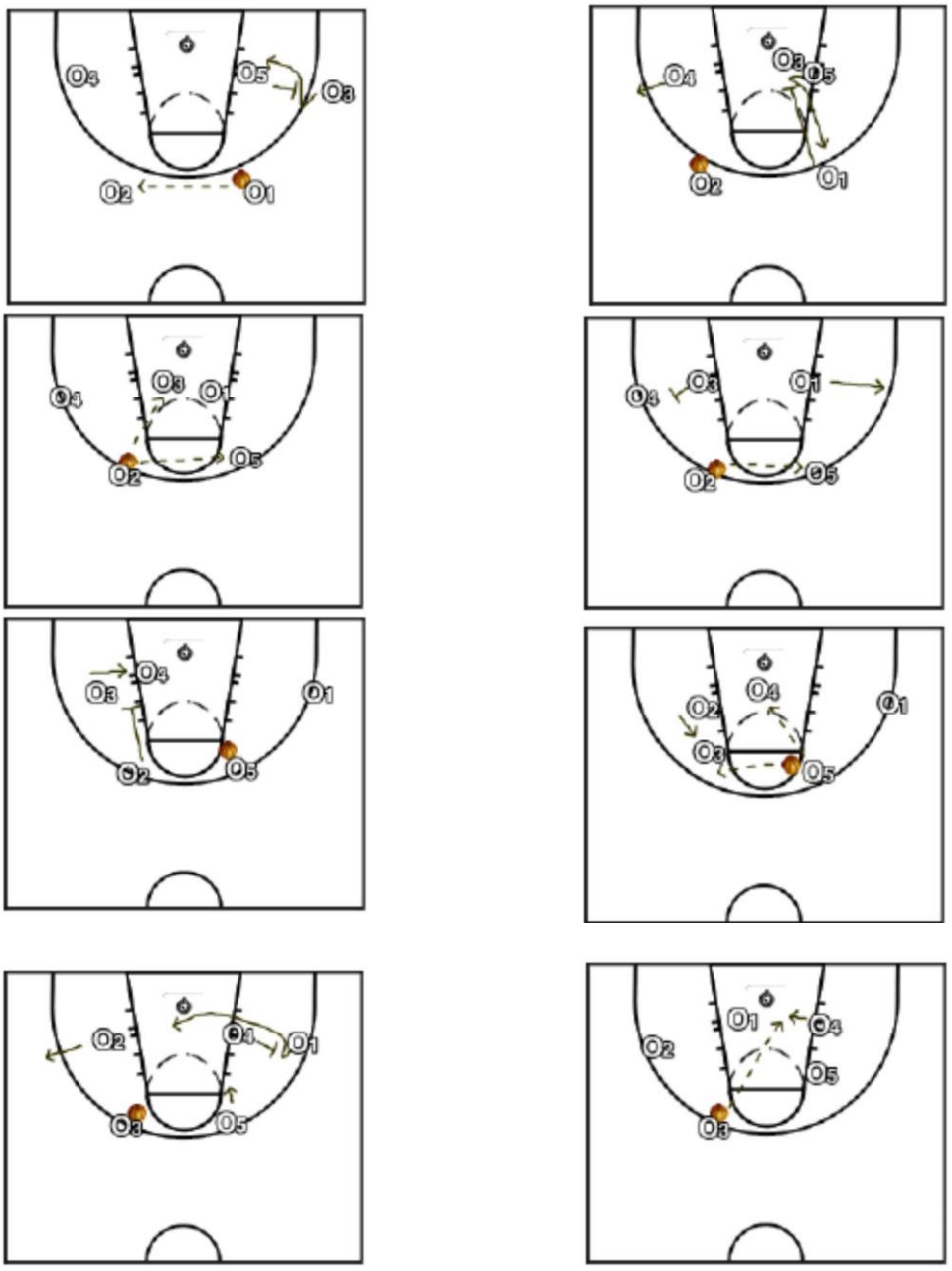


THE FLEX

The Flex works best if you teach your players to execute specific things well. Make sure your players know when and where they should take shots. For the Flex you are generally looking for the flex cutter near the basket, or for the elbow shot off the down screen.

The Flex operates off the pick the picker concept where two consecutive picking actions are designed to catch the help defender of the first screen over playing and be delayed in getting through the second screen. Timing of this action is crucial to successful execution of the Flex.

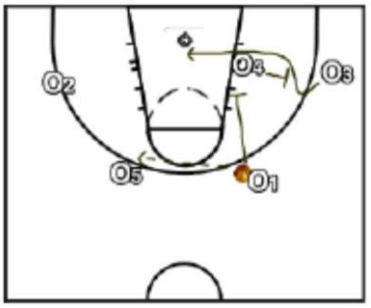
Teach your cutters to move on ball releases from the passing teammate's hands. Players in the post on receiving the down screen should take one hard step at the basket before sprinting to the elbow. If the post defender doesn't respond to the hard step to the basket this opens up a quick duck undercut by the post. Keep proper spacing on offense and floor balance to reduce defensive help. Use backdoor cuts to keep the Flex motion fluid if the defence tries to overplay the guard to guard pass consistently.



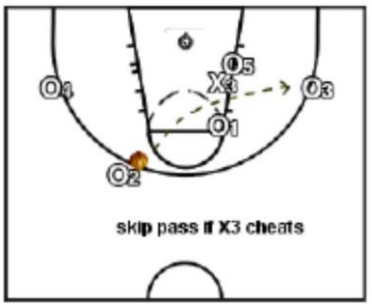
If these passing options are not there because of defensive alignment and / or denial, here are some counters:

If the defender denies pass(02); a) backdoor cut hard to and through the basket before filling away weak-side,

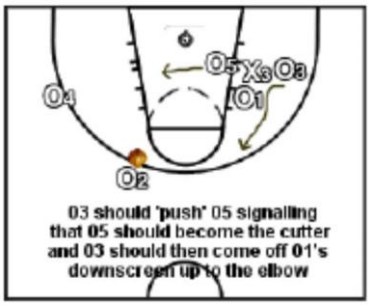
or b) screen away for a teammate adjacent to your position away from the ball.



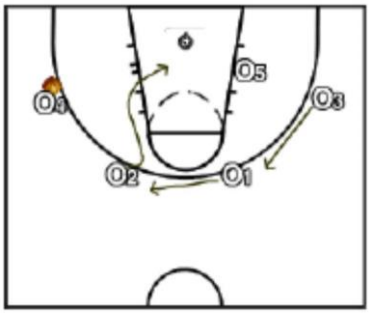
The first flex cutter can use the screen either topside or baseline side depending on where the defender is. Also, be aware of the defender cheating early to get past the screen. The cutter could cut back into the corner area for a pass from the guard spot.



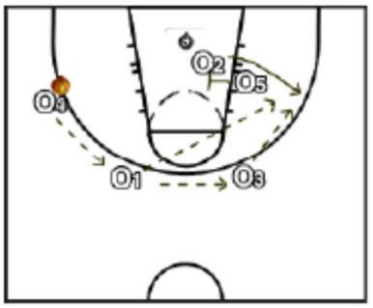
05 can also 'lock pick' or pin screen X3 at this point to have 03 wide open for the possible catch n shoot.



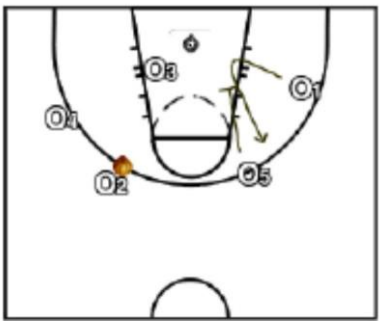
Other entry options: Guard to corner (or forward)



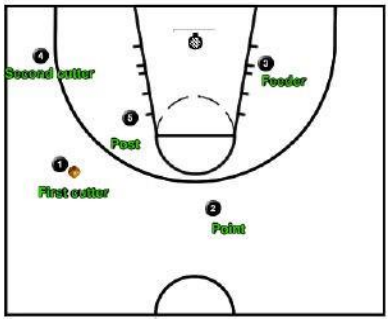
If you can reverse the ball quickly, you may be able to get 02 coming off a baseline screen by 05 for a shot in the corner / wing.

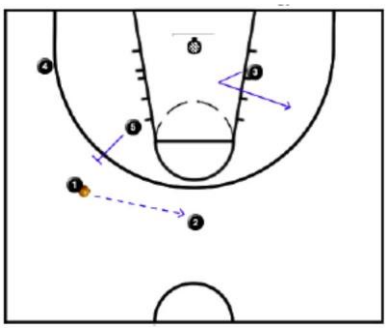


Here is another option:

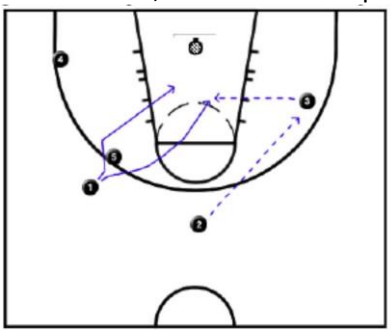


SHUFFLE OFFENCE

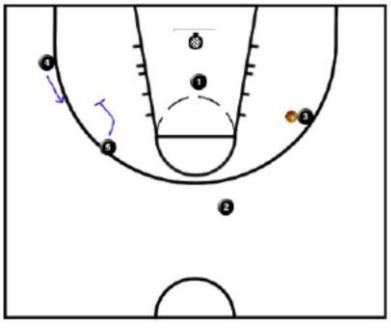


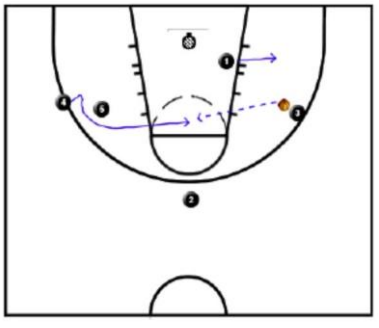


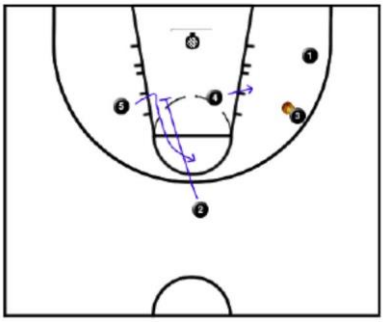
This is the basic set and the terminology. #3 could go 1 on 1 here. If the screen is a good one, you will get layups all day off this first cutter option! #5 needs to be reading the defence also, because if her mangoes down to help on the cutter, then she can step towards the ball into the paint.

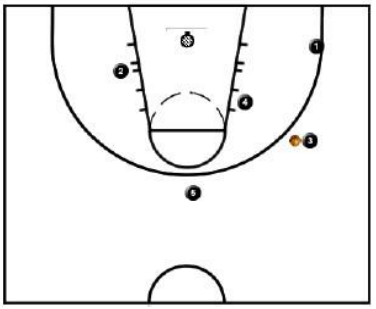


#5 must headhunt to set this second screen









#2 will pick for the picker immediately after #4 has cut off #5's screen.

You can see when / if the whole offence is run through one way, the positions / roles are simply set up again on the other side, but with different personnel.

Part Four: Zone Offence

Principles of zone offence, should have been covered at Level 2. These are:

1. Penetrate the gaps / seams with and without the ball.
2. Overload one side of the zone defence.
3. Reverse the ball. Quick, correct angle passes. Including the skip pass, and the inside-weak-side pass.
4. Be able to shoot the mid-range (and long range) jump shot.
5. Ball fakes and pass fakes.

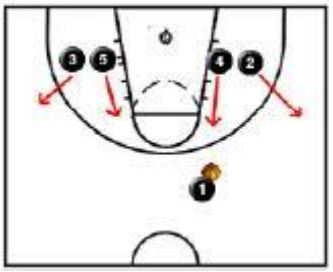
Further more advanced principles, ideas, would include:

1. Forming triangles to exploit defenders and gaps.
2. Dribble penetration to 'freeze' a defender, (draw then pass).
3. Screening of the zone defenders.
4. Flash cuts from behind the zone.

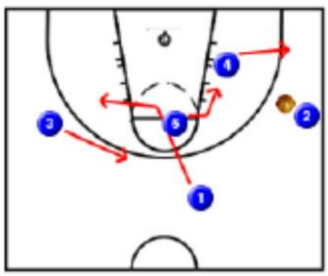
Once again, coaches must be constantly stressing, even within zone offence, that players should be reading the defence and exploiting relevant opportunities.

There are several offence to choose from, a fairly simple, yet effective offence would be the best to choose. Also, one that will be equally effective versus an odd or even fronted zone defence.

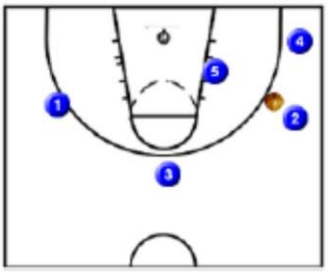
1-4 OFFENCE.
Your initial set can be 1-4 high or 1-4 low and flash the post players to the high post areas.



Enter to wing(s) and begin the offence: #4 slide down the lane and look for brief post-up. #5 follow the ball and cut into gaps of the zone defence.

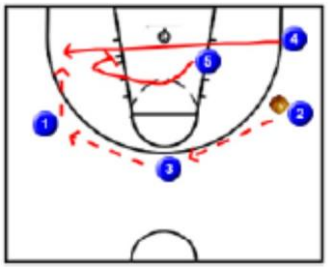


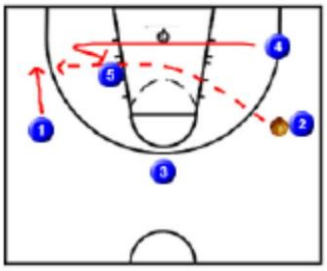
#1 can cut through and rotate with #3. #1 empty out on weak-side. #3 fill the point spot. #4 will pop out to ball-side corner. #5 will go to medium or low post. The overload is created with the triangle being formed with #2, #4 and #5. If you pass to the corner, cut through. All perimeter players rotate.



If nothing happens here, look to reverse the ball either via #3 at the point or with a skip pass from #2 to #1 or via the inside - weak-side pass through #5. On the ball reversal, #4 will now cut along the baseline, corner to corner. His rules are that he can cut into the paint and / or post-up at any time he likes according to his read of the defence.

Simply repeat the options on the other side of the floor. Other possibilities include; setting a baseline screen for #4 or setting a double screen for one of the perimeter shooters.





Other entries: Post entry:

Dribble entry:

Weak-side post entry:

OVERLOAD DRILL

Put six defenders in a zone defence, and have your offence go 5 on 6 running their zone offence.
The extra man can be used in a variety of ways - Coach's call. E.g. on the perimeter to make it tough to find passing lanes and angles; designated double-teamer of the post player(s); chasing the ball to cause confusion....
Play in the half court and have a scoring system - especially weighted towards rewarding the offence if they are successful!

INSIDE-OUT DRILL

#1 will pass right to #2 so #4 will start away from the ball.

#4 flashes high then low. #3 and #1 will spot up on the perimeter.

#2 pass into #4 who makes an inside-weak-side pass to either #3 or #1 for the shot.

Variation: Coach has two basketballs; feeds 04 who makes the inside-weak-side pass, then re-posts getting a second ball from Coach; shoot or make the shot fake and power move.

GAP PENETRATION DRILL

A drill to incorporate penetration with and without the ball versus zone defence.

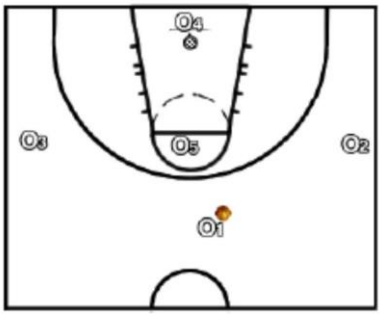
Simple repetitive drill...#1 will dribble penetrate into the paint and #2 will spot up, spot down, or cut to basket. #1 must make the money pass, #2 will shoot.

Change roles and change sides and angles of penetration.

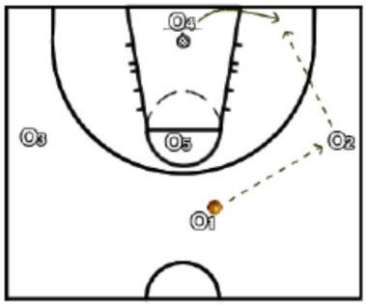
Progression - add defenders.

1-3-1 ZONE OFFENCE

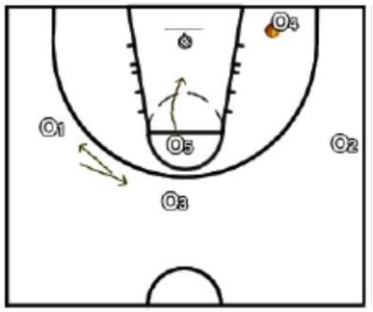
The 3 perimeter spots on this offence are interchanging throughout. The two inside spots, are high post and short corner.



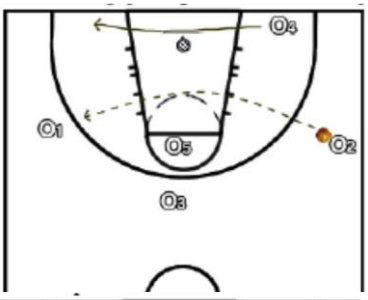
04 will set up behind the defence...he will cut from below the level of the back line of defence.

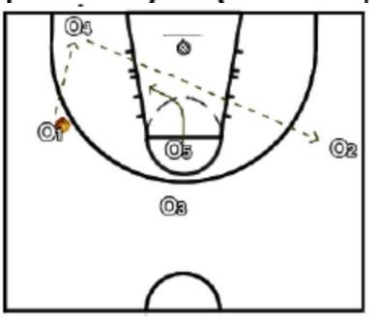


Cut to short corner on ball side. 04 may have a shot from here.



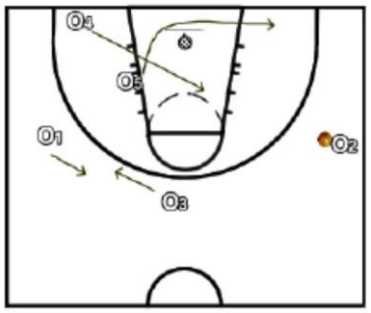
05 cut into gaps or go to ball-side mid post.



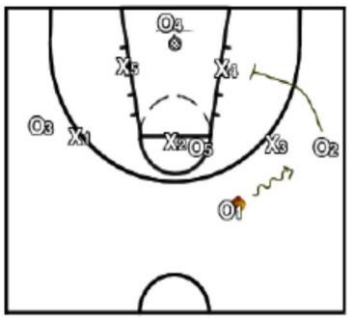


If 02 skips to 03 then 04 cuts behind the defence to ball side short corner.

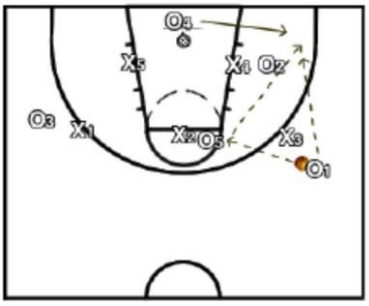
04 make the skip pass to 02. This is the key pass after the reversal.



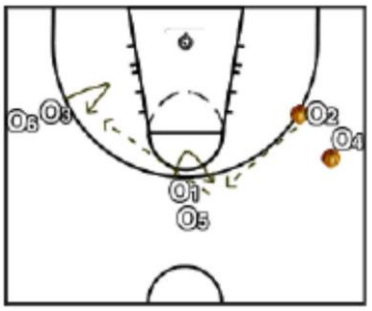
05 makes the behind the defence move to ball-side short corner.
04 follow the pass and cut to 'soft' spot in zone at dotted line area. The high post area must be filled, so 04 & 05 work together in the two designated spots.



Possibilities vs. a 3-2 zone. 02 will set a screen on the back defender. 04 will come to short corner as usual. 05 will screen off X2.

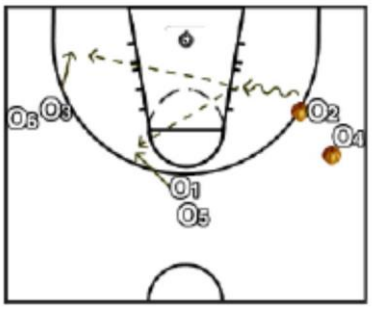


BALL REVERSAL DRILL



On the slap of the ball, #1 and #3 make cuts vs imaginary zone defence. #2 is ball/pass faking whilst that is happening.
#2 reverses to #1, who will reverse to #3 who will shoot. #2 will weak-side rebound. All rotate one spot clockwise. Change sides also.
Later, #1 can dribble perimeter to change the passing angle vs zone

03 should again spot up or down where the gaps are likely to be in the zone defence.



Variation: 02 dribble penetrate, kick to 01 or 03 who have spotted up in 'soft' areas of zone.

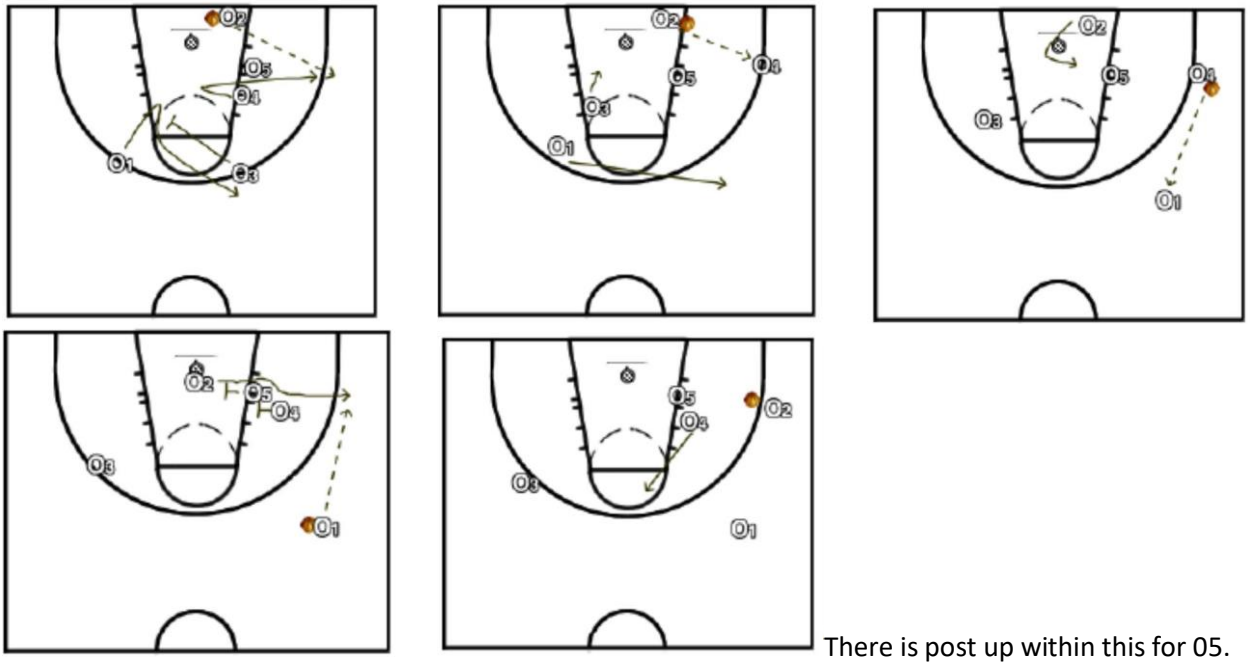
Part Five: Out Of Bounds Plays

Obviously, there are two main areas to consider, the baseline out of bounds and the sideline out of bounds. In the modern game there seems to be many more baseline out of bounds. Again the coach must have a philosophy – do you simply want to get the ball in bounds and run your half court offence or do you want to have an aggressive scoring out of bounds play?

The other consideration is will you have a different play versus man for man and zone, or will your one play work against either defence?

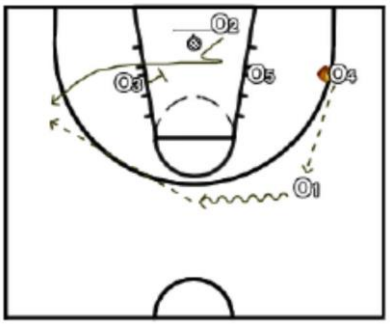
BASELINE OUT OF BOUNDS #1

This is a baseline out of bounds play which will get you a three point shot! The best shooter should take the ball out of bounds (or the guy you want to get the shot for). On the slap of the ball, #3 screens across for #1 who gets open as high as he needs to. At the same time the high man on the stack, #4, fakes inside and pops out to the wing #3 should look to duck in after his screen as this is often open. Later also, #1 can fake coming off the screen high side and dive to basket. Same for #4, if his defender is cheating and playing him on the wrong side anticipating the flare out, #4 can simply go to the front of the rim for the lob from #2 out of bounds!



There is post up within this for 05.

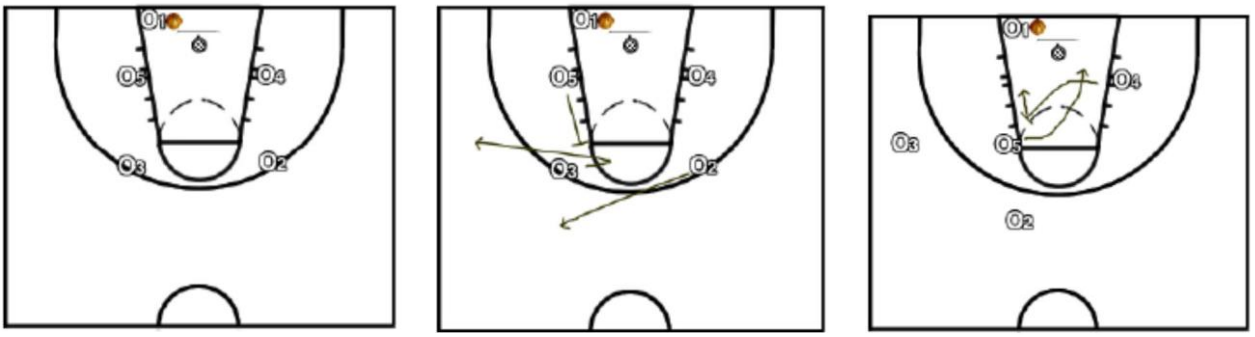
Alternatives:



After running the regular cuts for a few times, 02 can fake the regular cut and come off 03's screen to the other side; 01 change the passing angle via the dribble. 03 can open to ball in the paint. 01 can hit 02 for the shot or 03 inside.

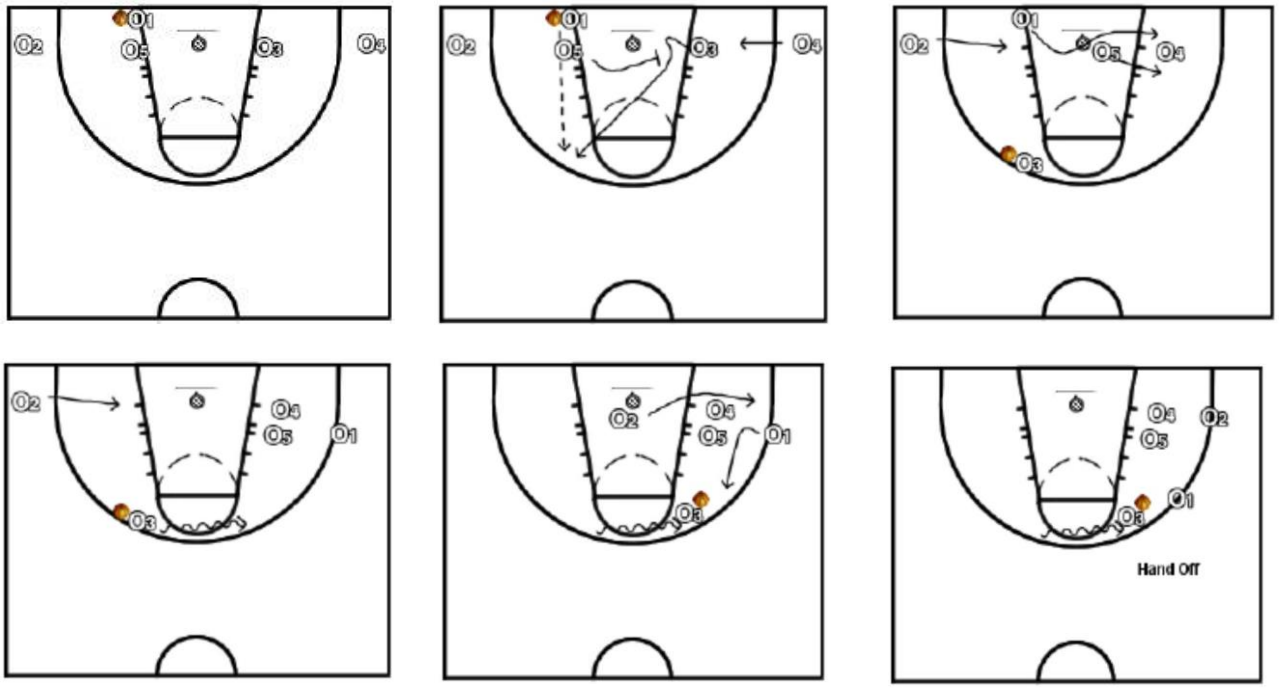
Baseline out of bounds #2

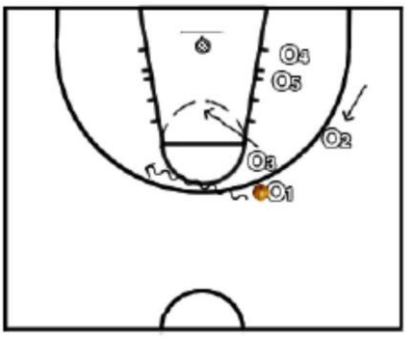
This involves good timing and reading the defence. It is a pick for the picker action.



The play invariably works for either 04 or 05 getting a lay up underneath! Continuity

BASELINE OUT OF BOUNDS VERSUS MAN OR ZONE DEFENCE.
'Spread' alignment...

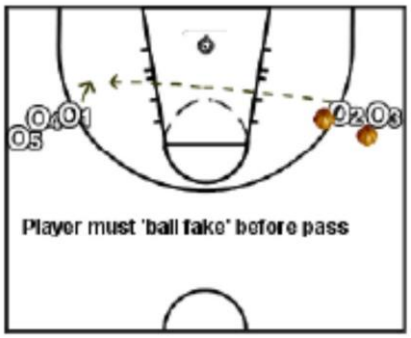




vs Zone, often either 02 or 04 are open immediately!

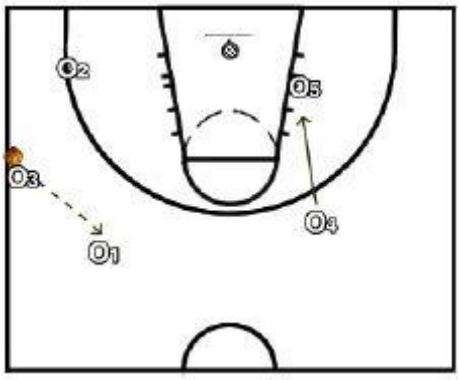
SKIP PASS DRILL

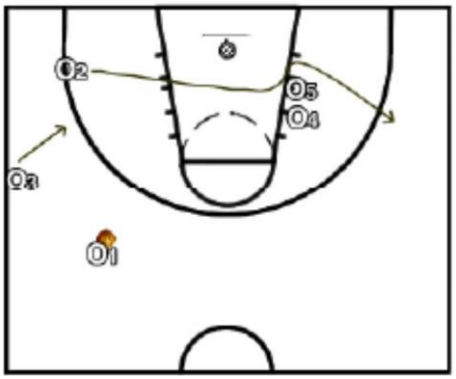
A drill to incorporate not only the skill of the skip pass versus the zone but also the mid-range and long range spot-up shooting that is also required.



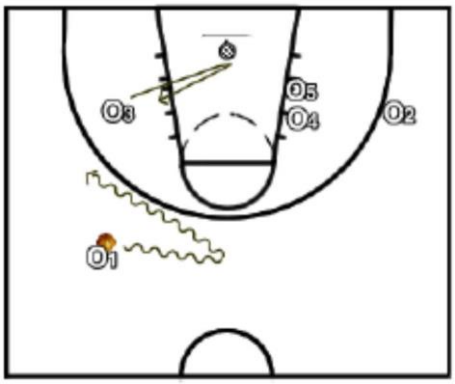
Two lines of players as shown, one line with basketballs. The passer must make a ball fake or a pass fake, whilst this is happening, 01, the shooter, will spot up or down (imagining the zone defence is there); 02 will make the skip pass for the catch n shoot. 01 collect own rebound and they change lines. Can have a target score or go for time etc. Change sides of course.

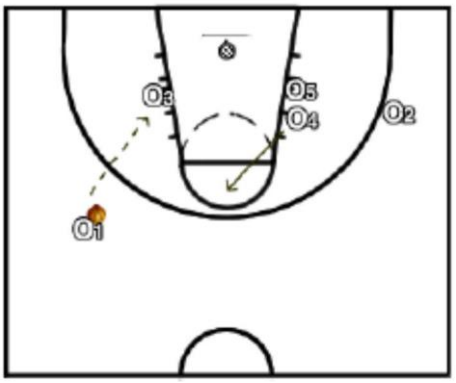
SIDELINE OUT OF BOUNDS





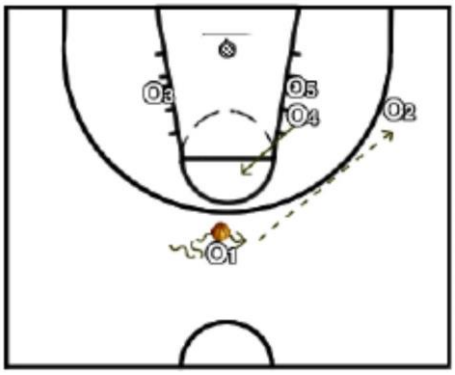
01 must try to get open. If 01 is being overplayed, then 01 and 02 can exchange or set a down screen or back screen to release each other in this spot.
03 will cut in bounds hard after entering the ball.





01 will dribble across and reverse dribble back to create a good passing angle for 03, who has 'buttonhooked' after putting his head underneath the rim. 03 will post up and 01 hits him. On the catch by 03, 04 and 05 'split the stack' and go high-low.

Alternative option:
After running this a couple of times, 01 can fake the reverse dribble and continue to pass the ball to 02 who has got open behind the double stack. Again, upon the catch by 02, 04 and 05 split the stack and go high-low.



Part Six: Press Offence / Breaker

Most coaches will employ one strategy versus a full court man for man press and another versus a full court (or three quarter) zone press.

Oftentimes, versus the full court man for man, the point guard or best dribbler, will simply try to advance the ball in a one on one situation with all his teammates having ' cleared out' up the court. Clearly with the other four players taking their defenders away from the ball, this creates enough space for the dribbler to then only have his defender to worry about.
Of course, consideration must be made if / when the defending team is employing a run and jump type of pressing defence.

The coach must also have a philosophy about beating or countering pressure defence. It comes down to two choices; do you want to simply break the press and maintain possession of the ball in order to organiSe and run your offence, or do you want to beat the press and try to aggressively attack the vulnerabilities that tend to accompany pressure defence…that is, try to get a lay up / quick scoring attempt?

Again, a consideration for your choice may be the type of press that is being employed. Also, scouting information on that particular team's transition and recovery execution may influence / determine your decision.

Most coaches however will have a clear and definite philosophy about this.

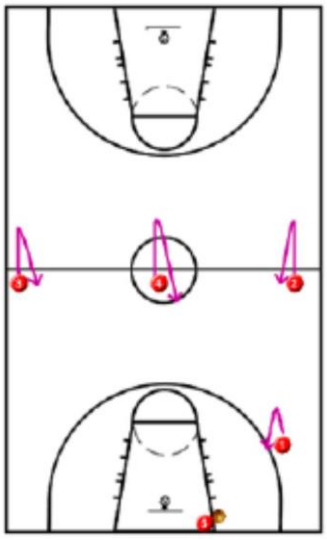
There follows an example of an offence versus a zone press defence.

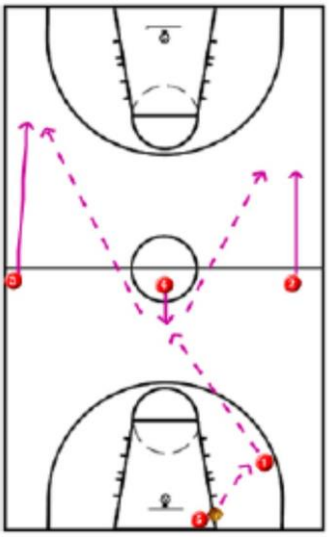
The basic principles are:

1. Try to beat the press before it sets up! Ball out of net, one hopper, inbound it and go!
2. Get into positions / lanes quickly and always see the ball.
3. Big man (designated) always take the ball out of bounds, and not behind the backboard.
4. Every player who touches the ball should look long, middle, sideline – in that order. Hit the open man with a good pass.
5. Pass receivers must V cut hard back towards the ball in the gaps of the defence (read the defence), they must step to meet the pass with two hands. On catching the ball, turn and face the basket (triple threat).
6. Advance the ball up the court using passes, avoid putting the ball on the floor.
7. Run the fast break lanes and try to create a 3 on 1 or 3 on 2 situation in the final third of the offensive court.
8. Don't stand still. Go long then come back if needed.

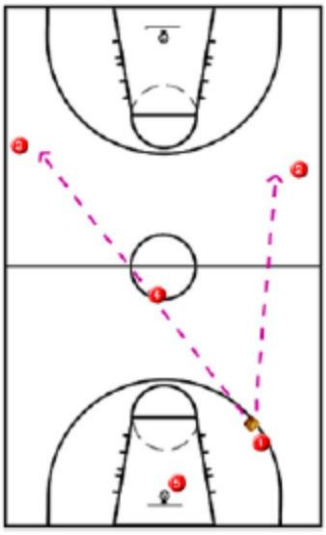
PRESS BREAKER (OFFENCE)
This will work against any zone press defence.
The keys are:

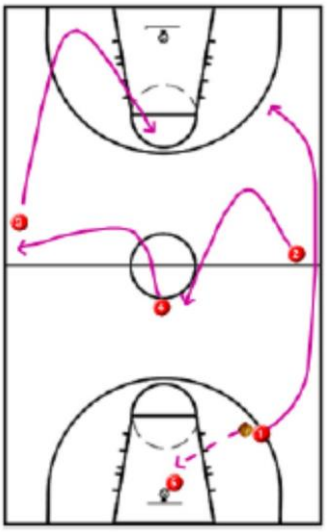
(i) V cut hard back to the ball.
(ii) Come to meet all passes.
(iii) (iii)Go away first then come back if needed.
(iv) Try to get ball to middle and attack from there.
(v) Attack the press and try to get a lay up.
(vi) Keep the ball off the floor and out of the corners.
(vii) When a player catches the ball, squeeze it, protect it and turn and face up court (triple threat).



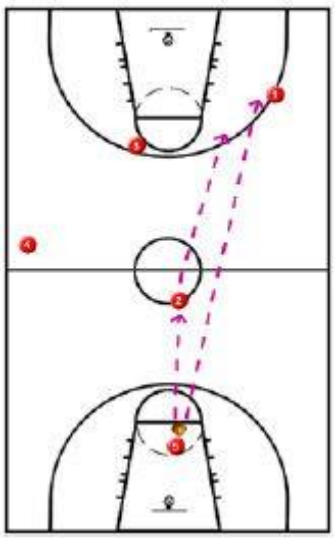


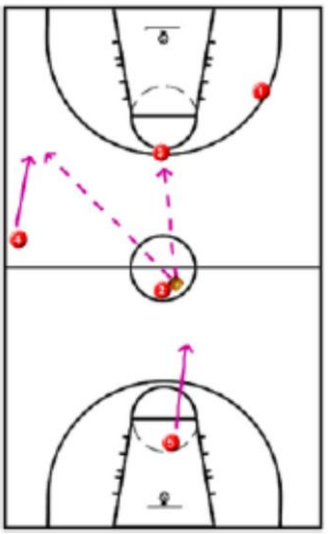
Everybody who touches the ball must think in this order (for passing options): Long, middle, sideline.





The in bounder who should be your centre or best shot blocker, steps inbounds and stays behind the line of the ball. If #1 has to reverse the ball, the cuts are as shown above. It is imperative that these are made quickly and accurately and players must still be aware that they must be available for a pass. #1 takes off up the sideline and we can get him a layup off this play!





Module: Team Defence

Philosophy

The coach must at some stage in his/her career have reached and established a philosophy about how he wants the game to be played by his players and teams, and also how he wants to teach and coach those players and teams.

The clarity of this philosophy needs to be communicable to the players and furthermore there is an inherent presumption that the philosophy is based on sound principles and tenets that will actually be functional and ultimately successful. The players need to be able to see this in an unequivocal practical way, day in and day out at practice and games.

This premise places an important burden upon the coach because he / she is 'standing front and centre' every day in a potentially vulnerable position as the proponent and proposer of the playing style by and through which the players and team will either succeed or fail.

Of course, a well-established philosophy is not infallible nor is it literally cast in stone. Moreover, depending on the personnel and / or the myriad of circumstances that coaches may find themselves in, those confidently held tenets may have to be adapted somewhat, sometimes.

The coach will either make a total commitment to defence or not. The reason why the converse is not true, that is, a total commitment to offence, is that no team can survive nor expect to win games if there is no attempt to stop the opponent from scoring. However, the commitment to defence engenders and encompasses a different attitude and mind-set when it comes to the winning of basketball games. There is a total effort, indeed a passion, an intellectual decision almost, that if the team can limit or stop its opponent scoring, then provided the team can then compete and be reasonably efficient at the offensive end of the court, well, there will be a greater chance to win games.

It comes down to a simple choice for the coach; is it your philosophy to try to limit an opponent's field goal percentage and their points scored or do you just want to outscore them?

History shows that the latter strategy will not win championships and titles. The time-honoured phrase "a team's defence generating its offence" gives a snapshot of how very many coaches would like their strategy (and philosophy) to manifest itself on the court. If the players can enable this through great and constant effort, technical skill, hard-nosed attitude and the willingness and desire to work hard on every possession, all game, every game…well, there would be many more happy coaches in the world!

The principles, techniques and strategies will be discussed later but another consideration for the coach in this section about philosophy would be what type of defence do you prefer and would want to employ?

The preference for most coaches is undoubtedly man for man defence. But is it going to be full court, half court, quarter court? Pressure or sagging? What specifics, rules do you advocate?

Zone defence can be very potent and successful. (Indeed, in the modern game an NCAA Div. One Championship has been won using a 2-3 zone!). Do you want to zone press perhaps or use combination defences?

Again, the focus here is on your philosophy as the coach of your defensive strategy; once you have decided what you want to do the next stage is how you are going to implement that strategy.

The pedagogy goes hand-in-hand with the difficult task also of "selling" this strategy to your players. If the players/team do not "buy in" to what the coach is attempting to teach/implement, then it is not going to work nor will there be a harmonious and cooperative environment which is so vitally important for medium and long term success.

One of the reasons for this potential problem is that (unfortunately) most players do not appreciate the value of tough defence because it is either (a) too much hard work, physically and emotionally or (b) it is not the "glamour end" of the basketball court!

So, the coach must have several selling strategies in order to convince the players to appreciate, understand and perform the necessary requirements involving the defensive principles, strategies and techniques.
After a while, with this co-operative in place, positive processes and consequent outcomes and results will be forthcoming.

General Principles

Apart from the different types of defence and the techniques which will be looked at in greater detail later, there are a few considerations for the coach to stress to the players.

Indeed, these could be formulated into goals, not only on a game to game (short term) basis, but also for the season (long term). These are:

- Limit opponents' field goal percentage.
- Limit opponents' scoring.
- Force turnovers.
- Limit number of opponent's possessions.
- Limit opponents' offensive rebounding.

Depending on the level at which you are coaching, the above need to be quantified into achievable numerical targets and then analysed and reviewed; the consequential implications to be then decided upon.

STRATEGY

For the purposes of Level 3 the elements listed for consideration will assume that all necessary and relevant individual and team fundamentals (Level 2) will have been suitably taught, learnt and understood.

1. MAN FOR MAN

(i) Ball Pressure:

On the live dribble, contain and do not allow dribble penetration into the paint.

On the dead dribble, "belly up".

Fan the dribble (vs funnel it).

In the full court, stay in front of dribbler, pressure the weak hand, don't go for steals.

In the half court, fan the dribble, don't allow easy entry passes.

In the quarter court, don't allow penetration into the paint.

(ii) One Pass Away

On dead dribble, deny.

Generally deny, especially the guard to forward pass.

(iii) Helpside:
Maintain stance, keep hands up, have 'active feet', be ready and alert to help and recover and to help the helper.

Awareness of the help rotation.

(iv) Communication:
Constant and by all five players.

Terminology

(v) Cutter Defence, Bump and deny

(vi) Post Defence
Be active with good footwork. –
Hand in passing lane.
Usually, three quarter to ball side.
Not too much body contact.

(vi) Close Out – correct hand and foot.
Good stance, don't lunge, don't 'leave feet'. - Balance.

(vii) Box Out – technique (Level 2)
Recognition, positioning.

(viii) Out of Bounds – deny all in-bound passes.
Don't guard the man out of bounds (unless for example, one or two seconds left, trying to distract the inbounder).

(ix) Play 5 on 4 in the court, face inwards and help deny or act as 'free safety'.

2. ZONE

(i) man for man principles.
(ii) Don't ball watch!
(iii) Match-up principles.
(iv) Guards – not parallel.
(v) Front all posts.
(vi) Deny all cutters.
(vii) Hands up.
(viii) Read the offence; anticipate.

3. COMBINATION DEFENCES

(i) Belief in / attitude.
(ii) Triangle and two.
(iii) Box and one.
(iv) Diamond and one.
(v) Inverted triangle and two.
(vi) 1-3 and a chaser.
(vii) Tandem and 3.

4. ZONE PRESS

(i) Full court.
(ii) Three-quarter court.
(iii) Half court.
(iv) Trap or no.
(v) If so, where? When?
(vi) Fake trap…
(vii) Show man go zone. (viii)
Middle responsibilities. (ix)
Rules – ball in middle etc. (x)
Recovery / slides.
(xi) 1-2-1-1 ball allowed in or man right up on endline pressuring the inbounder?
(xii) 2-2-1.
(xiii) 1-3-1 half court.
(xiv) Recovery to what? Man for man? Zone?

5. STUNTS

(i) Run and jump.
(ii) Run and jump switch.
(iii) Run and jump trap.
(iv) Switching defences – what triggers? Eg. (a) ball on one side of court = one type of defence, on the other side, switch defence. (b) when certain player touches it, defence switches.

6. SCREEN DEFENCE

(i) Away from ball
Down screen
Lateral screen
Back screen
Big to big switch or no? Big
to small switch or no? Go
over, under or through?
(ii) On ball screen
Pick and roll - pick and pop
Pick and go (slip screen)
Switch?
Trap?
Fight over top?
(iii) Hedging.
(iv) Bump, 'ride' screener prior to him setting screen.
(v) Help defenders' role.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

PART ONE: MAN FOR MAN

Most of the applications required for correct execution not only of the philosophies previously discussed, but also of the actual kinesiological and biomechanical execution of the skills can be summarised in the drills described below.

1. BallPressure:

(i) Zig-Zag drill …all progressions.
(ii) Half court whistle 1 on 1 drill.
(iii) Drive Drill.
(iv) 15 Pass drill.
(v) Indiana Whistle Transition Drill.
(vi) Montana Fundamentals Drill.

Zig-ZagDrill:

Divide the court down the middle into two channels. It is a one on one drill. Offensive player is not allowed to go past the defensive player, he is just dribbling left and right working the defensive player down the length of the court. Defensive player is stepping and sliding to maintain good position (ball you basket). Defensive player is yelling "ball!" every few seconds.

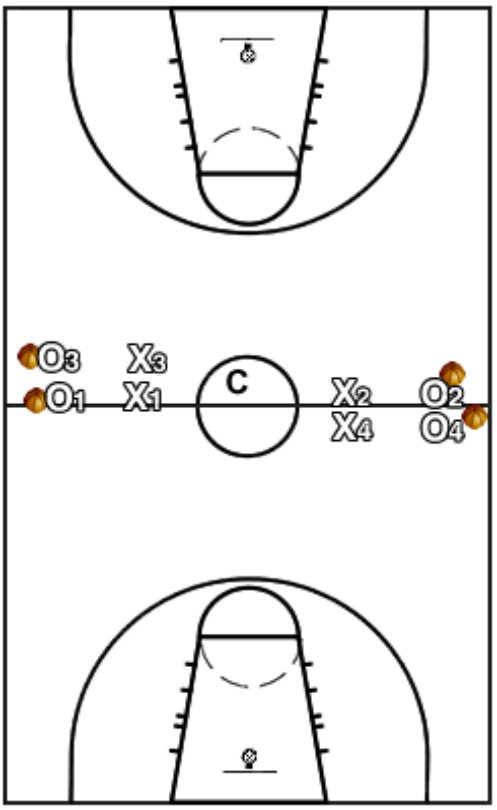
ZIG-ZAGSERIES:

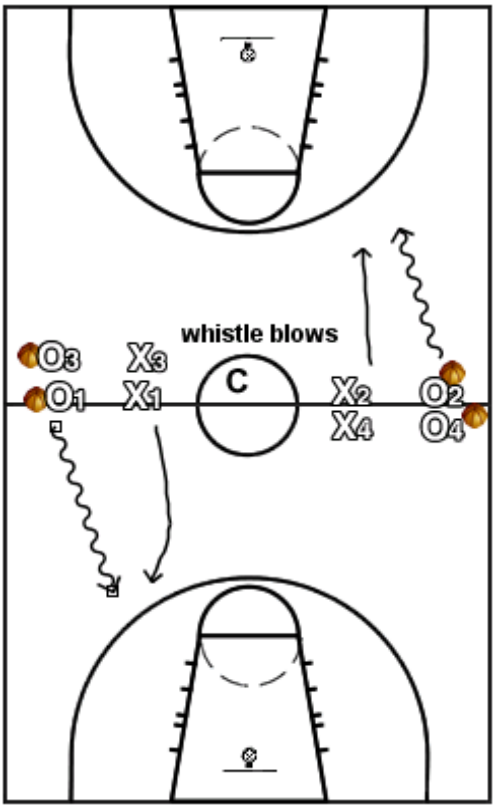
Progressions are as follows:

(i) defender must be one arm's length away from dribbler.
(ii) defender must have "nose on the ball", ie. nose is in line with the dribbling ball (shoulders / chest therefore cover the dribbler's intended path).
(iii) "get to the line first", defender must beat the dribbler to a spot
(iv) dead dribble -defender must "belly up", yell "Dead! ", offensive player bring the ball down to triple threat position, defence assumes stance one arm's length before dribble is resumed
(v) offence may now try to go past defence, if he does then he must dribble in place until defence sprints and recovers back to proper position and stance
(vi) once in a while the dribbler can pick up the dribble and push the ball (gently!) into the defender's chest, thus simulating a charge -defence must 'take the charge', fall over, get up, resume stance etc.
(vii) Zig Zag to the half, then 1 on 1. Progress as above to the half way line, when there the offensive player can go straight for basket. Defender is trying to stop him scoring, by beating him to spots, maintaining defensive stance and positioning and ultimately making the dribbler pull up his dribble on the perimeter and take the jump shot. Defender should be 'fanning' the dribble with the 'inside foot up' technique. If the jump shot is taken, the defender must'close out' on the shot, by stepping forward with the correct (inside) foot and the correct hand (inside hand), up, and yelling "Shot! ", then he will box out and go rebound the ball.

Whistle1on1Drill

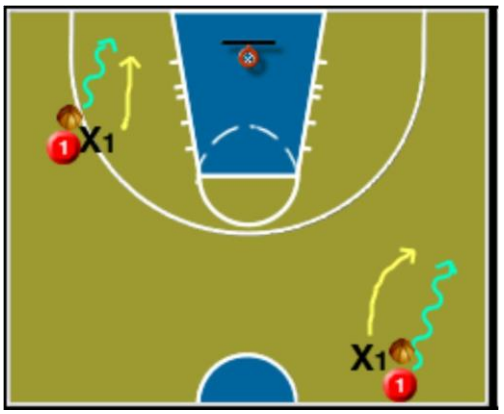
Players are in pairs, lined up at the half as shown. When coach blows whistle, they go 1 on 1 to basket.
The defender is trying to 'fan' the dribbler and keep him out of the paint. Keep score, offence goes to defence and change sides.





DriveDrill1

#1 drives hard towards the baseline (or sideline) and X1 must try to beat him to the spot and place his lead foot on (or over) the line. Just two or three dribbles - maximal effort to not let the dribbler go past



DriveDrill2

As above except now all drive-dribbles are to the paint and basket for live one on one. Pairs begin outside the 3 point line - practice from all different angles. FORCE down sideline NO MIDDLE.

15PassDrill-BallPressureemphasis

2 teams, almost any number. Use half court or full court depending on numbers.
One team must try to make 15 consecutive passes without the other team touching it. If defensive team get a deflection, then offensive team start from zero again.

To promote movement and to create space add a conditioning rule: you are not allowed to pass back to the person who just passed to you. Every player who catches the ball is allowed one dribble to improve the passing angle...this is where the emphasis for this drill is; ie. what is the on-ball defender doing before, during and after the dribble?

15PassDrill-Denialemphasis

2 teams, almost any number. Use half court or full court depending on numbers.
One team must try to make 15 consecutive passes without the other team touching it. If defensive team get a deflection, then offensive team start from zero again.

To promote movement and to create space...rule: you are not allowed to pass back to the person who just passed to you.

The emphasis here is on players who are (at least) one pass away from the ball, should be denying their man the ball.

WhistleTransitionDrill

Two teams are playing full court. When the whistle blows the man with the ball places it on the floor (don't drop it or roll it); nearest player from the other team picks it up and teams make their transition both ways. Keep score.

IndianaTransitionDrill

Players are playing regular half court basketball. When the whistle blows, the man with the ball places it on the floor. The team must now make the transition from offence to defence but they must rotate to guard different men .

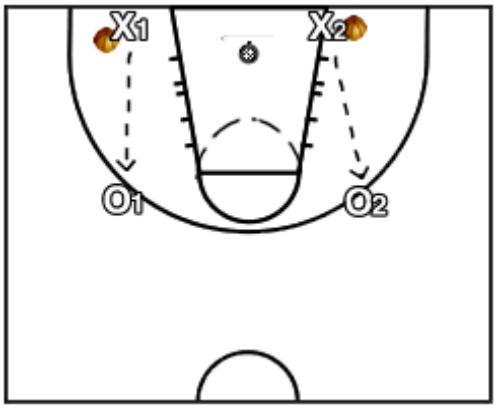
Even though this is predominantly an offensive drill, the emphasis here is on pressure on the ball. So, as soon as that ball is placed on the floor, somebody has to take quick responsibility to not only pick up and guard that dribbler but execute the fanning details etc.

Talk, hustle, stance, hard work!

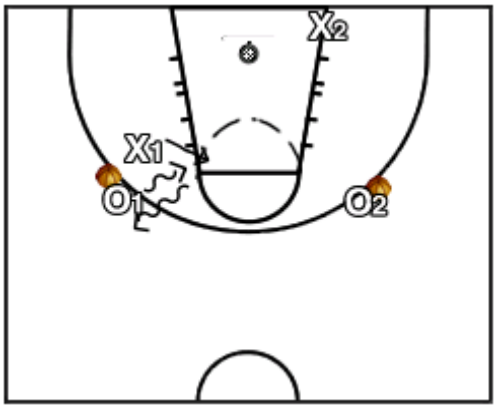
MontanaDrill

Players set up either side of the lane as shown.

After the pass, X1 will close out properly on the offensive player who is in triple threat.



When the defender has arrived in correct stance, with correct footwork etc., 01 begins to dribble hard to the right for 2 or 3 dribbles then back to his original spot, then hard to his left 2 or 3 dribbles and back to the original spot again.



At this time, 01 shapes to shoot & X1 must close out properly, yelling "Shot!", then box out.

Go 3 times each from both sides of lane.

2.OnePassAway:

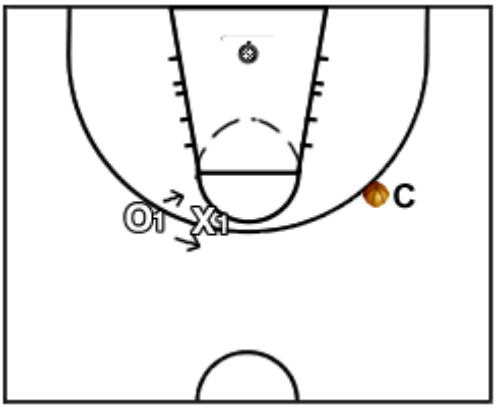
Drills:

(i) Deny Drill; wing and guard cuts.
(ii) 15 Pass Drill.

DenyDrill

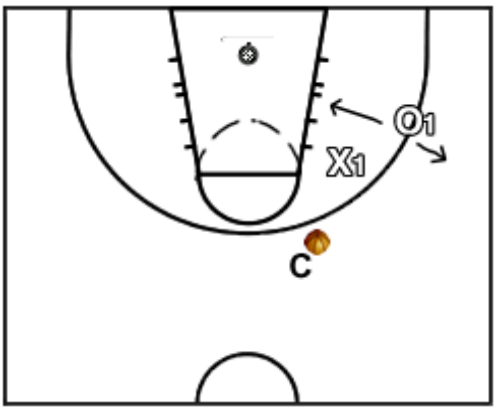
Deny the Guard spots one pass away:

01 is trying to get open in the guard area only. X1 is trying to deny the whole time. If 01 does get it then they go 1 on 1.



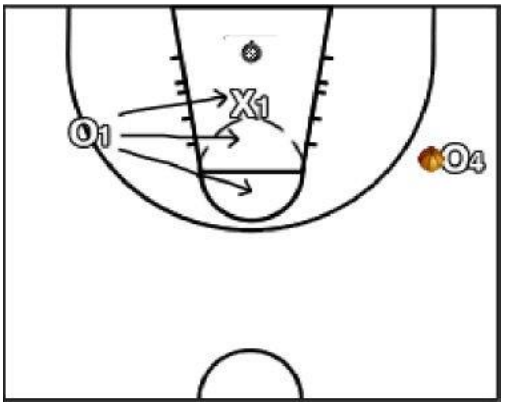
Deny the Wing

Try to deny the wing and the backdoor cut. No 'post ups' allowed.



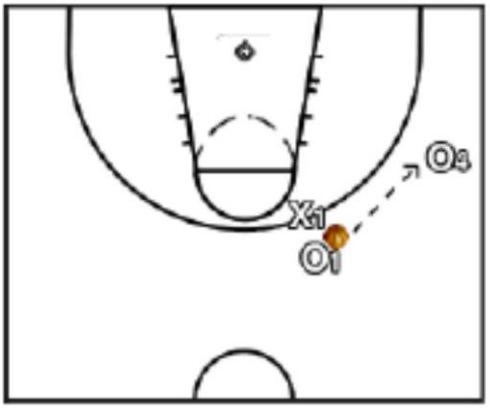
DenytheForwardCutDrill

01 tries to cut to the ball. X1 must bump and deny this cut. 1 on 1 if 01 catches it.

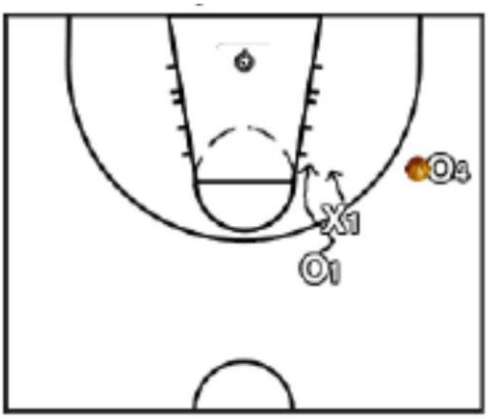


DenytheGuardCutDrill-UCLACut

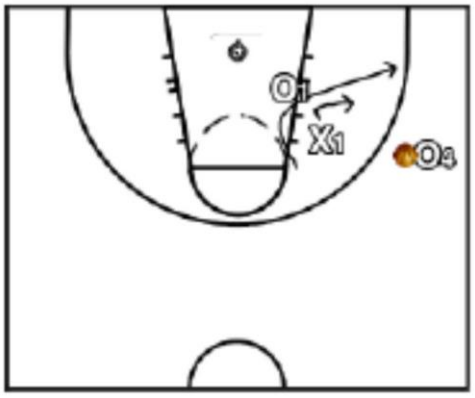
On this pass, X1 must make the correct adjustment. "Jump to the ball / get off to the ball".



01 tries to get open on the give and go or the UCLA guard rub cut. X1 must deny this. If 01 catches it then it's 1 on 1.



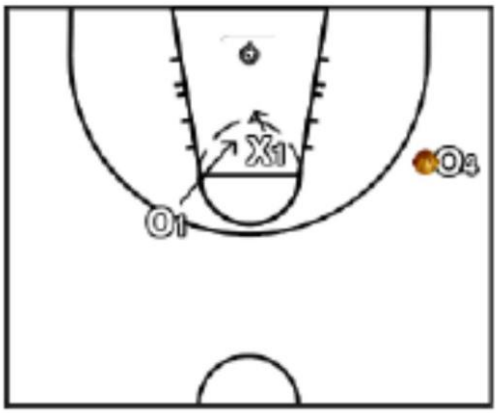
If 01 cannot get open then he either empties out ball side, in which case X1 must deny, or 01 can empty out weakside, in which case X1 must "stay for help"

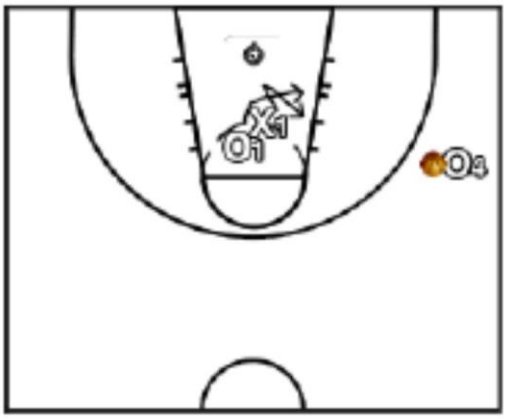

O1
X1
O4


O1
X1
O4
stay for help

XCUT

Now the guard cuts across the paint and tries to post up. X1 must bump and deny, trying to 'ride'
01 out of the low post position that he seeks.





15PassDrill-Denialemphasis

2 teams, almost any number. Use half court or full court depending on numbers.
One team must try to make 15 consecutive passes without the other team touching it. If defensive team get a deflection, then offensive team start from zero again.

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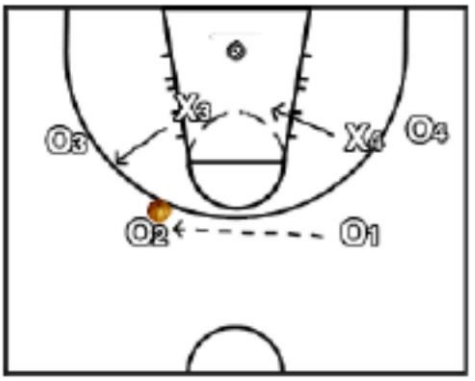
Every player who catches the ball is allowed one dribble to improve the passing angle...this is where the emphasis for this drill is; ie. what is the on-ball defender doing before, during and after the dribble?

3. Helpside:

2on2HelpsideDrill

#1 and #2 pass the ball back and forth to each other for two or three passes. X3 and X4 adjust according to ball position. Either one-pass away denial or helpside position. They are yelling "help left / right!" "Ball!" etc.

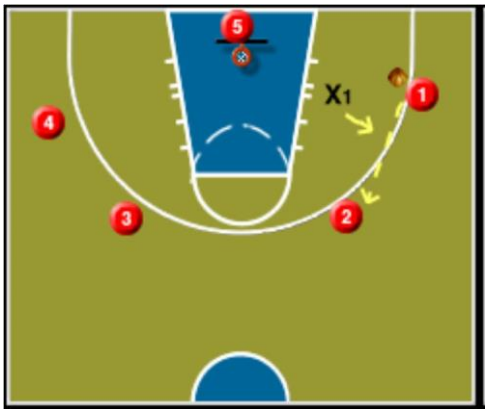


The entry pass is made to the wing man and then it becomes live two on two between #3, #4 and X3, X4.

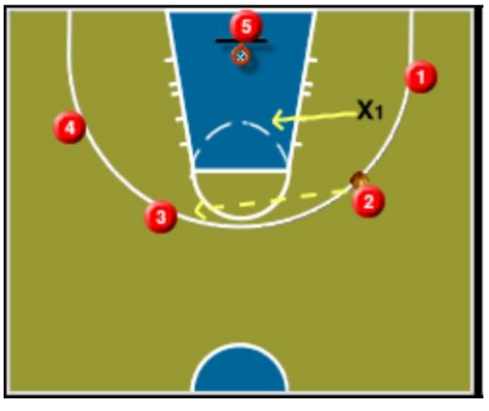
Defenders must stay on defence until they gain possession of the ball. Then rotate, offence to defence, defence to passers.

"GetUp!"Drill

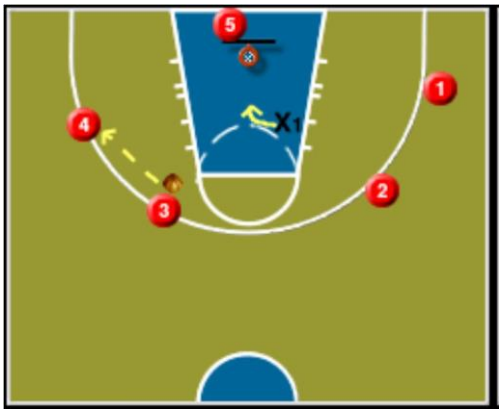
X1 plays on ball defence on #1 who can also dribble in and out a couple of times. X1 yells "Ball!".
#1 pass to #2.
X1 must play one pass away denial on #1.



X1 yells "Help right!". #2 pass to #3.
X1 adjust position accordingly. Talking, "Help left! Help middle!"

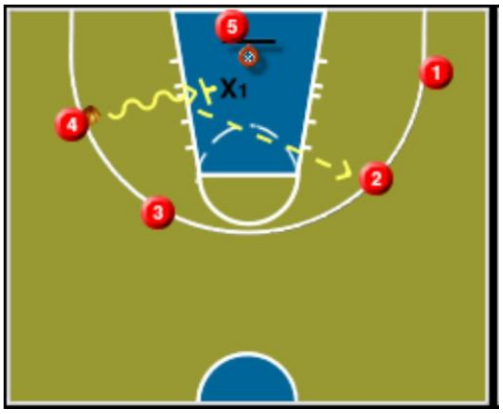


Pass to #4 who will dribble-drive to basket.



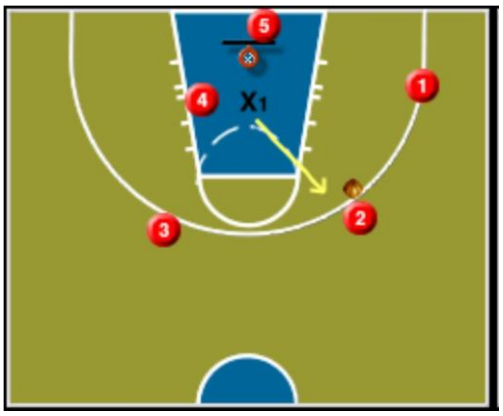
X1 adjusts and takes the charge. X1 falls backwards after taking the contact.

#5 yells at X1 "Get up! Get up!". X1 immediately gets back up into defensive stance, #4 pass the ball to #2 who will shoot it.



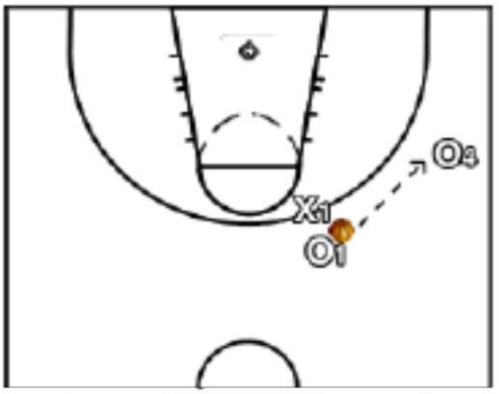
X1 must close out on the shot, box out, rebound the ball, pass it out to #1 and repeat the drill again.

X1 does it twice then all players rotate. Repeat both sides of lane. Clockwise and counter-clockwise.



DenytheGuardCutDrill-UCLACut

On this pass, X1 must make the correct adjustment. "Jump to the ball / get off to the ball".



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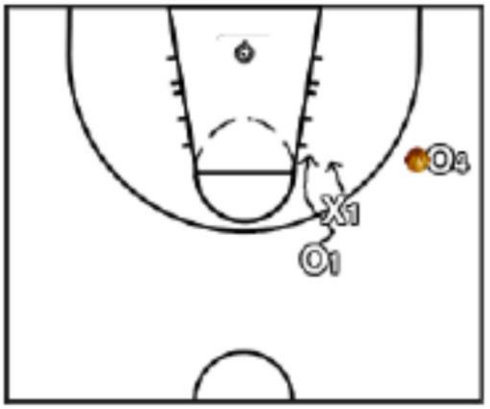

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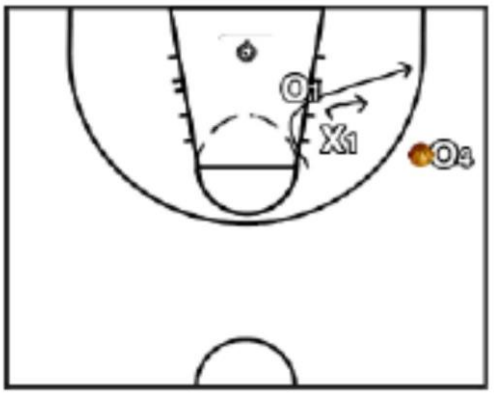
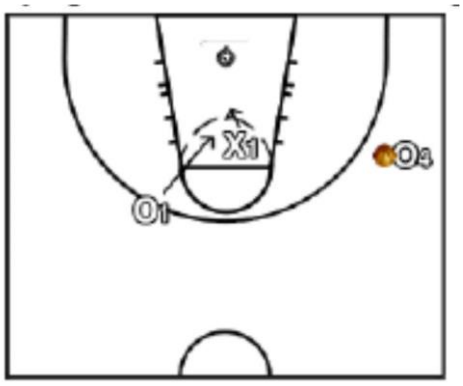
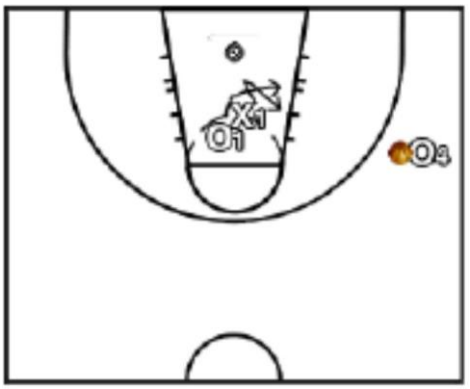


or 01 can empty out weakside, in which case X1 must "stay for help"

XCUT

Now the guard cuts across the paint and tries to post up. X1 must bump and deny, trying to 'ride' 01 out of the low post position that he seeks.





DenytheForwardCutDrill

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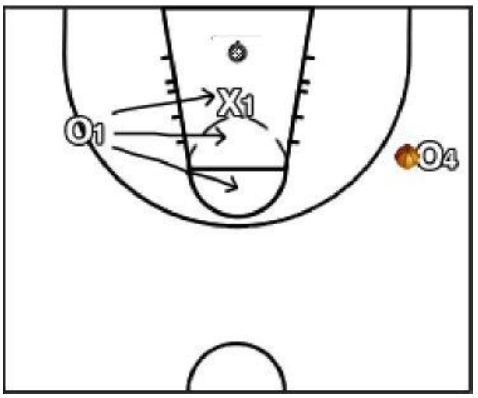
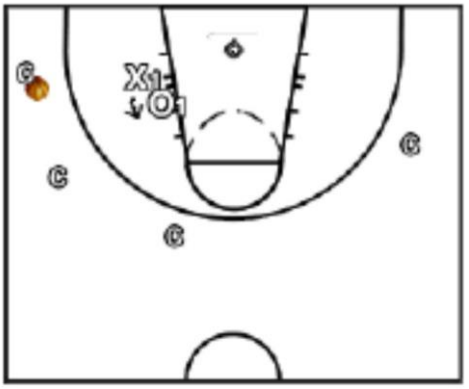
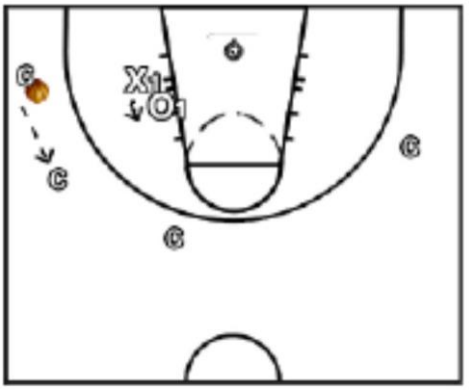


PostComboDrill

X1 will play three -quarter denial to the baseline side.



On the ball movement, he will transfer over the top of 01.
There are two methods to do this...NB. Footwork.



On the second pass, X1 will help on penetration

On the kick out, X1 will play helpside defence.

Drill continues with 01 flash to high post.
X1 must deny this.

Drill finishes with a shot and X1 must box out 01 as he tries to rebound it.

PostDComboDrill2

Slight variation of the previous drill.
01 now cuts to low post.
X1 repeat the post defence techniques.
The dribbler is taking the ball baseline and bringing it up foul line extended etc.

If the shot goes up, then box out / rebound.
But, C can pass to 01 in the post, then it becomes 1 on 1.

3. Shell Drill:

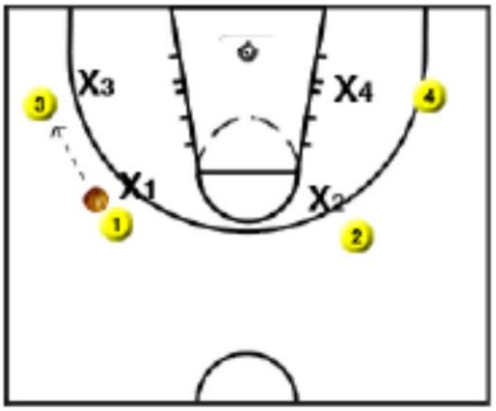
The Rolls Royce of defensive teaching drills! Incorporates;

(i) On ball and away from ball screen defence.
(ii) Help the Helper.
(iii) Help Rotation.

1. Offence just pass the ball around to each other, defence must maintain stance, position and talk etc.
2. Offence now dribbles in and out, defence must show good footwork, fan, stay in front etc.

Rules: The offence cannot shoot unless the coach, who is standing under the basket, has his hand raised in the air.

If the defence doesn't talk, gets beaten on the dribble, doesn't close out, box out etc. then they have to do a 'forfeit!'



Also, you can keep score on the Shell Drill; if offence scores they get one, if defence do something well etc. they can score 'points', but they can also 'lose' points for transgressions!

After the initial progressions the following can be practised:

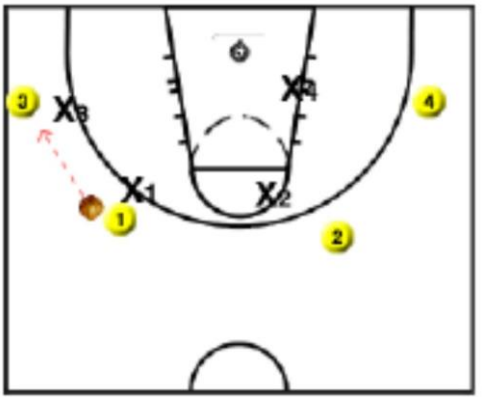
4 on 4 Shell Drill. Guard to forward pass.

Guard #1 cuts to basket. X1 must get off to ball, bump and ride the cutter, denying him the ball all the way through his cut.

#2 rotate over and #4 rotate up.

#1 will empty out opposite the ball. All defensive players slide and shift their positions accordingly.

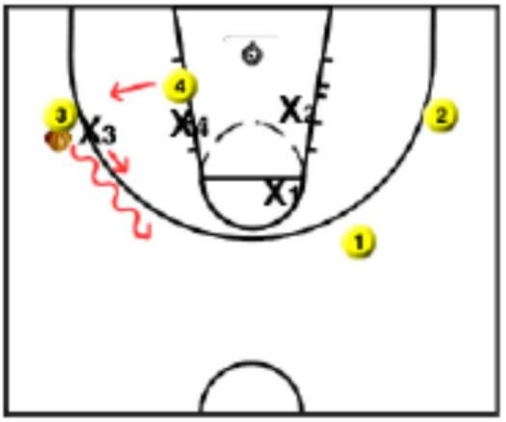
Guard to forward pass.



Ball with forward, opposite forward cut through.

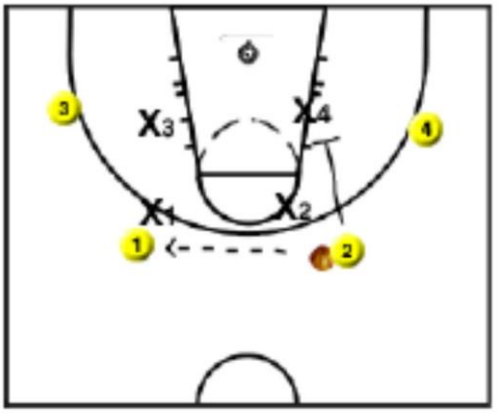
X4 must bump and deny the cutter across the paint.

#4 will empty out ball side, #3 dribble up, #1 move over, #2 move down.



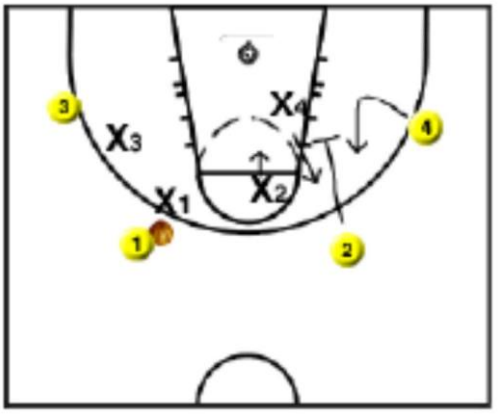
Screen Defence:

On the guard to guard pass, screen down.



Defence has to play this screen as the coach has specified. (Over the top; through etc.)

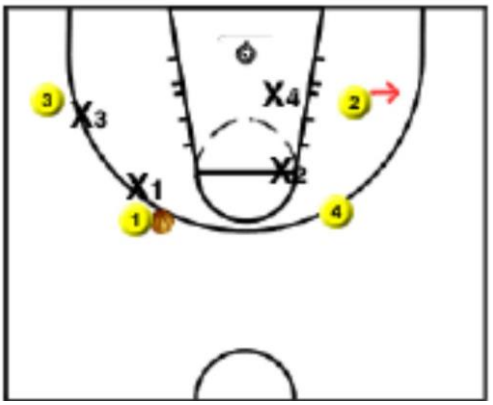
On the guard to forward pass, execute a lateral screen:



Again, defend it how the coach wants it done:

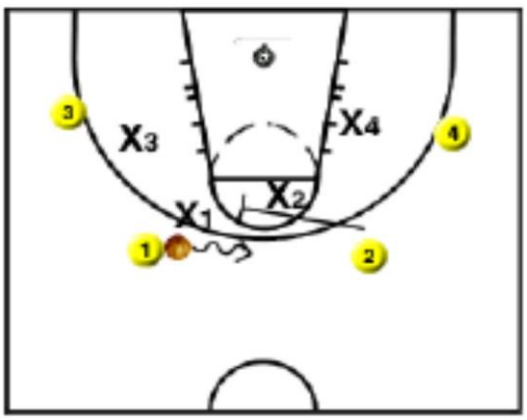
Switching: #2 screens down for #4. X2 switches on to #4 whilst X4 switches on to #2.

The screener's man, ie. X2 should call the defensive switch.

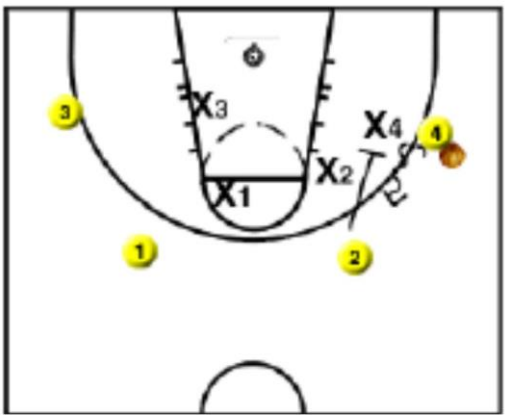


The On Ball Screen Situation:

Guard spots:

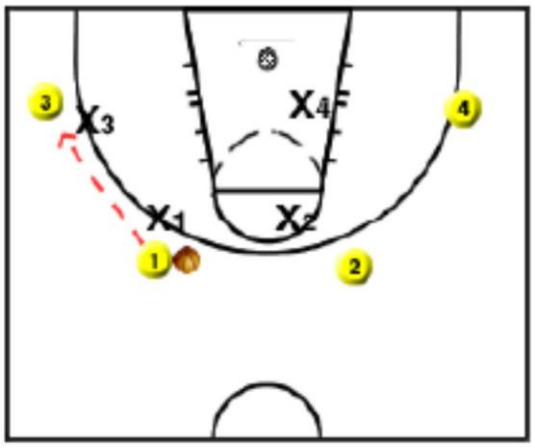


Forward spot:



Help the Helper:

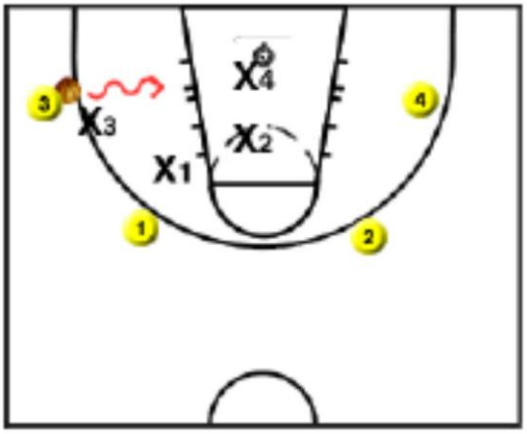
#3 starts to dribble penetrate.



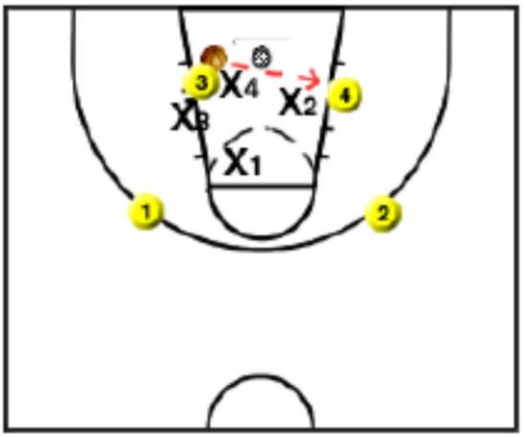
X4 has left his man #4 to help X3 on #3's dribble drive to basket. X1 and X2 are beginning to adjust their positions to 'help the helper'.

X1 will 'zone' both #1 and #2.

X4 begins to come over to help.

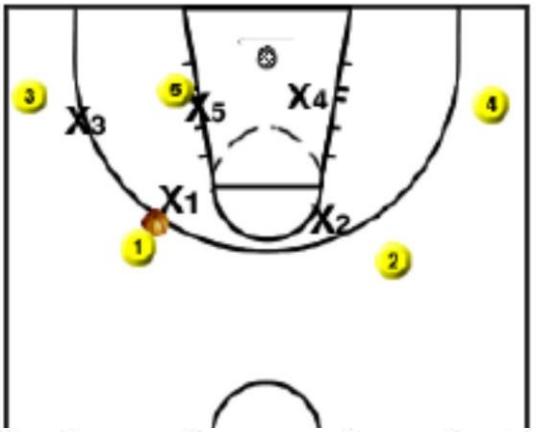


On #3's pass to a momentarily open #4 X2 has rotated down to help the helper.



5 Man Shell Drill :

Situations…

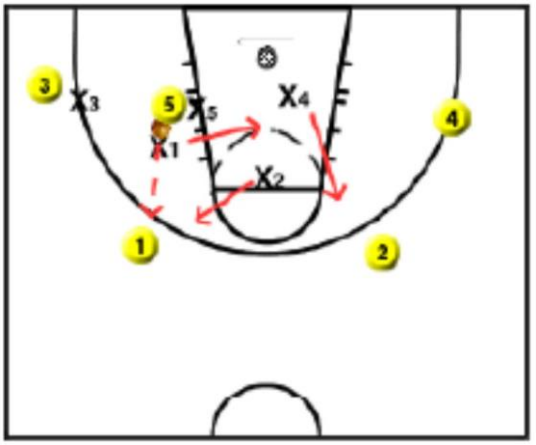


Rotation:

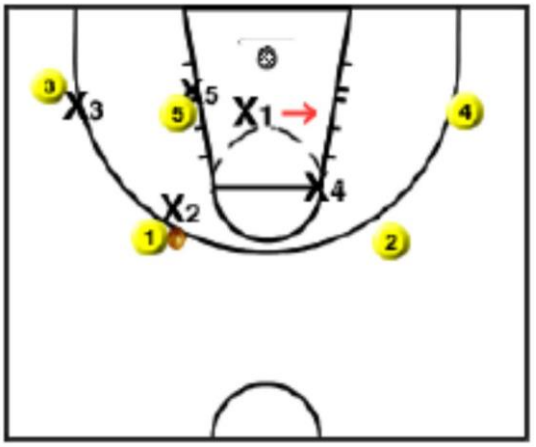
On the pass into the post from the wing…

X1 will sink down on the post ready to double.

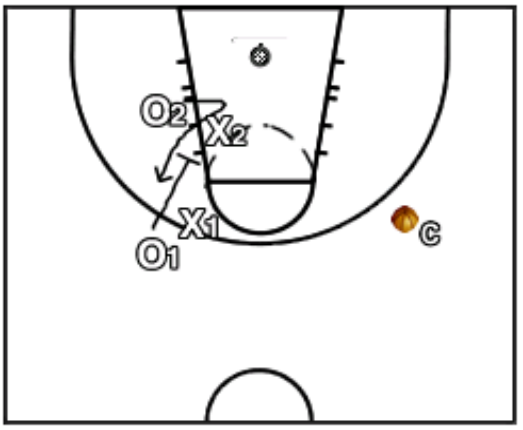
The defensive players rotate as shown as #5 passes back out to the perimeter player
#1.



The defensive players are shown having rotated onto their new assignments.

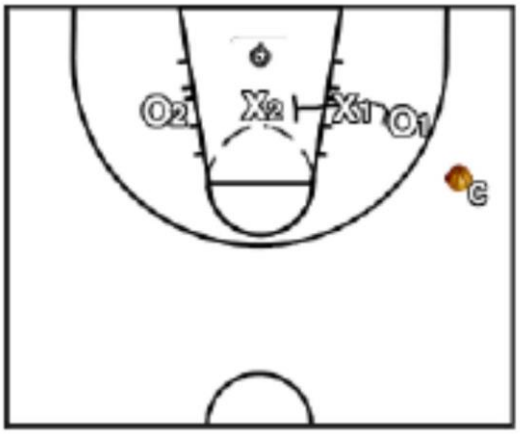


SCREENDEFENCE

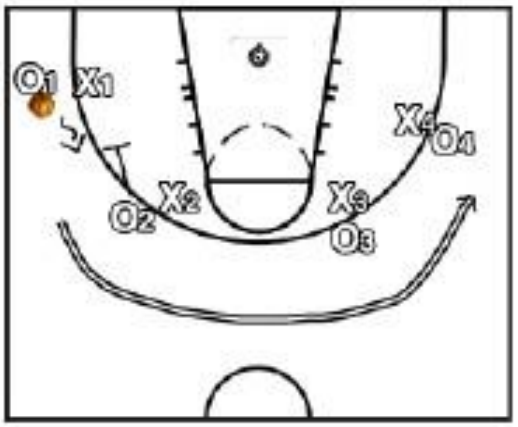


2on2DownScreenDrill

If 02 cuts over the top of the screen:
X1 call the screen and step back.
X2 get through.
X 1 open up to ball and 'hip shove' X2 through. X1 get hand in passing lane.
If 02 uses the screen baseline (backdoor),
X2 bump off screener and either open to ball or snap deny.



LateralScreen2on2Drill
Possible methods of defending this situation:
Over the top.
Under.
Through.
Switch.
Trap.
01 will set a lateral screen for 02.
X1 must hedge and bump the cutter (02).
X1 call screen and stay open to the ball.
If 02 goes topside, X2 get over the top. NB. Footwork, body position etc. X2 try to flash-deny the passing lane.
If 02 goes baseline side, X2 'bump' off the screener (01) and denial stance on 02 (backdoor).



RoundtheHornDrill
To practice the defence of the on-ball screen. It is up to the coach how he/she wants his defenders to practice negotiating the screen.
Choices:
1. get over the top.
2. Jump trap.
3. Go under.
4. Chase trap.
5. Switch.
01 will take X1 all the way round and back again.
All the defenders must communicate to X1, "Screen left!" etc.
They must also hedge out each time.
Rotate one spot clockwise, everyone gets a go.

TrapthePickandRollDrill
The screener's defender can also practice 'riding the screener off', that is, try to prevent him from setting the screen by bumping him away from the intended
screening area.
Must work on the footwork for the trap, the angle of the trap, the hands are up.
X1 must now 'lead' 01 into the screen.

(Attention should also be paid to the defensive rotation that will have to occur behind this trap pick and roll. ie. the other three defenders).

Part Two Zone Defence

The principles of why and when to use zone defence covered at Level 2 leads the coach to the decision regarding what type of zone to use, ie. the alignment. But the other important considerations are how will your zone operate and function.

The most effective zone defence is based upon sound man for man principles. It must be aggressive and active. The match-up zone is difficult to implement in its pure form but using some of the match-up principles is desirable in order to keep the pressure on the offence. An example follows based on the following 'rules':

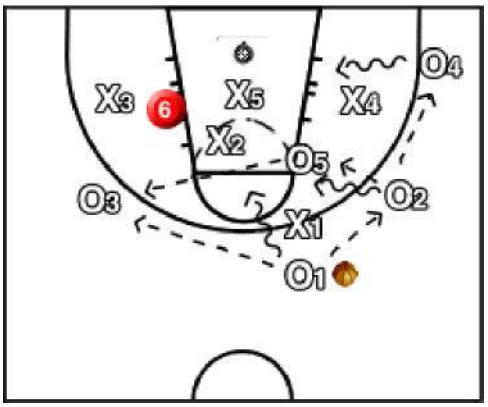
1. Must have constant ball pressure.
2. Front all / any post up players.
3. Deny all cutters across the paint.
4. Trap in corners and at foul line extended.
5. Must talk / communicate.
6. Must box out.

5on5

Play half court 5 on 5 running your zone offence vs the zone defence. Keep score, either 'make and take' or alternate possession.

5on5HalfCourtwithTransition.

As above, except on a defensive steal or rebound, the offensive team now goes full court vs the retreating defence. If there is a score, then we just stay at one end and play half court.

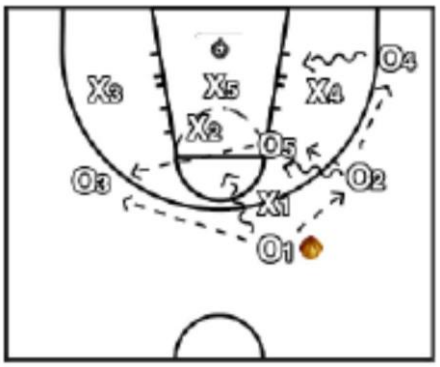


6on5Drill

Put 6 offensive players on the floor vs your 5 man defence. Offence can move, pass, dribble wherever they like. Defence have to try to cover all possibilities! Keep score, reward the defence with points for stops, steals, deflections, forcing violations etc.

Shifts&SlidesDrill

The offence is simply passing the ball around, anywhere they like. Defence is making the relevant slides and shifting according to position of ball. Progression: the offensive players put the ball on the floor and try to dribble penetrate vs the zone. Defence must adjust in the correct way.

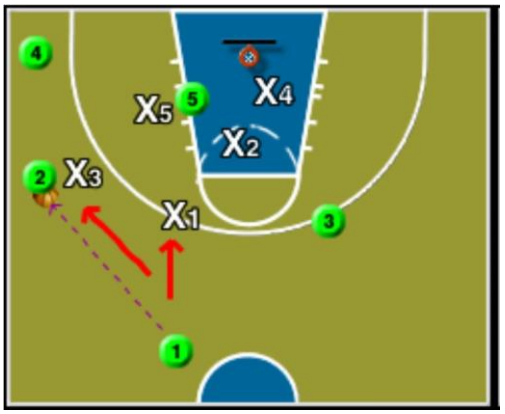


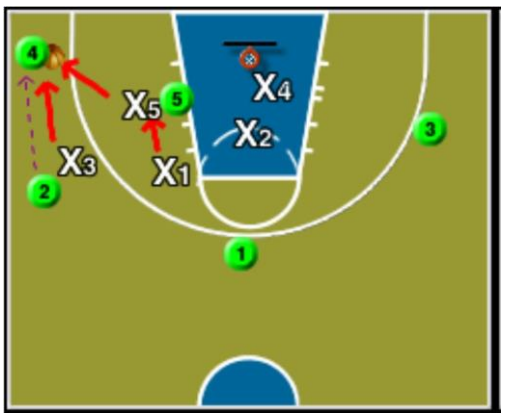
Match-UpZone

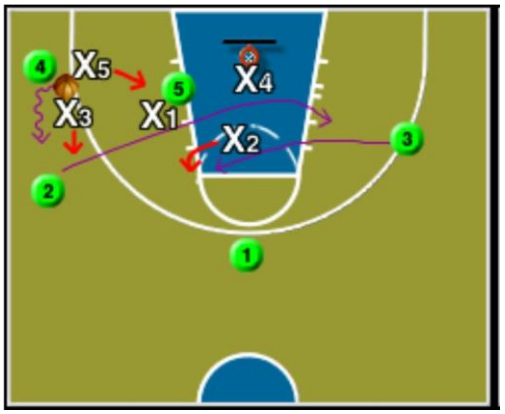
Based on an amalgamation of a match-up zone (Dean Smith's) and the Amoeba (Jerry Tarkanian).

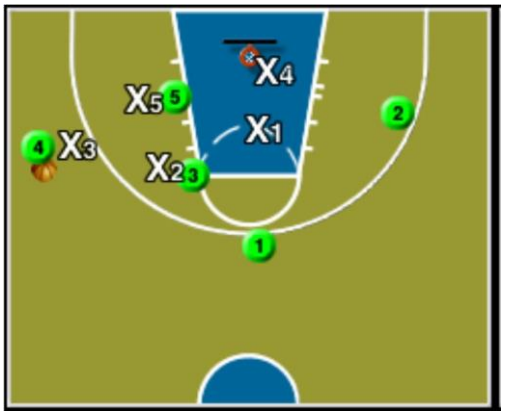
Rules:

1. Front all posts.
2. Deny / bump all cutters.
3. Pressure the ball.
4. Trap in the baseline corners.
5. No dribble penetration.
6. Ball on wing, foul line and below = back man's responsibility.
7. Guards are in tandem.
8. Guard and forward may trap foul line extended if applicable.








X4
X5
5
X1
2
4
X3
X2
3
1

Part Three: Zone Press

The coach has to decide whether or not he/she wants to zone press, whether the players are able to press, if so, then what type of press to use, what is the aim of that press, when during the game to use it and how is he/she going to teach it.

The most common zone presses are:

In the full court, three quarter court and half court: 2-2-1 / 1-2-2 / 1-2-1

In the half court: 1-3-1

Principles/Philosophy

1. Decide when you want to use it:
   (i) After a made field goal.
   (ii) After a made free throw.
2. Decide what you want it to do:
   (i) Trap – where? When?
   (ii) Contain.
3. Consider this: "Show man go zone". ie. when the ball is out of bounds your defenders are guarding everyone man for man, when the ball is in-bounded they go to the zone press.
4. Trapping areas…must be identified and taught. Including the techniques of trapping.
5. When will the press cease and what defence will you retreat back into?
6. Teach your players to understand the passing lanes, to be able to "shoot the gap".
7. Players not involved in the trap must understand how to read the offence, and be able to "gap" passing lanes. Also, they must understand how to retreat when press is broken.
8. Important point of emphasis; the flash cut to the middle of the floor – whose responsibility is this potential 'press-breaker'?
9. Must define the responsibilities for; front row, second row and the back.
10. Identify audible and / or visual signals for the various permutations within your press.

TrapDrill

As soon as #1 puts the ball on the floor the drill is live. X1 and X2 try to trap (X1 will contain, 'give the outside & take it away' etc., until X2 comes over).
#1 will work on trying to beat the trap, and get to the time line.
Teach defenders how to contain, how to apply the trap, what angles of approach to take, talk, how to prevent trap being split.

Progression: Place an offensive receiver at mid court (can be an Assistant, manager or player); he can go anywhere and can signal for the ball (visual only) whenever he wants; 01 must immediately see him, react and throw the perfect pass to him.

ComboDrill

Keep all defensive players on defence until they have played all four positions. Rotate, X1 to X2 to X3 to X4, after two possessions. The rotate offence to defence.

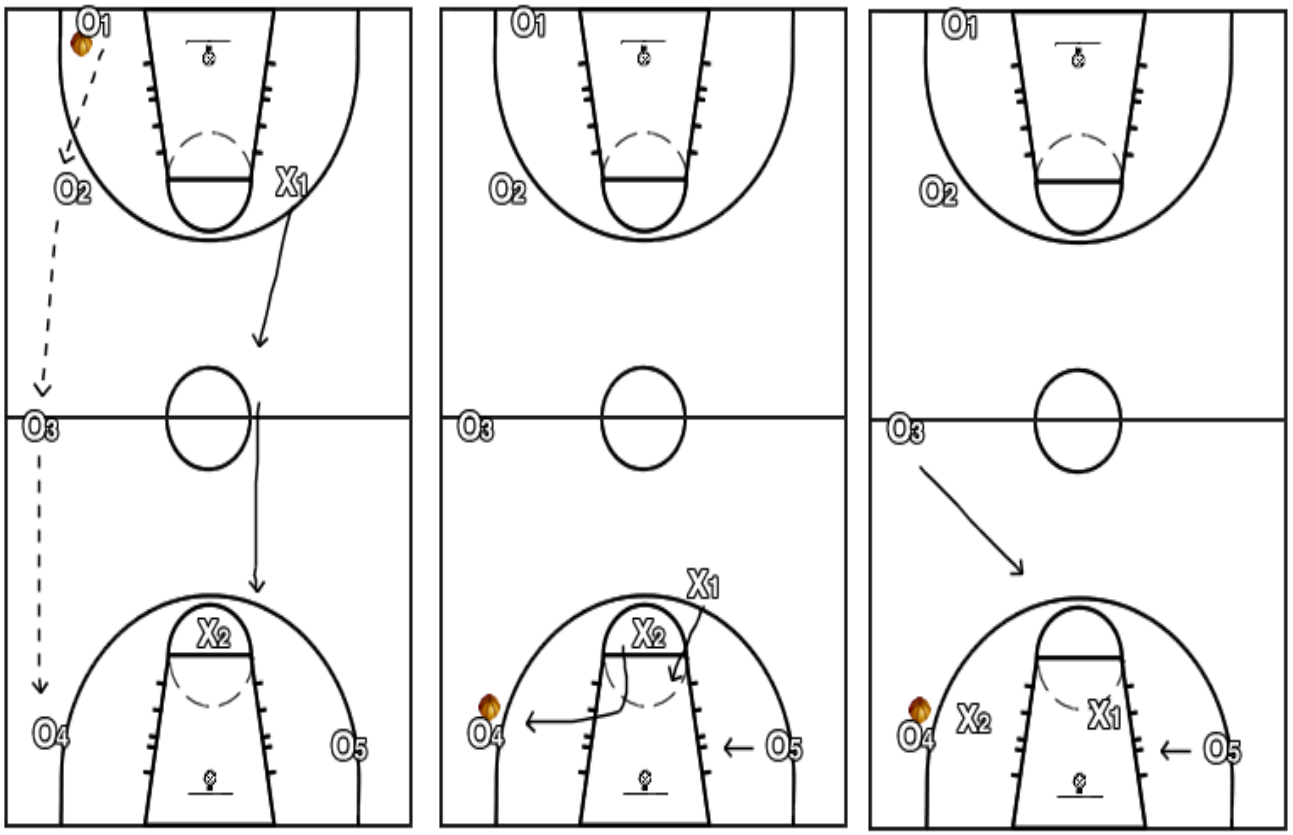
01 can escape the trap, X1 and X2 must close in to trap, by dribble or pass. 02, 03, 04 are not allowed to move.

X3 gaps 02 and 03. X4 gaps 03 and 04.

X3 and X4 watch the passer's, 01's eyes and his passing motion or body language to anticipate and try to shoot the gap.

RecoveryDrill1

X1 begins to sprint down floor as 01 passes to 02. When 04 receives the ball, X2 goes out to cover him.
05 cuts to basket for a pass from 04.
X1 must get to the basket before 05 gets there, and deflect, intercept pass.

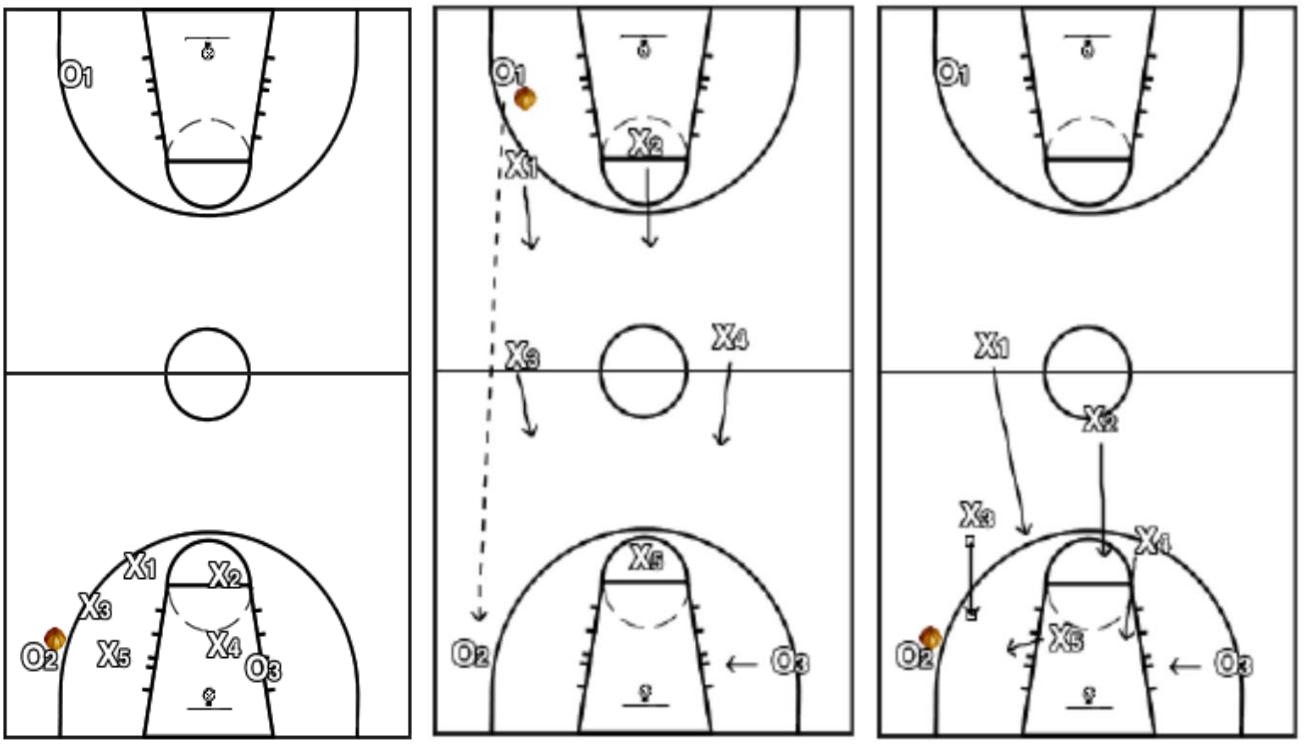


Progression: When 02 receives the ball, he can pass directly to 04 or 05. When 03 receives ball he can do the same.
This keeps X2 'honest' and helps him practice being an interceptor.
If 05 does receive the direct pass, 04 breaks to basket for pass. X1 must prevent this.

Progression: Play 2 on 2. X1 and X2 vs 04, 05. Progression: Allow 03 to join in thus making it a 3 on 2.

RecoveryDrill2

01 is live with a dribble, on the coach's command, 01 will make a baseball pass to either 02 or 03.
All team members must arrive at their quarter court defensive positions before 02 can pass to 03.
Teaches: 1. Proper recovery should never allow the lay up.
2. Teach the back man to intercept passes and make him aware about 'staying at home' until he sees his teammates recovering to the basket area.
3. To teach defensive movement whilst ball is in the air.



ShoottheGapDrill1

Similar to Trap Drill, except the receiver, 02 is moving anywhere between baseline and time line, but must stay on one side of the court. Whilst X1 and X2 are trying to trap, 01 is trying to pass 02 the ball and X3 is reading and trying to shoot the gap and intercept the pass.
Rotation: 01 to X1, X1 to X2, X2 to 02, 02 to X3, X3 to nd of ball line.
Progression: Add two offensive receivers, X3 must try to shoot the gap vs both.

ShoottheGapDrill2

Slight variation on the previous drill...now have X3 sitting in the centre circle facing the other end of the court!
When ball comes in, X1 and X2 communicate by yelling "Ball in!", upon hearing this X3 reacts, gets up, faces the play in his stance and is ready to try to intercept 01's pass to either 02 or 03 who can only move vertically in the back court.

TrapDrill

As soon as #1 puts the ball on the floor the drill is live. X1 and X2 try to trap (X1 will contain, 'give the outside & take it away' etc., until X2 comes over). #1 will work on trying to beat the trap, and get to the time line.

Teach defenders how to contain, how to apply the trap, what angles of approach to take, talk, how to prevent trap being split.

Progression: Place an offensive receiver at mid court (can be an Assistant, manager or player); he can go anywhere and can signal for the ball (visual only)

whenever he wants; 01 must immediately see him, react and throw the perfect pass to him.

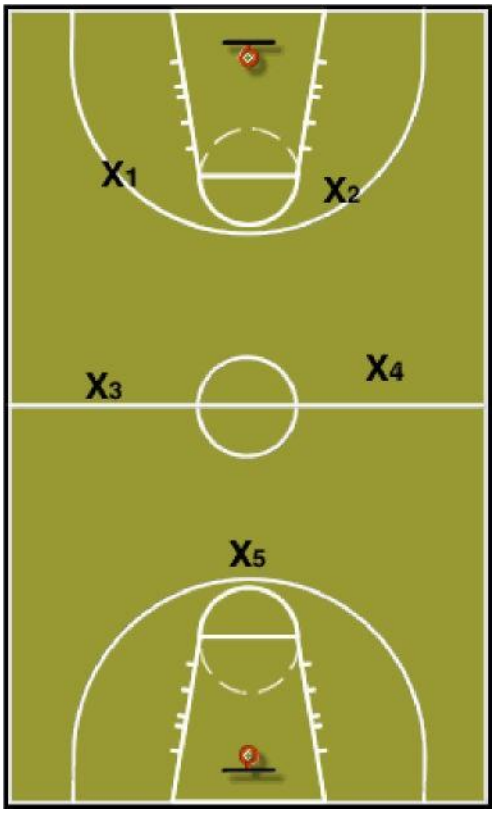
ZONEPRESS1

A 2-2-1 zone press. Can be used in full court, three-quarter court and half court situations.

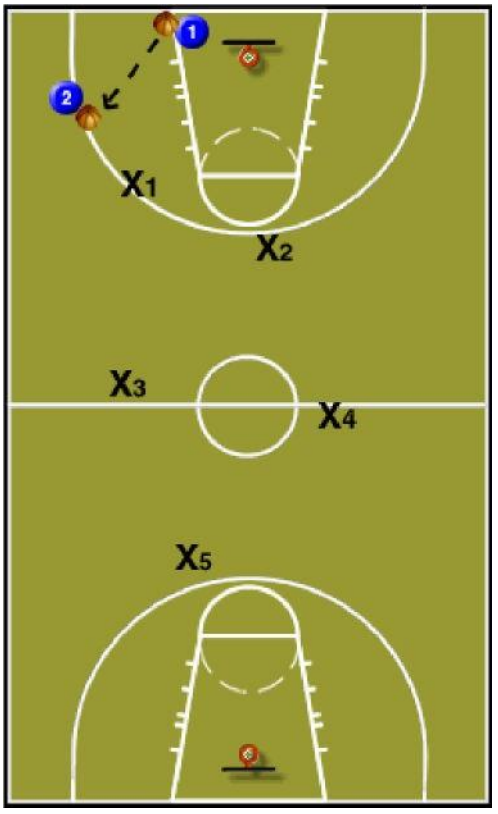
You must decide what you want to use the press for...is it for containment? Do you want to try to steal the ball and / or trap it? Are you going to 'stunt' within it? Do you want to simply 'slow-up' the opposition's offence?

You must also decide whether you want to trap in only certain areas of the court, anywhere and everywhere, who is going to trap, are you going to fake-trap, will you trap only when a certain player has the ball, trap on a specific 'key' or 'cue'? These are all aspects of philosophy which must be decided upon and taught to the players on a regular basis...everyone needs to understand and know exactly what is required at all times.
It is vital that if you are going to zone press, that the team works as a well-oiled unit!

Initial formation.

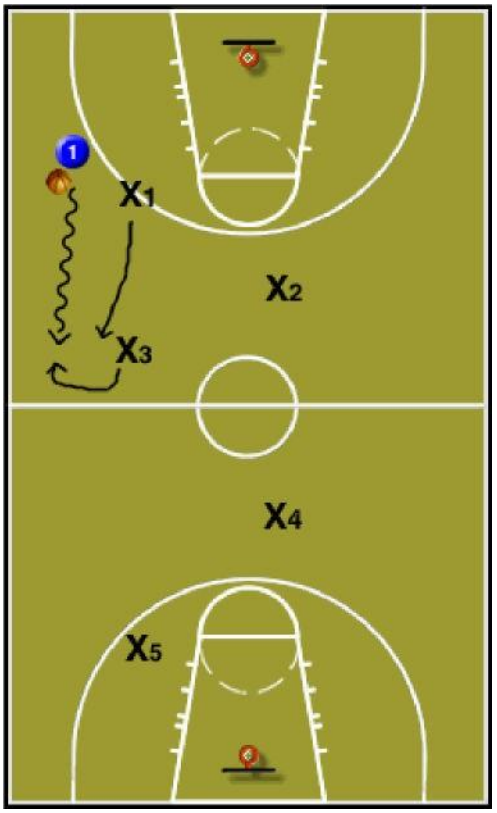


When the ball enters, do you want to trap right away? After the dribble? When the dribbler has dribbled up the sideline?
As soon as a side has been established, then the players away from the ball-side will have responsibility for covering the cutters to the middle (this is always the soft spot of any zone press defence). Communication and quick reaction slides are going to be a key for success.



One strategy is, as soon as #2 has put the ball on the floor, the front row of X1 and X2 'attack' and try to aggressively trap the dribble. The other defenders will try to locate potential receivers and deny them the ball.

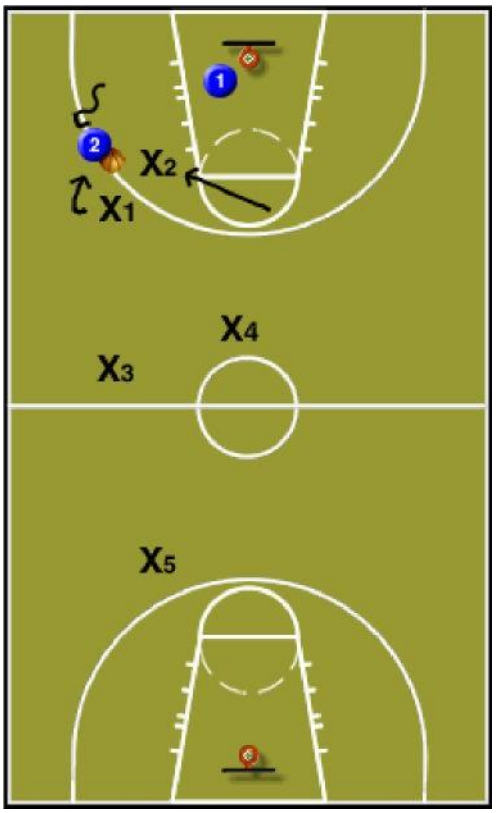
Alternatively, the dribbler can be 'invited' to dribble down the sideline towards the mid-court corner and the trap will be attempted by X1 and X3.



ZONEPRESS2

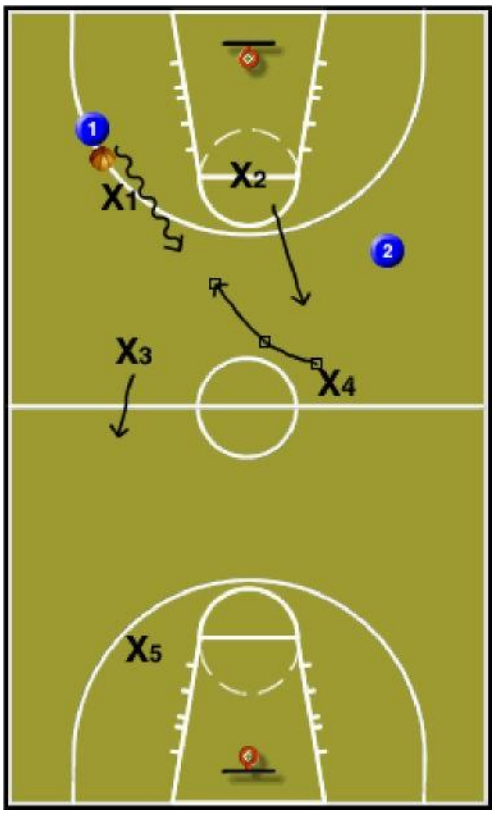
The second row of your 2-2-1 zone press has responsibilities for "gapping", trapping (sidelines), middle-flash-cut, stopping penetration down the middle.

If you are going to exclusively send dribbler down sideline, then X2 will have the middle flash cut responsibility.



If X1 is beaten on the dribble down the middle, then X4 from second row must step up to contain.

The back row of your press is responsible for gapping, trapping in the baseline corners, denying the down pass (sidelines) and "quarterbacking" the defence, that is, communicating to the four teammates he has in front of him.



Part Four Combination Defence

The utilisation of combination defences can be extremely advantageous if used sparingly and if executed well. The main consideration involves the element of surprise and unfamiliarity. It is not a 'game defence' ie. one that can be used as a team's main defensive strategy; rather, when used for a few possessions within particular / selected games, the effects can be very dramatic and rewarding.

There are several reasons why this type of defence can be successful:

1. Most teams / coaches do not spend practice time working out how to beat it.
2. There is often confusion and lack of decision-making whether to execute your zone or man for man offence versus the defence.
3. The 'elimination' or at the very least 'limitation' of the (star) main scorer or scorers will disadvantage most teams.

Like with everything though, one has to spend quality practice time working on the nuances and details of the defence(s). there must be a total belief in the fact that they will work if played properly.
The attitude of the players to make it work is an important factor, because there are a couple of factors that are unique to combinations.
Namely, the player or players guarding the 'star(s)' ie. in the man for man part of the defence, unusually have no helpside responsibilities. They must totally deny their assignment the ball throughout the possession, which includes boxing out and keeping them off the boards.
The players in the zone part of the defence have more work than normal to do, as there are going to be (a) bigger gaps (b) open shooters. They must be covered.

The combination defences are:

1. Triangle and two.
2. Box and one.
3. Diamond and one.
4. Inverted triangle and two.
5. One-three and a chaser.
6. Tandem and three.

The principles and techniques already taught for man for man and zone defence will apply.
Communication is key as is boxing out and rebounding.

The best way to practice combination defences is to have the players run it during scrimmage time at practice.

The coach can designate who from each team is going to be guarded man for man.

Module: Individual Skills

Philosophy

The most important aspect of a player's development is the acquisition and then the constant practice of the individual fundamental skills of the game. The pre-requisite to being able to not only play the game well and efficiently, but also to be able to perform and be successful at the elite level of the performance scale is the mastery of the fundamentals.
This is a long process and players and coaches must be not only methodical but also patient.

Principles

The Long term Athlete development (LTAD) model is relevant in this process and coaches should not only familiarize themselves with this but be sympathetic to the individual difference that will occur and are prevalent during the athletic, physiological and skill development continuum.

A brief summary of LTAD: Developed by Istvan Balyi.

Stage One: FUNdamental stage. Age 6-8 females, 6-9 males.
Fundamental Movement and Skills (FMS)
Fundamental Sport and Skills. (FSS)
FMS + FSS = Physical Literacy.

Stage Two: Learning to Train. 8-11 yrs. Females, 8-12 yrs. Males. Stage

Three: Training to Train. 11-15 yrs. Females, 12-16 yrs. males Stage

Four: Training to Compete. 15-17 yrs. Females, 16-18 yrs. Males

Stage Five: Training to Win. 17+ yrs. Females, 18+ yrs. Males
Of course one can see that there are constraints and limitations which may / will impinge upon this paradigm. Regular and repetitious practice time being the most problematic; suitable and continuous coaching input; relevant and rigorous monitoring and measurement; assessment and progression.

Within basketball in the UK the general application has been to try to teach (and / or at least introduce) the basic skills, try to 'hook' the kids by making it a fun experience and this can be at any age depending (unfortunately) on opportunity of geography, the presence of club, coaches, facilities.

However, the important skills can still be identified here. This is what the Level 3 coach should be able to teach (once again assuming that all other skills, that is, Level 1 and 2, have been taught, learnt and mastered).

Part One: Movement Without The Ball.

This is a hugely important aspect of basketball and one which takes a long time for players to acquire, appreciate and be able to execute efficiently.

The 'team' elements of the game are implicit within this skill but must be amalgamated with an appreciation of what the player with the ball is doing.

Considerations

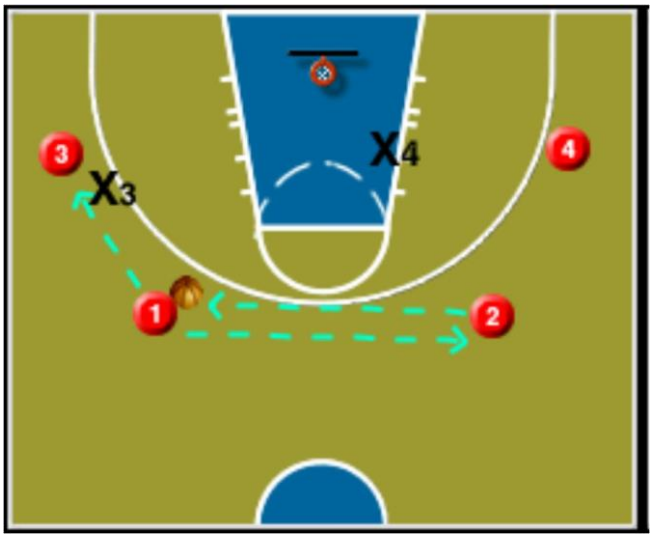
1. Reading the defence: (i) your man
   (ii) when overplayed
   (iii) defender with head turned to ball
   (iv) defender with head turned to you.

2. Use of the screen away from the ball.

3. Use of the on-ball screen: (i) screener
   (ii) weak-side cutters, spot ups.

2 on 2 Helpside Drill

Although primarily a defensive drill, the emphasis would be on reading your defender and making correct decisions, cuts etc.



#1 and #2 pass the ball back and forth to each other for two or three passes.

X3 and X4 adjust according to ball position i.e. either one-pass away denial or helpside position.

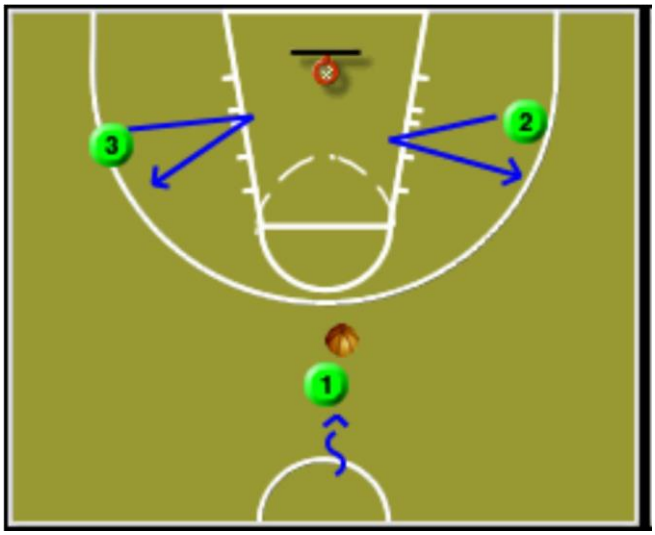
The entry pass is made to the wing man and then it becomes live two on two between #3, #4 and X3, X4.

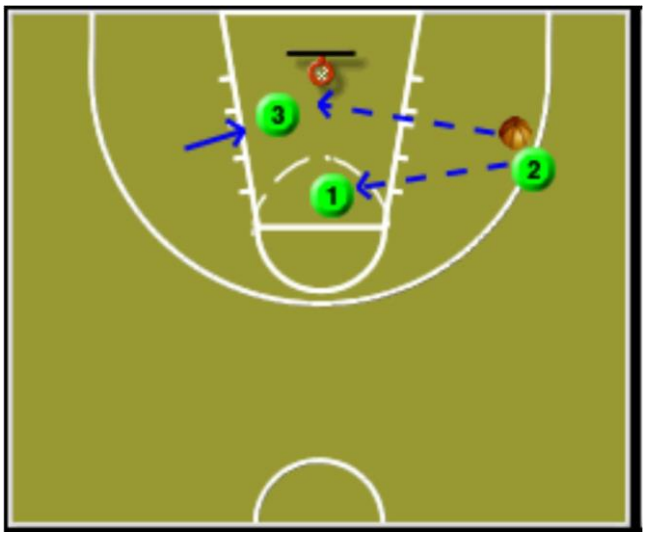
Defenders must stay on defence until they gain possession of the ball.

Then rotate, offence to defence, defence to passers.

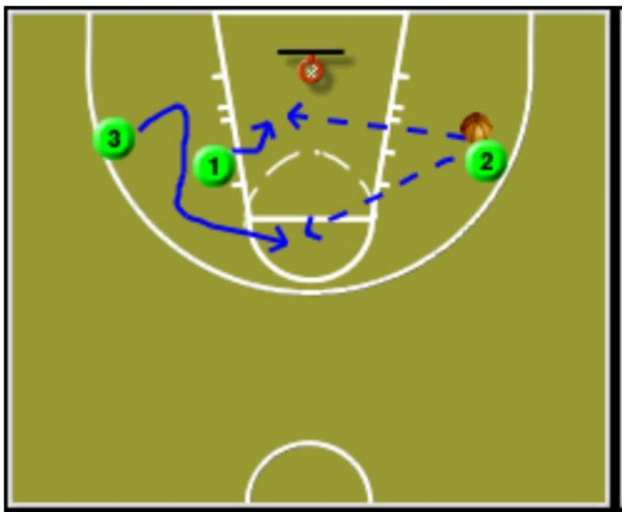
3 Man Motion Drill

Pass & Cut to basket. - Give n Go.

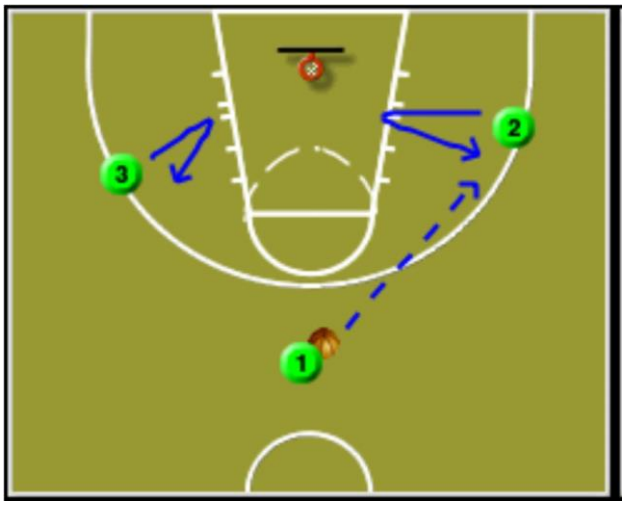




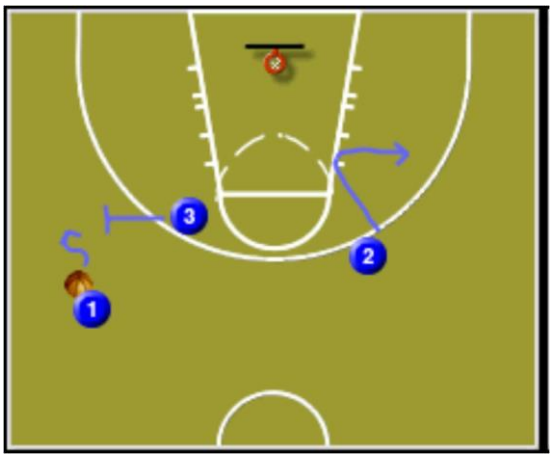
Pass & Screen Away.



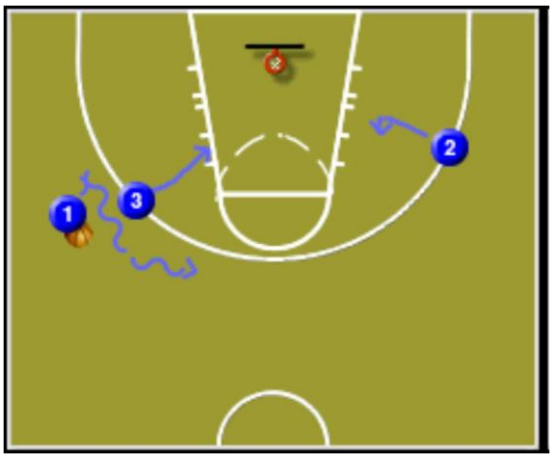
V Cut & Replace yourself



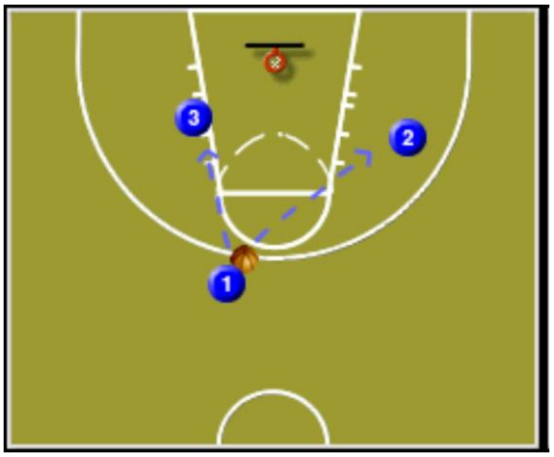
3 on 0 Pick and Roll Drill



#1 dribbles to the relevant angle. #3 will set the screen. #2 will spot up on the perimeter.



#1 will use the screen correctly. #3 will roll to basket.



#1 can either pass to #3 or to #2 who can also go backdoor. (Later, #1 may also shoot).

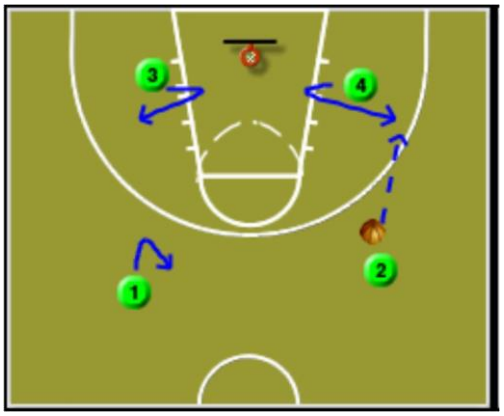
3 on 3

Play 3 on 3 quarter court; emphasis is on reading the defence when away from the basketball.

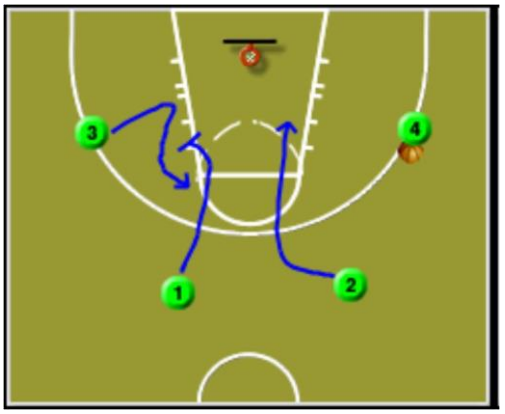
Progressions:

1. No dribble.
2. Only one dribble allowed.
3. Can only score off a screen away.
4. Can only score off a pick and roll.

4 Man Offensive Shell Drill



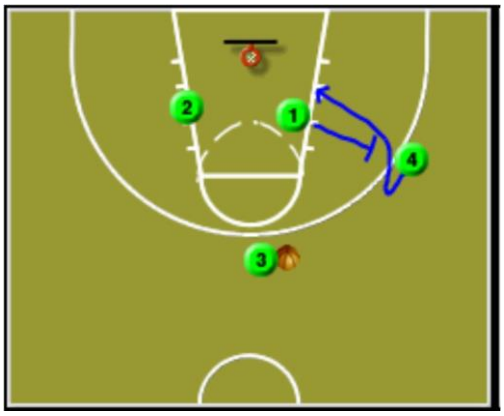
On the slap of the ball players make their moves to get open.



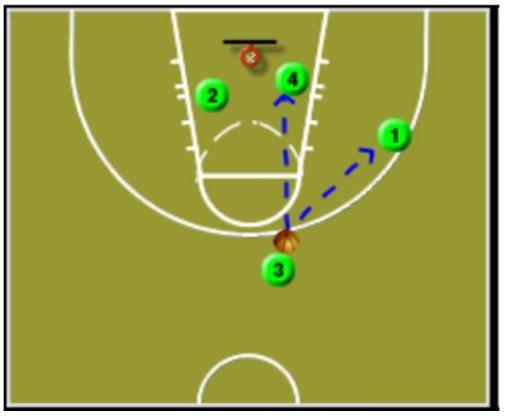
#2 passes to #4 and #2 cuts to basket. #1 is down-screening for #3.

#2 will screen away for #1.

#4 reverses the ball via #3.



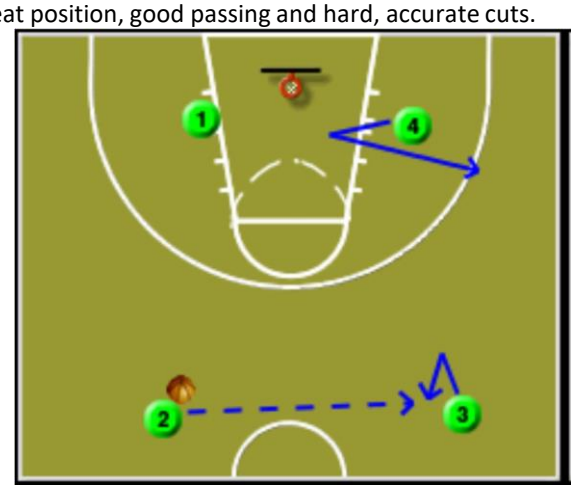
#1 back screens for #4.

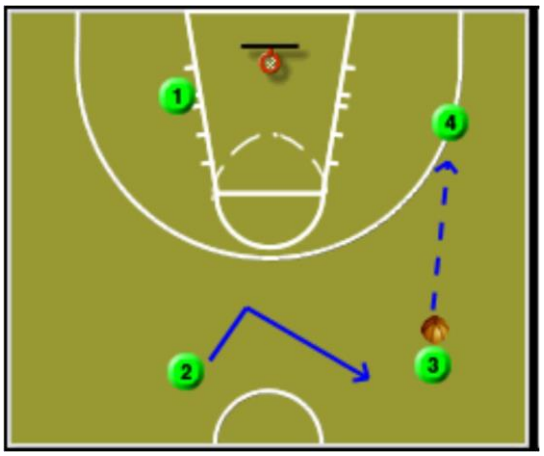


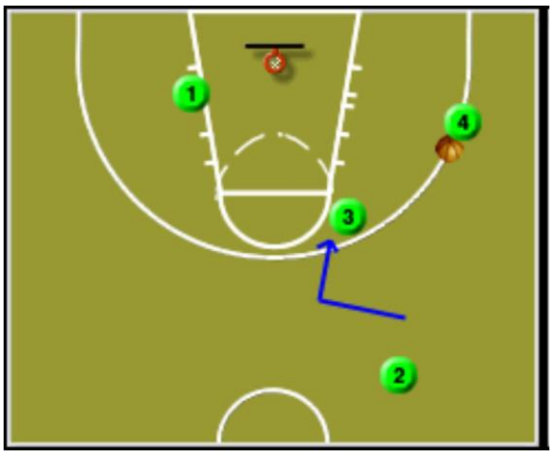
#3 has two passing options

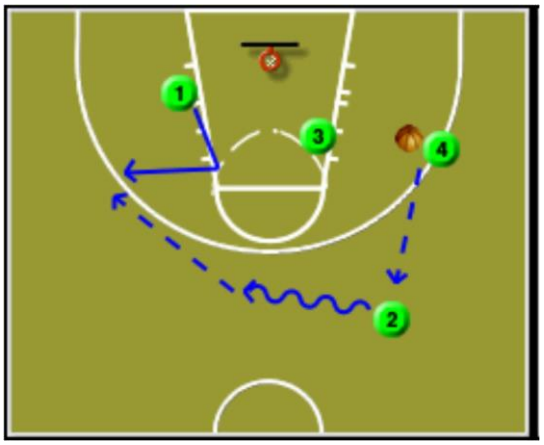
4 Man Pass & Cut Drill

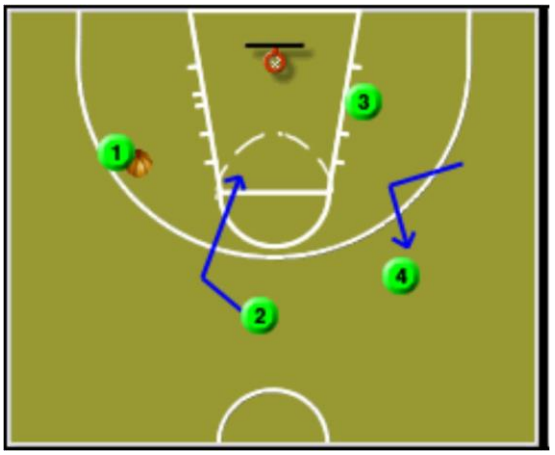
4 on 0 to begin with. Then add the defence. Emphasis is on triple threat position, good passing and hard, accurate cuts.





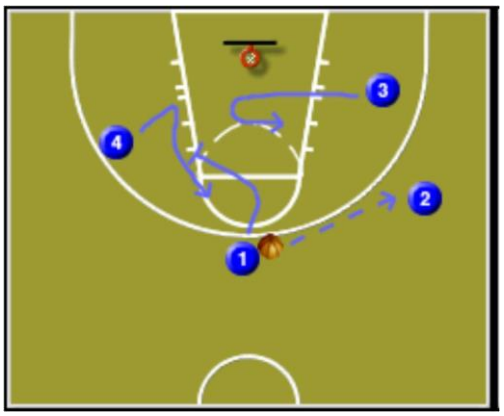




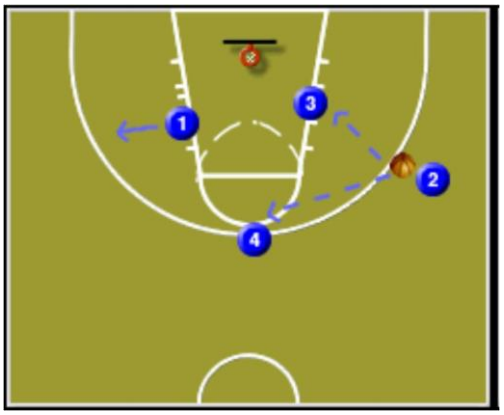


Drill is continuous with players filling each of the four spots. Rotate the spots.

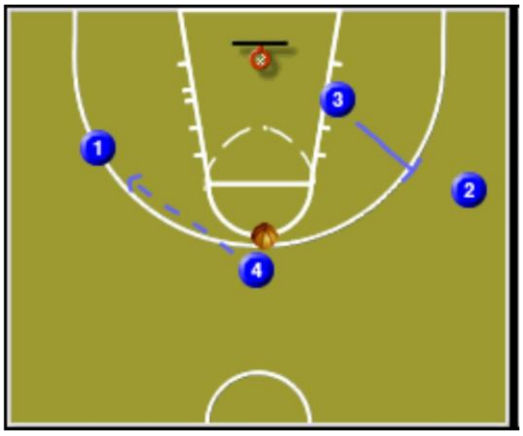
4 on 0 Pass & Screen Away Drill



#1 passes to #2. #3 fakes the screen away and buttonhook back to the low post. #1 screens away for #4 who comes off the screen topside.

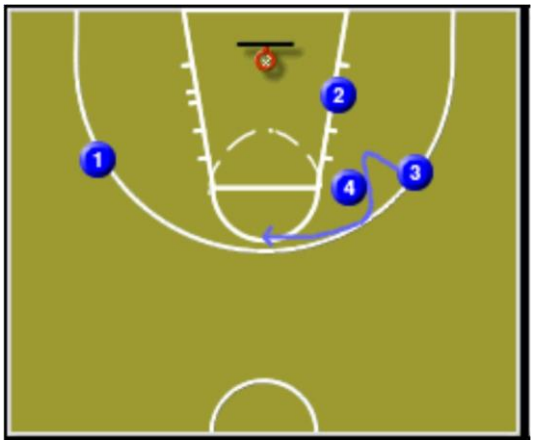


#2 can pass to either #3 in the post or #4 at the top of the lane.



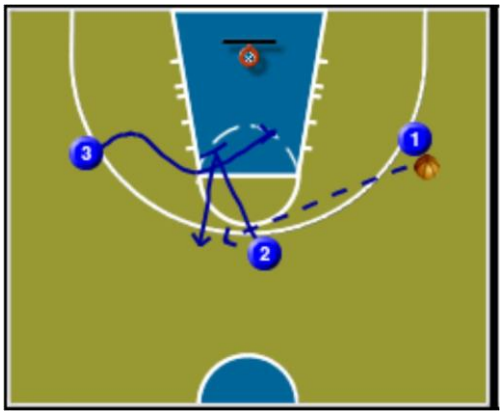
Continuity of drill: #4 reverses the ball to #1. #3 back screens for #2.

#4 pick for the picker.

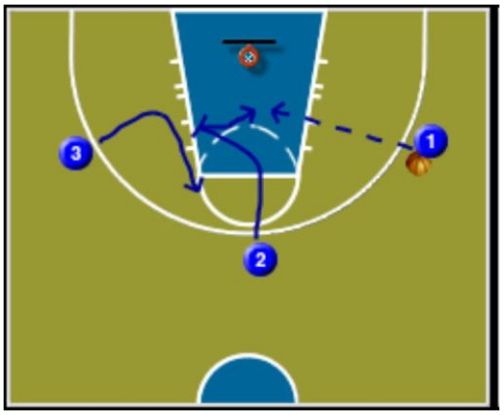


#3 comes off the screen topside.

Cuts After the Screen Drill



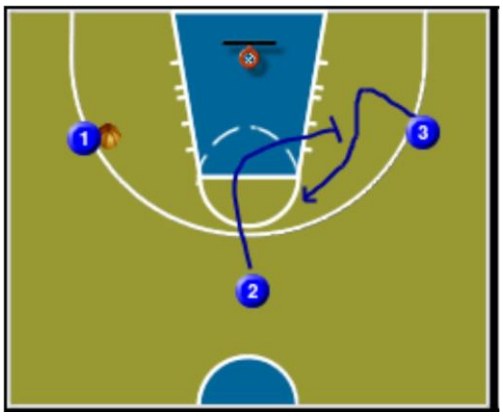
If cutter curls or back cuts off screen, screener must reverse pivot towards time line and step back for ball.



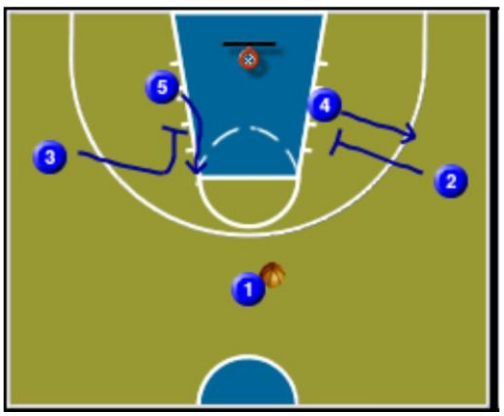
If cutter goes over top or flares, screener will reverse pivot towards baseline.

Cuts off the Screen Drill

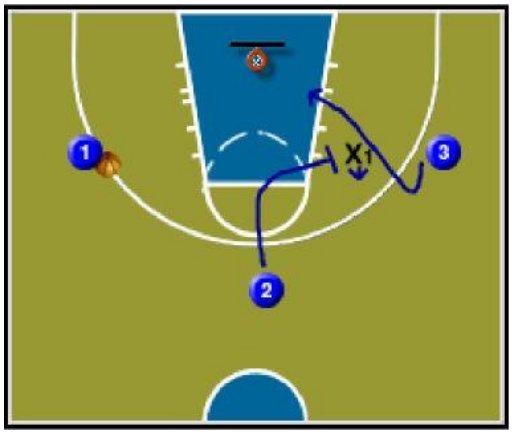
Practice various cuts off the screen:
Over the top - cut to the ball



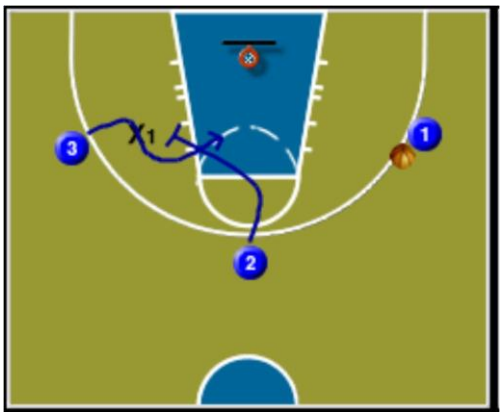
Cut around screen and up inside



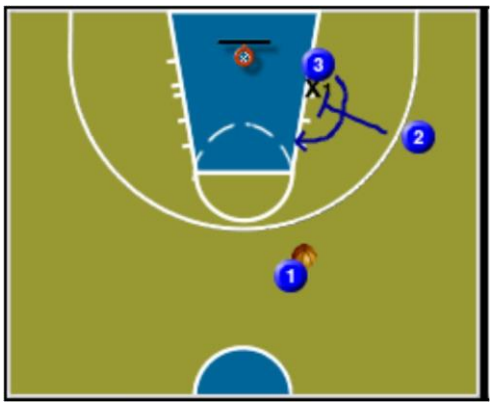
Back Cut off the screen



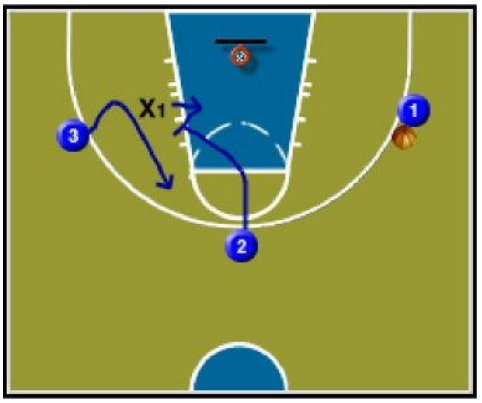
Curl Off the screen



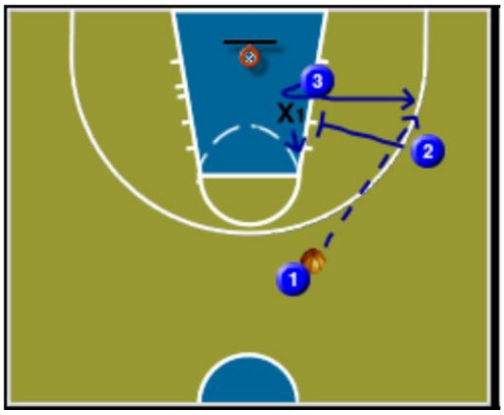
Curl



Flare Out off screen

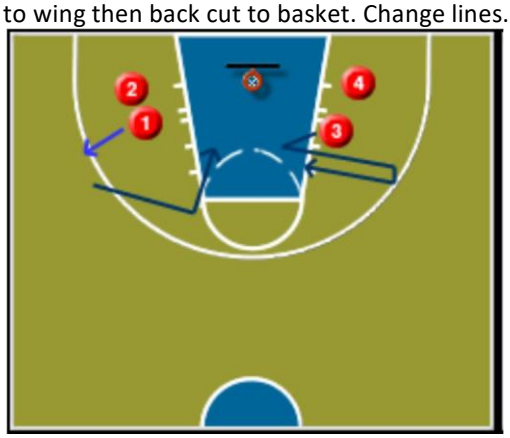


Flare

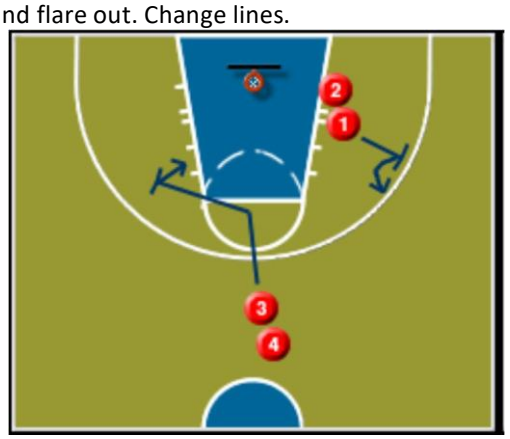


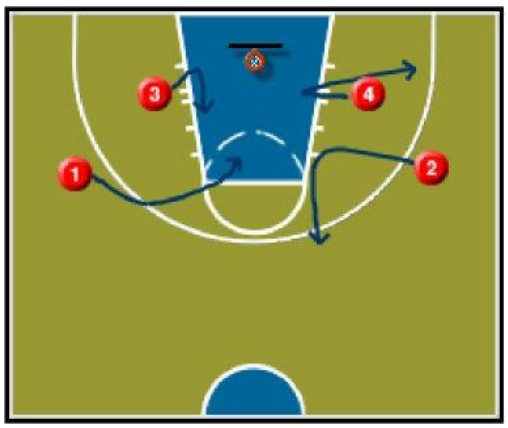
Cuts Possibilities Drill

#1 breaks out to wing then L cuts to basket. #3 V cut to wing then back cut to basket. Change lines.



#3 screen away and roll to basket. #1 back screen and flare out. Change lines.

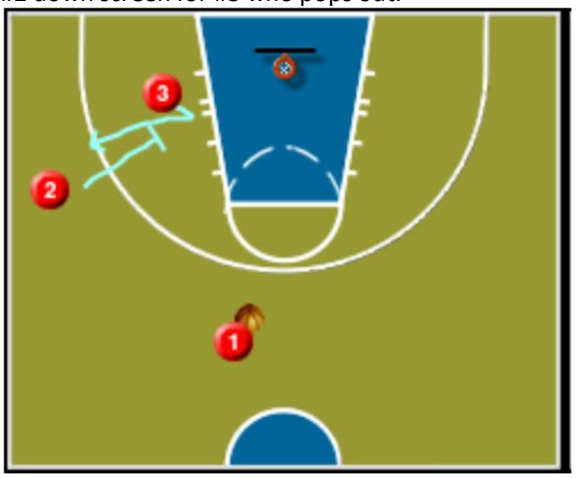




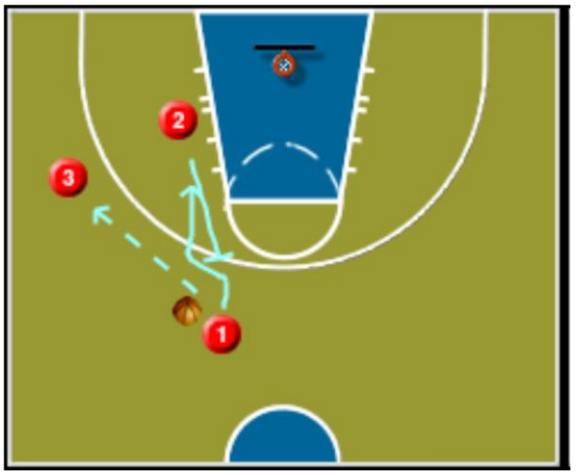
1 curl cuts or C cut.
#2 L cut and flare out.
#3 V cut and duck in.
#4 V cut and break out.

Up & Down Screen Drill

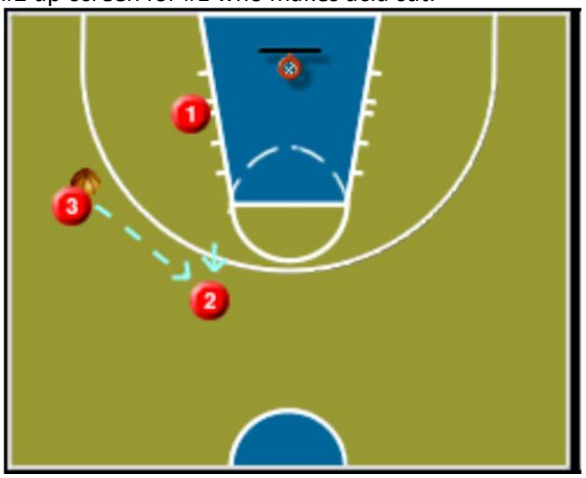
#2 down screen for #3 who pops out.



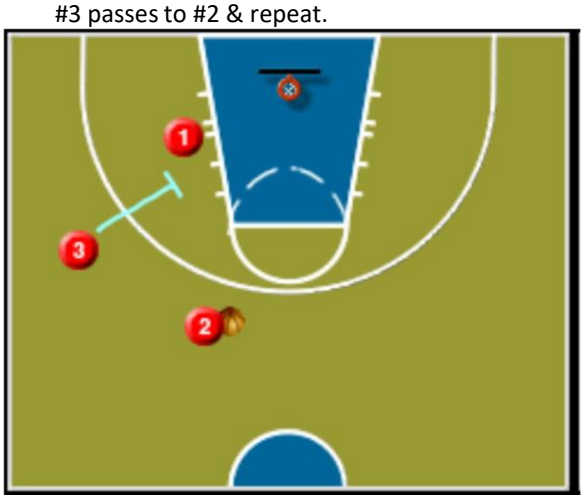
#1 passes to #3 on wing.



#2 up-screen for #1 who makes ucla cut.

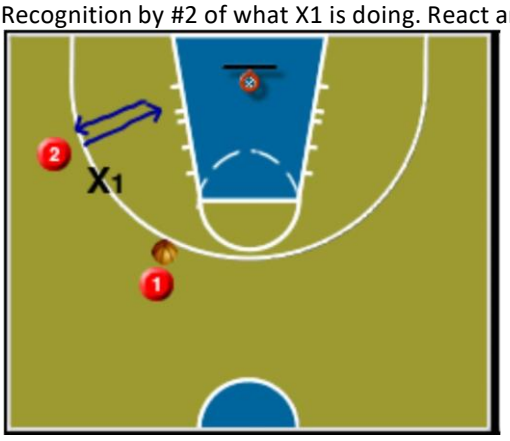


#3 passes to #2 & repeat.



Wing Drill

Recognition by #2 of what X1 is doing. React and execute.



X1 must try to prevent #2 from getting the ball either on the Perimeter or Backdoor.

If #2 catches it then they go 1 on 1.

X1 has to stay on defence until they manage to deflect the pass, rebound a missed shot or steal the ball.

If the player manages to deny for 5 seconds, then they can come out also.

Part Two: Dribbling

At this level, the coach is assuming that the players, whilst constantly practising their basic dribbling skills, can nevertheless competently dribble under pressure with their head up and with either hand.
Therefore the skills to be 'added', that is, to be acquired include the ability to maintain control of the dribble under pressure, the ability to pass off the dribble and the understanding of when to dribble.

Apart from the specific drills to practice some of the skills listed below, there are other key abilities that can only really be practised and perfected during game situations.
The scrimmage time at practice is such an important time for the coach to teach and players to learn these (other) subtleties of the game.

Considerations

1. Versus full court man for man pressure defence.
2. Versus traps / double teams.
3. Versus run and jump defence.
4. Penetrate and dish.
5. Penetrate and kick.
6. Fast break situations: (i) pass off the dribble – chest, bounce, baseball.
7. Coming off the on-ball screen: (i)to rolling picker (ii)to spotting picker (iii)to cross court spot-up shooter (iv)to cross court backdoor cutter.
8. To improve the passing angle.

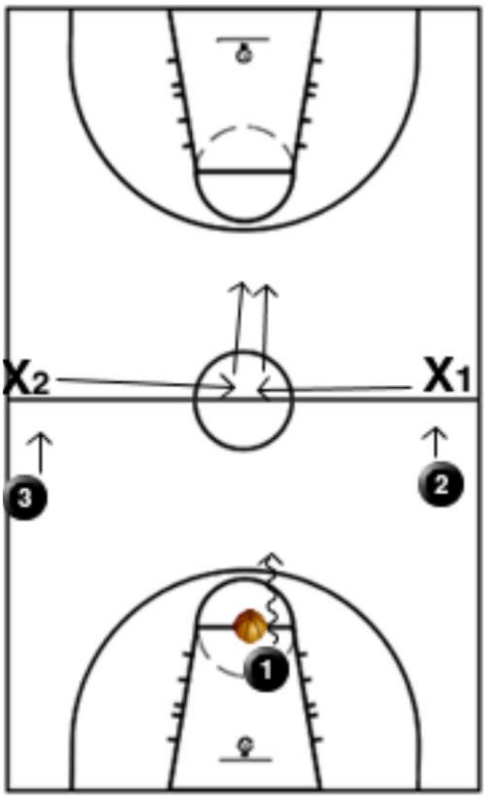
3 on 2; 2 on 1 Drill

3 players come down the floor in a 3 man break. The defensive players are stationed at the mid court corners and must come together in the centre circle, 'high five' then get back on defence.

Play 3 on 2 until either the offence scores or the defence secures possession.

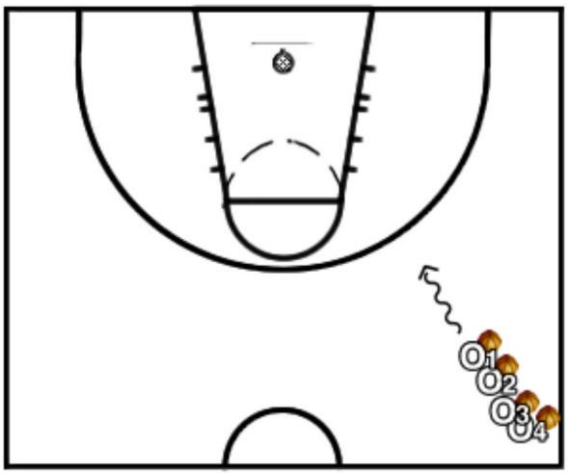
The player who touched it last at the offensive end comes back on defence vs the other two.

The other two guys must hustle to mid court corners and repeat the 'high five' in the middle etc.
Make good ball handling and passing decisions, read the defence.



Dribble Moves Series

Players will line up as shown on one side of court; they will perform the move according to coach's command, collect their rebound and dribble out to the left side of the court, when all players have cleared, repeat the same move on the other side, with other hand of course.



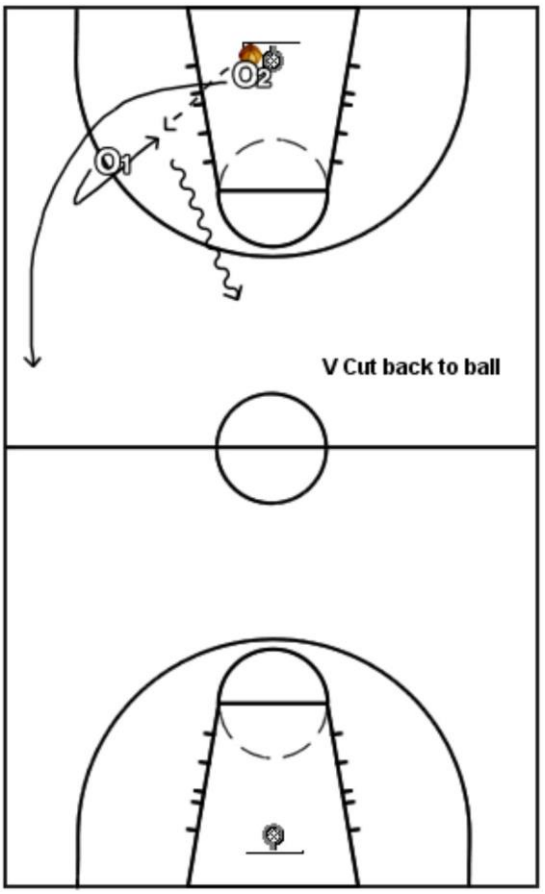
The Moves:

1. Spin Dribble - reverse lay up.
2. Behind the Back - lay up.
3. Hesitation Dribble - power lay up
4. Cross Over (in front) - across for jumper.
5. Cross Over (through legs)
6. Combo - spin, go to middle, cross over, come back to wing, hesitation, go to hoop.
7. Combos 2- behind back go to middle, V dribble ("in-out dribble") / (fake cross over), across to wing for jumper.

Fast Break Drills

2 Man Fast Break Drill

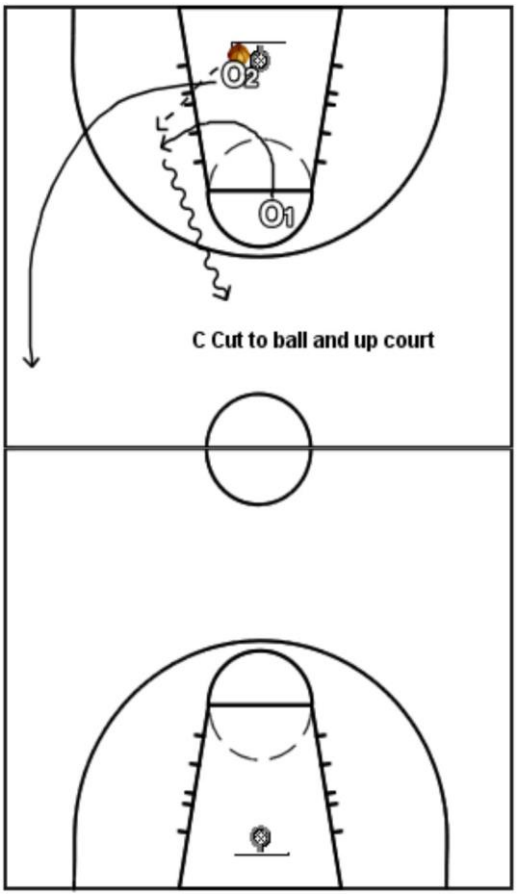
First Consideration should always be the outlet receiver:



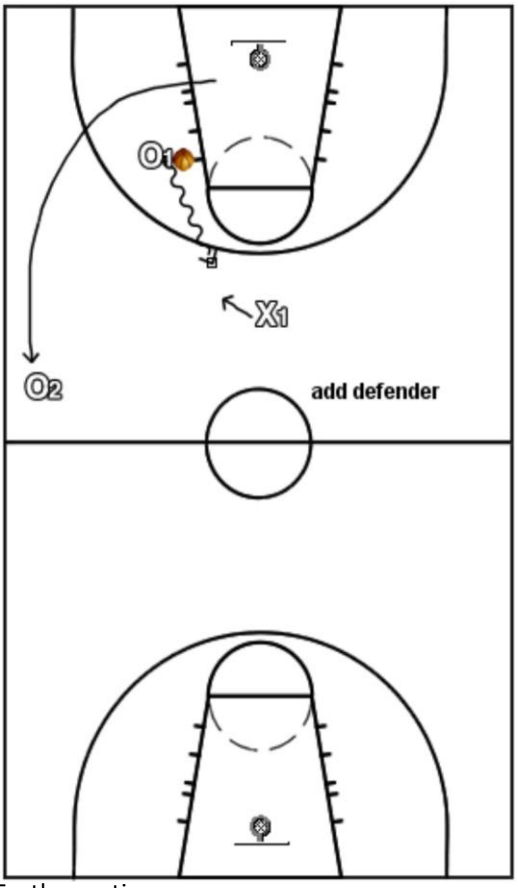
1. V Cut back to ball.

2. C Cut up court.

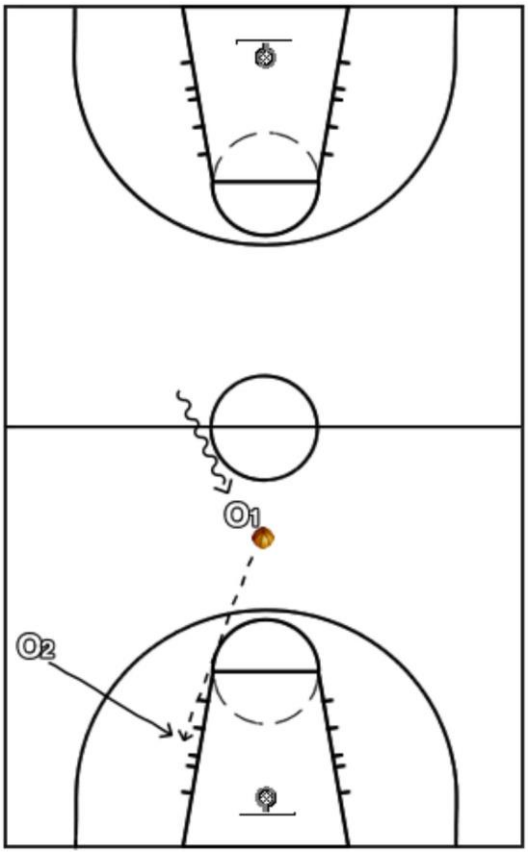
Emphasis is on 01 to make good ball handling decisions and execute the correct pass.



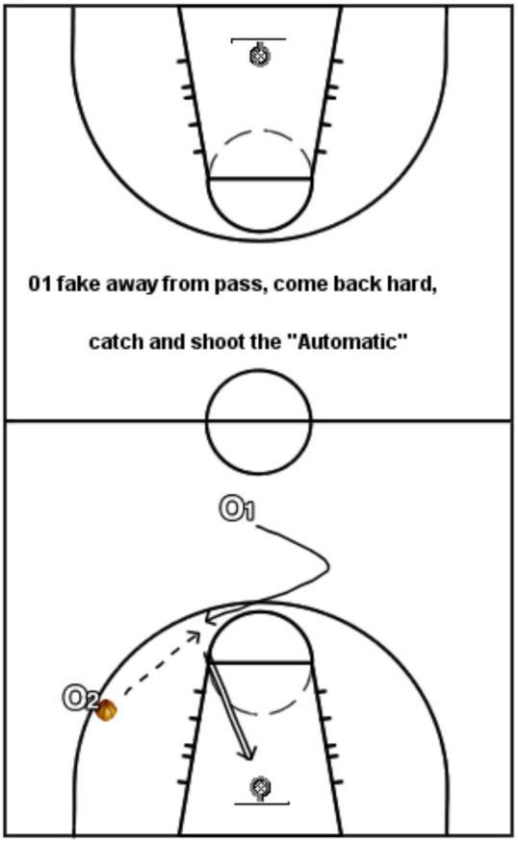
Attention now on 02 and the options to score
i.e. Lay up; Power lay up ; Bank shot



Further option
Pass back to 01 for the "Automatic" shot

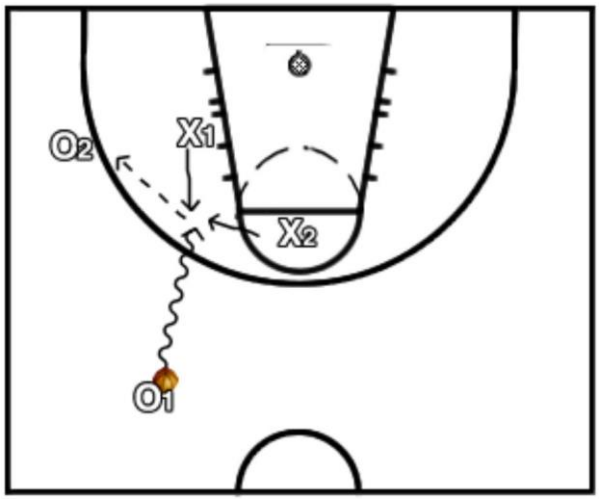


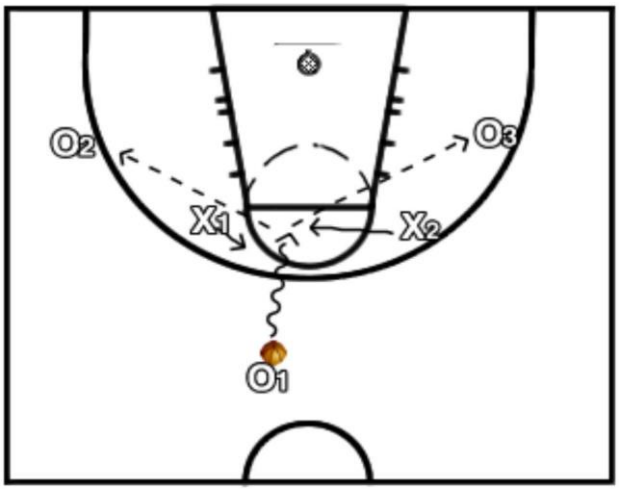
Now run the 3 man fast break drill.



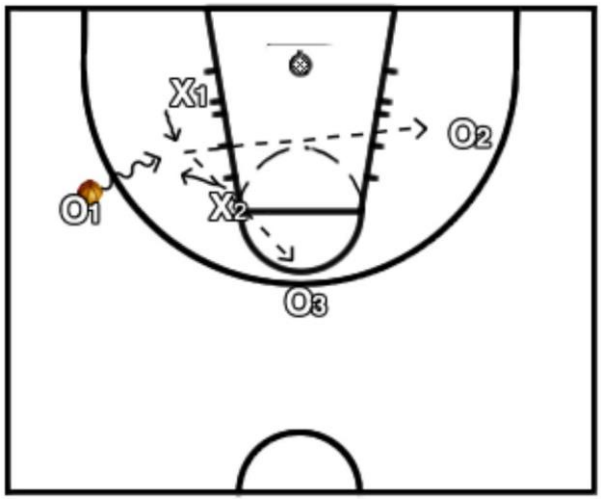
Penetrate & Kick Drill

01 must penetrate as far as possible before finding 02 on the spot up, deliver the appropriate pass, 02 shoot.



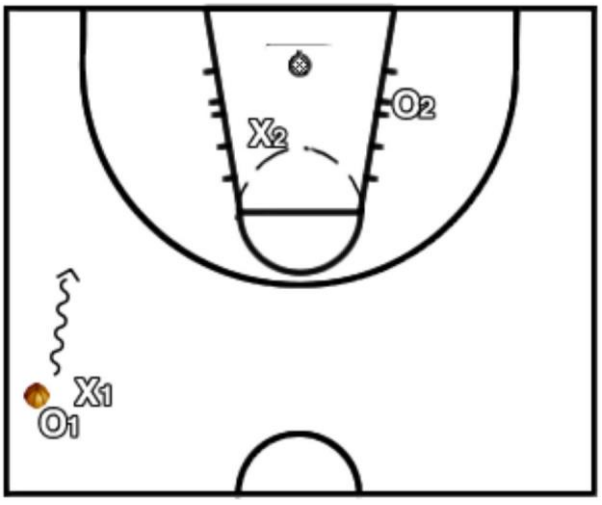


Progression



Perimeter & Post 2 on 2 Drill

The coach will specify whether the post player must post up at the low post or flash to high post.
The progression is that the players will then go 2 on 2live and the post player makes up their mind what he wants to do.



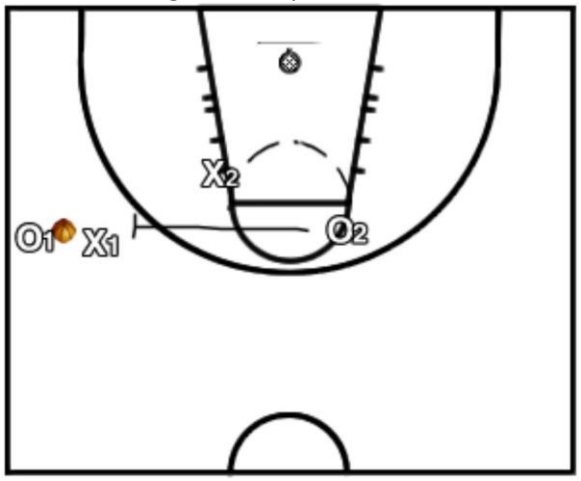
Keep the score. Go both sides of lane.

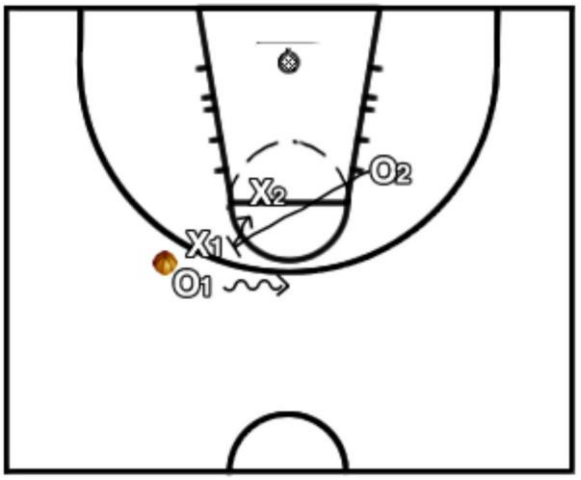
This drill will accomplish many of the skills required in this situation, namely:

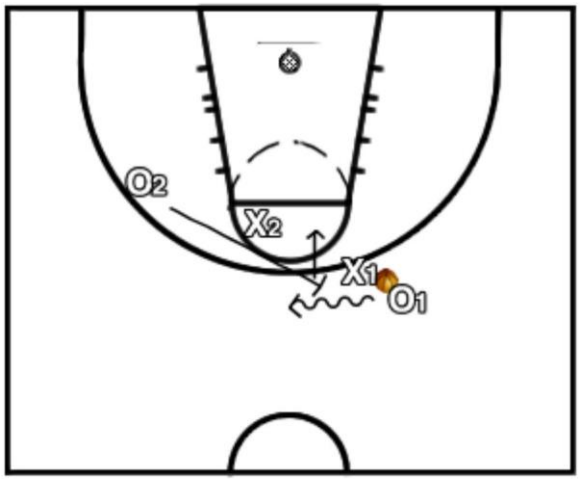
1. Reading the defence.
2. Maintaining control of dribble under pressure.
3. Passing under pressure.
4. Posting up.
5. Passing into the post with the appropriate pass.
6. Footwork in all aspects.
7. Spotting up or down, or cutting to basket after passing into the post.
8. Practice of high post entries as well as low post entries.

2 on 2 Perimeter-Post Pick n Roll Drill

Run this drill from 3 angles as shown:

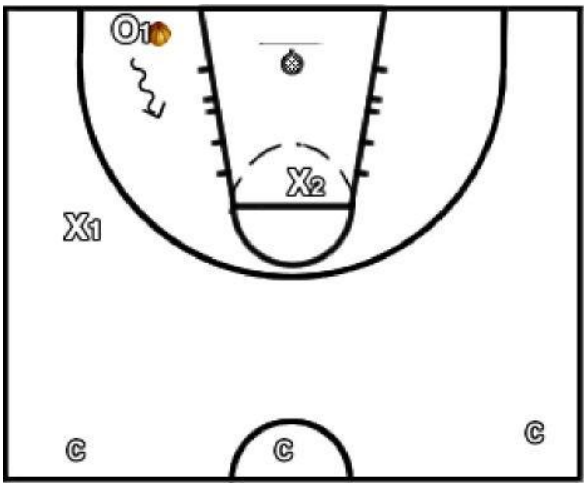






Protect & React Dribble Drill

The dribbler is trying to get to half court with the live dribble. The coach places himself or assistants at any of the three locations. As soon as the signal is given, and it will just be a hand signal for the ball, 01 must immediately react and deliver the appropriate pass exactly to the target.



The defenders can do whatever they like, without fouling, to stop 01 advancing the ball.

Part Three: Passing

Again, the points under consideration at this level are not the basic mechanics of passing but rather the type of pass relevant to the situation, the appropriateness of the pass and the ability to deliver the pass (for maximum efficiency) for the receiver to execute the shot; (a "shot pass").

The 'instinct' that has been exhibited by many of the great passers through history cannot be acquired by everyone; there is an innate ability which not every player is going to have. However, the more game-like practice a player can get, the more he / she will be exposed to, will experience and will have to cope with the many and varied passing situations that can occur in basketball.

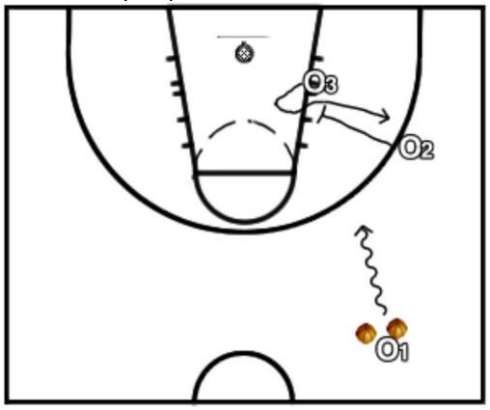
Eventually, through constant review and feedback by and from the coach along with video playback, the player will hopefully retain the knowledge and be able to "replay" the skill in his retentive memory thus enabling the recognition of the similar situation when it re-occurs in the future, and consequently then be able to duplicate the relevant and correct action (pass).

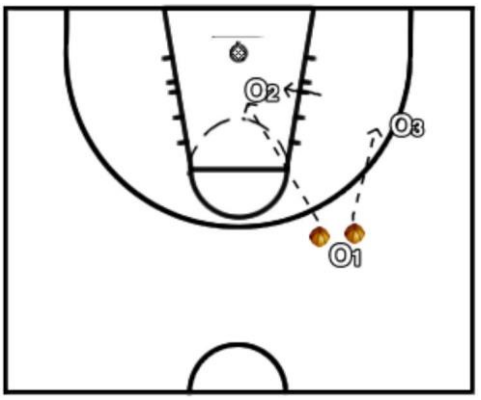
Considerations

1. Passing out of double teams:
    i. Perimeter
    ii. Post.
2. Passing after penetration dribble:
    i. Dish to cutters.
    ii. Kick to spot-up shooters.
3. Passing on the fast break.
4. Passing from the pick and roll situation (also reference to Dribbling section as this area has corresponding and cross-over applications).
5. Passing into low post from wing:
    i. Defence behind
    ii. Defence baseline side.
    iii. Defence topside.
    iv. Defence fronting.
6. Passing into the high post from wing:
    i. Flash cut.
    ii. Seal.
    iii. Back cut to basket.

2 Ball Pick and Pop Drill

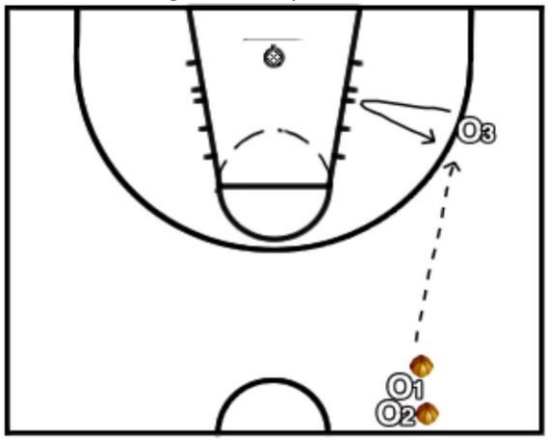
01 has to try to pass two basketballs at the same time, off the dribble, to the two situations.

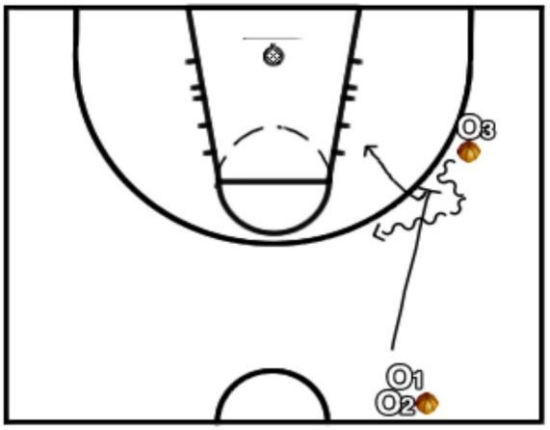




Pass, Pick, Pop Drill

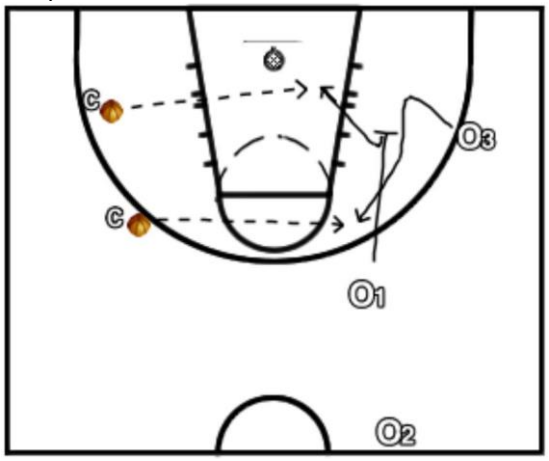
On ball Screen:





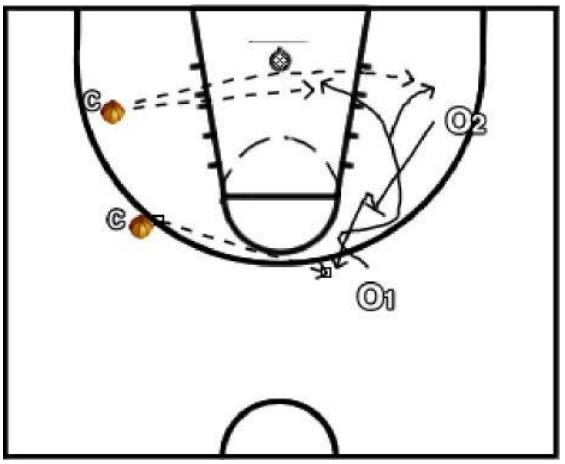
01 can pop or fade to perimeter (or roll to basket). 03 can pass to 01 for shot, or can pull up and shoot off the dribble.

Away From ball Screen:



01 can roll to basket for power move or can pop/fade to perimeter for skip pass and jumper.
02 must use screen topside and catch n shoot.
Rebound own shot, return ball to coach who passed to you, join the back of the other line.

Back Screen:



02 back screens for 01. 02 pop to perimeter for pass and catch n shoot.
01 can bump and fade off the screen or go backdoor for power move / alley-oop etc.

Part Four: Shooting

Shooting is critical to any team's success. It is imperative that teams are able to stretch the defence, forcing them to cover more of the court. The introduction of the new FIBA rule the 3pt line moves the line 50 cm further away from the basket to 6.75 m. Coaches should also be aware of a players ability for "finishing" or scoring in the key against pressure has been a weakness. Coaches need to analyse:

- A player's range – an appreciation of where on the floor he / she are likely to be successful and efficient.
- A player's percentage from various areas / spots on the court.
- The refinement and mastery of shooting form and technique.
- The ability to have a 'quick release'.

Considerations for your shooting sessions:

- Good form at all times.
- Competitive. Always keep score.
- Intensity. "Game shots, in game spots at game speed" Add defensive pressure.
- Chart and keep stats of players' percentages– make this available to the players – self motivating.
- Set a target of 60% for uncontested 2 point shots and 50% for uncontested 3 point shots.

Sample checklist for shooting progressions

1. Shooting under pressure.
2. Shooting off the dribble.
3. Guard shots: Off a pass. Off a screen.
4. Forward shots: Off a pass. Off a screen.
5. Post shots: Off a pass. Off a screen.
6. Various layup shots: Reverse, right and left hand Power lay up Straight ahead, finger roll, bank it.

Free Throw Shooting

Much of free throw shooting is mental / psychological. Obviously if a player does not have good shooting form, technique, mechanics, then that is a pre-requisite, it goes without saying.
But the coach must consider the psychology involved, from the player's pre-shot ritual through the ability to focus the mind to the non-distracted aim and focus on the target – these are all essentials to successful free throw shooting.

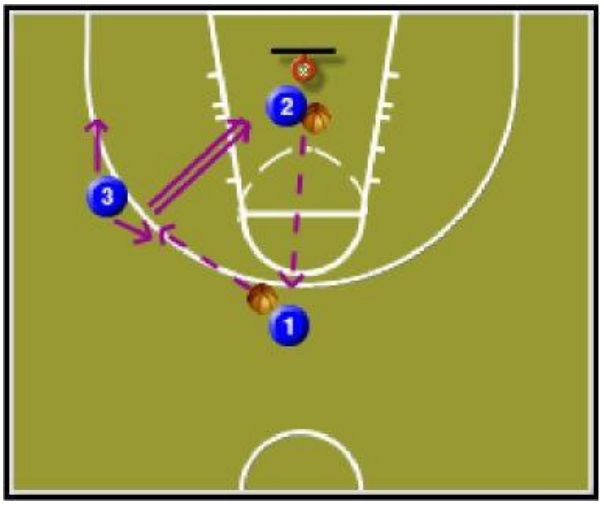
Have a benchmark for free throws at practice e.g. 80%.

2 Ball Shooting Drill

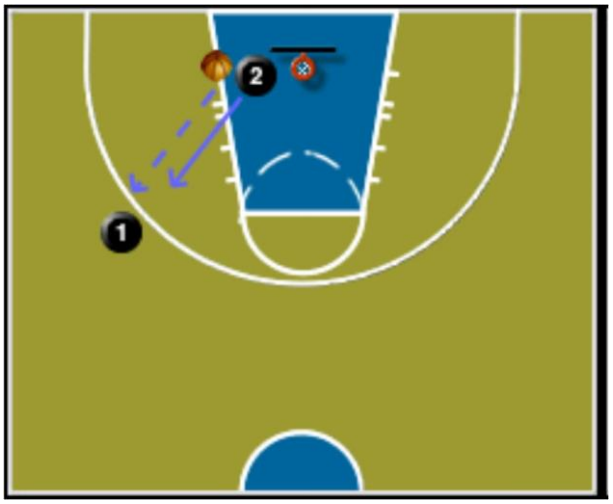
One player shoots, one player rebounds, the other player passes. Take 10 and rotate.

Shooter is moving from elbow to short corner on baseline and back and forth between these two spots.
Next, move elbow to elbow.

Repeat the drill in the same spots, but now take 3 pointers.



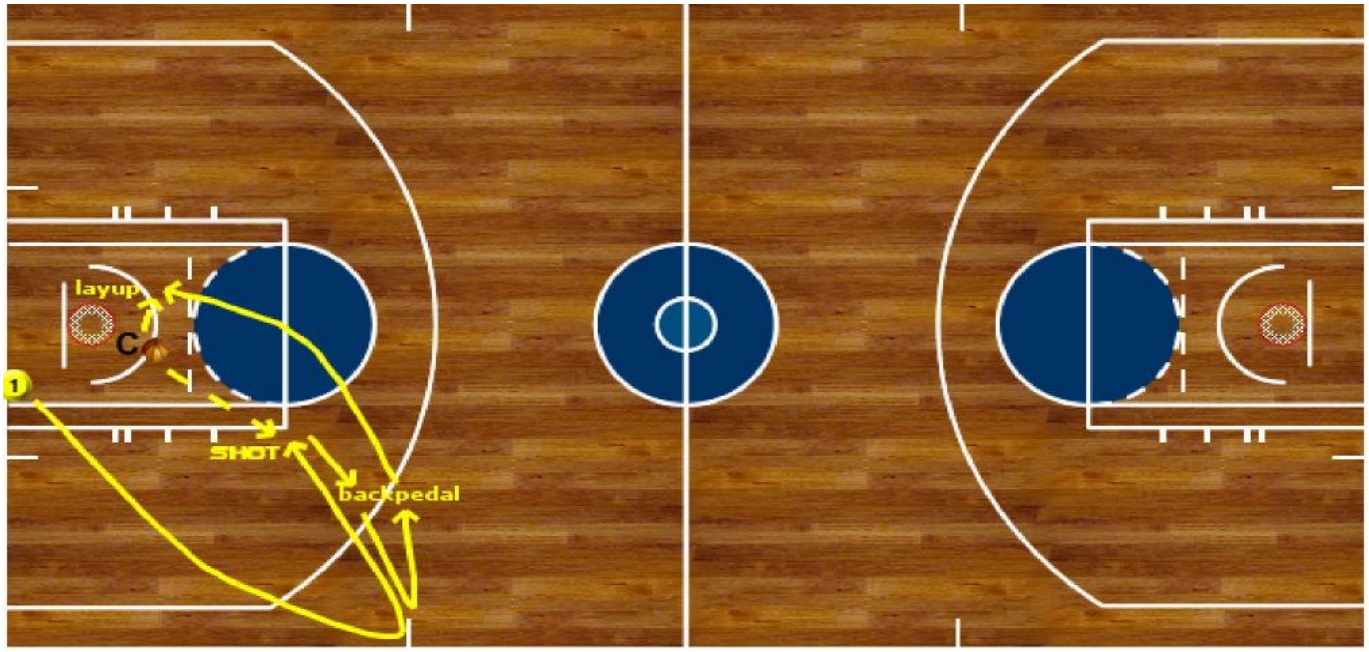
Close Out on Shot Drill



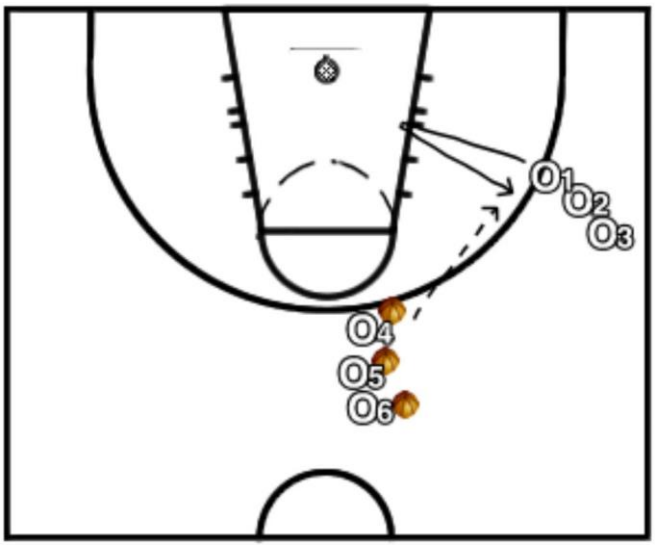
#2 will pass to #1 who has spotted up ready to shoot. #2 will follow the pass and "close out" on the shot using correct technique but not blocking the shot.
#1 will shoot it and motion towards the rebound. #2 will box out and rebound the ball. #1 spot up again, etc. Take 5 shots then rotate.

NBA Banana Drill

Player sprints a banana cut to a designated point near the sideline. Player hits that point with foot and sprints to elbow. Receives pass for jump shot. Shooter back-pedals at an angle back to the designated point. Player then sprints to receive ball for lay up. Asst. Coach / Team-mate passes and rebounds.



Team Spot Shooting Drill



Players must make a good V cut, make a good 'shot pass', catch n shoot.
Collect own rebound, and change lines.

1. Pass from point shoot from wing.
2. Pass from wing shoot from point.
3. Pass from guard spot shoot from short corner baseline.

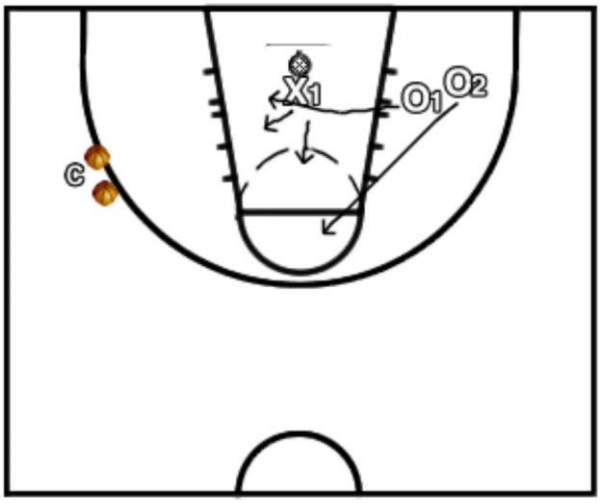
Part Five – Individual Defence

Whilst this is stressed as an important skill on the list of an individual player's fundamentals, all of the details will have been covered during the 'Team defence' module.

Considerations

1. Post defence
2. Pick and roll defence.
3. Hedging.
4. Help the helper.
5. Fanning or funnelling.
6. Trapping.
7. Run and jump.

Combo Post Defence Drill



01 will cut to low post, X1 must defend him.
Coach MAY throw pass in there, in which case it is 1 on 1.

When coach yells "GO! ", however, 02 will flash cut to high post.

X1 must come off of 01 and try to deflect the pass (bat it down) into 02.

If 02 catches the ball he must shoot it and X1 must get back down and box out 01.

If ball is batted down, then coach will enter into 01 on the block, X1 must get there and they go 1 on 1.

Part Six – Positional Play

Whilst it would be desirable to promote that all players should be able to perform all (fundamental) skills, there will come a point in time at which a player will be old enough and be, in part, also displaying the somatotype characteristics for the specialisation skills of a particular position on the basketball court.

Considerations

Guards

Dribble moves.
Perimeter shooting.
Entry passing: Guard to guard; Guard to forward; Guard to low post; Guard to high post.
Penetrate and dish.
Penetrate and kick.

Forwards

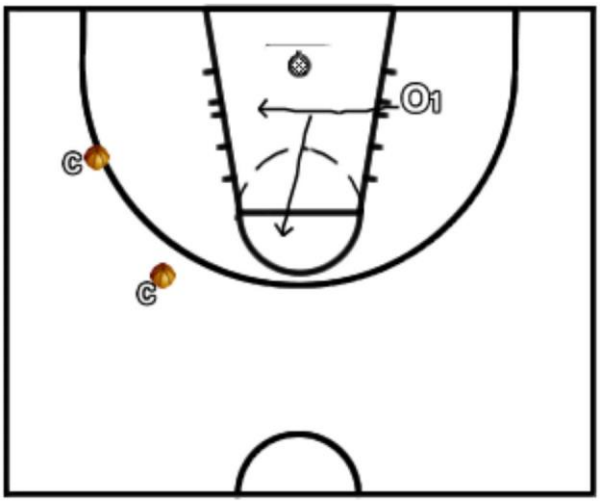
Getting open – wing and backdoor.
Perimeter shooting.
Drives to basket.
Passing into the low post.
Passing into the high post.
Rebounding.

Centres

Getting open:	Low post/ High post/ Reading the defence.
Post Position:	”sitting down” in low post /”swim stroke” / Giving a target.
Rebounding:	Tipping / Put backs.
High Post Moves:	Pivot and shoot / Shot fake and power / Shot fake and drive / Shot fake, one dribble and shoot.
Low Post Moves	Malone – drop step baseline Wilkins – drop step topside Sikma – inside pivot, jumper McHale – up and under move Schultz – up and under, reverse King – outside pivot, jumper Spin and Pin – inside seal.
Post Shots:	Power lay ups Pump fake and power Dunk – left, right, both Jump hook – left, right Hook shot Short jumper Reverse layup Bank shot Elbow jumpers Power dribble pull up jumper Power dunks – (from high post) – left, right, middle.

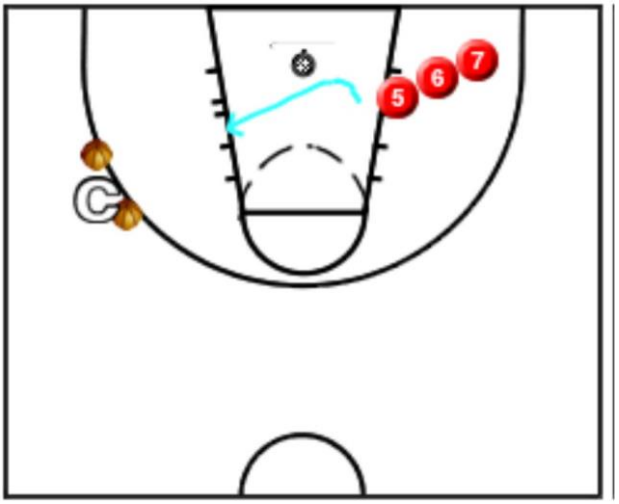
Combo Post Drill

01 will cut to low post, perform the specified move, rebound and outlet the ball back to coach and then flash up to high post, receive pass and make a high post move.



Post Move Series

This is the simplest of post move drills. Players take it in turn to cut across the lane and into the low post position. Players must have their baseline foot no lower than the second hash mark, and must be "sitting down in the post-up position", giving a good target. Only then will the coach pass them the ball, they make the appropriate move (see below), collect their own rebound and pass the ball back out to coach, then join the back of the line.



The Moves:

1. **Malone:** Ball fake to the foul line side, drop step baseline, power dribble, power lay up.
2. **Wilkins :** Ball fake toward the baseline, drop step inside, power dribble, jump hook.
3. **McHale:** Up and under move.
4. **Sikma :** Inside pivot, keep ball up high, shoot the jumper.
5. **Schultz :** The McHale plus reverse pivot and reverse dribble, drop step and power!
6. **King :** Head and shoulder fake one way, front pivot the other and shoot the turnaround jumper

Rebounding

Put Back Drill

Player tosses the ball up onto the glass for himself; rebounds it with good technique. Comes down with the ball, whilst 'chinning it', immediately goes back up and slams the ball against the backboard whilst still holding it in two hands. Comes back down and explodes back up to put the ball in the basket.
Repeat for a certain number or for time.

Tipping Drill

Player faces the backboard on one side of the rim. Tip the ball up onto the board repeatedly whilst jumping and coordinating the tip at the peak of the jump.

Go for 25 with right hand; 25 with left hand; 25 alternate hands.

Module: Game Coaching & Organisation

Introduction

The most important aspect of a player's development is the acquisition and then the constant practice of individual fundamental skills within the context of a game.

The UKCC Level 3 Basketball Programme will help you develop:

- Knowledge and skills about the techniques and tactics that are required in the modern game
- Ability to plan and monitor coaching programmes, to build relationships, to use questioning skills effectively as well as to continue to hone your basic interventional skills that help players in training and competition to develop as people and players (e.g. how to organise practice, explain, demonstrate, observe, analyse and provide feedback).

Part One: Motivation

There are several areas that the coach must be responsible for and these will vary in importance depending on, amongst other factors, the age and level of ability of the players, the time of the season and whether it is practice time or game time.

The issues here are often complex because whilst the coach is responsible for the whole team, that team is made up of 12 individuals and of course the coach and their support staff as well. Each player will or may respond to a different stimulus, ultimately the ensuing response will be the resulting behaviour or action. This may or may not be in harmony with the desired team responses and conflict or confusion may arise. The coach needs to be motivated in order to motivate and again this will manifest itself in different ways with different coaches.

At the risk of being over-simplistic, a brief working definition of motivation could be;

> *a concept used to describe the factors within an individual which arouse, maintain and channel behaviour towards a goal.*

It is commonly recognised that there exists, external (extrinsic) and internal (or intrinsic) motivation; the goal of most coaches would be to have a prevalence of players with intrinsic motivation. (This will be discussed in more detail within Module Six).

Here are some practical pointers from Rick Pitino from "Success Is A Choice" (Broadway Books. 1997).

> *"Build self-esteem in your players. As a coach you can expect great things from people who feel good about themselves. Once you have created a great work ethic and you've learned to motivate yourself, you see yourself as someone of value, someone who is going to be more successful, someone who is going to win, because you have worked for it.*
> *Motivators enable people to dream. Set demanding goals; it is going to be a long and difficult journey, but the opportunity is there.*
> *Always be positive; negative people create negative feelings. As a coach you must build on positives not negatives.*
> *You can condition yourself to be more positive, you can control both your attitude and your mood. The more trying the times the more positive you must be."*

Practice

For the purposes of this module, the coach's motivational expertise will probably have to begin during practice. Getting the players to enjoy the practice experience whilst working hard to achieve the mastery of the fundamental skills of the game, plus the underpinning importance of developing as a team, is the main task.

The objective is accomplished (primarily) through the continuous repetition of drills. Repetition must be done with high levels of interest and enthusiasm and this is accomplished through self-analysis of performance within the drills, along with guided discovery of learning outcomes.

The coach must evaluate the practices to determine if they are designed to prepare the individual player physically, technically, mentally and emotionally.

The coach must ensure that practices are interesting and kept up-beat and positive.
When making corrections, avoid nagging or carrying a grudge; take the corrective action, give constructive criticism and move on.
Reward and praise players for positive responses; too often the players tend to only hear from the coach when they've done something wrong and the coach is coming in to correct the fault.
It is important to set the tone for practice, have a good up-beat beginning to every practice. Also, it is equally important to end practice on a positive note.

Pre-Game

The coach may try various methods to motivate the team, these may or may not have the desired effect. Many players will have their own, personal and sometimes private 'rituals' that they use to motivate themselves for the contest.
(Once again, this will be discussed in more detail within Module Six).

Whatever methods are employed, they usually have only temporary value. A recent pertinent example of this comes from the 2006 NCAA Tournament and the improbable journey and story of George Mason University reaching the Final Four.

The following excerpts, used with permission from author Dan Steinberg of The Washington Post, from his article 'How To Win Games and Influence People' April 1 2006.
In reference to Head Coach Jim Larranaga:

> *"Jimmy really understands that every word he says in practice is going to have some impact on a player's mind, the way they're thinking, the way they're feeling. Said sport psychologist Bob Rotella."*

Often, the reality is that attempts to motivate players do not have the desired effect.

> *"Before practice, Larranaga will offer a 'thought of the day' to his players, which they promptly forget.*
> *'Something about having the extra mile and not worrying about the traffic ahead', Campbell (one of the players) said of Friday's message. 'I got this', forward Chris Fleming said, before drawing a blank. 'The extra mile, there is very little traffic, something like that'. Forward Will Thomas said, 'I have no idea what he's talking about'.*
> *Attempting to fire up the team, George Mason's assistant coaches once gave the team managers a box full of jelly doughnuts and told them to hide in the bathroom until the pregame speech. On cue, the managers emerged, attacking the doughnuts with their mouths. 'It looked like we were ripping into flesh' manager Sean Passey said, 'It looked like blood, and it was all over our faces and we were screaming. The players just started dying, they were laughing hysterically'.*
> *Before the Washington regional Final against U Conn., Larranaga delivered his 'Mission Impossible' routine in which the CAA was said to stand for the 'Connecticut Assassin Association'. This, remember, was motivation.*

'When he finished his speech last time, we were all dying laughing' Fleming said. 'It wasn't even like he pumped us up. It was like he was doing a comedy skit'.
Their recent successes aside, players still roll their eyes at some of Larranaga's gimmicks, like that preseason butterfly release ceremony, which was held on campus.
'Half of the people's butterflies were dead already' guard Gabe Norwood remembered. 'It was pretty embarrassing. We were hoping no cars would come by or anything like that'.
Even the speeches have gotten pretty repetitive for some veterans. 'All of them sound the same to me, I've been here for so long', guard Lamar Butler said.
But the Patriots clearly have played with a potent mixture of confidence and good humour this month, and players said their attitude is directly connected to their coach's motivational flourishes. 'We all feel as if this is our opportunity, and we all want to win a National Championship, so our confidence is just skyrocketing right now'. Campbell said, 'Coach L has everything to do with it'."

Game time

The coach should try to keep players motivated with constructive and positive feedback using comments and gestures. The challenge for the basketball coach is keeping 'everyone' motivated; because having substitutes sitting on the bench, who all want to be on court playing, can oftentimes be a de-motivating factor.

Half time

The "motivational gimmicks" that some coaches employ during some games at half time may or may not work. Once again, it is a case of knowing and understanding your personnel and the situation and making judgements and decisions based on what may be or is required at the time.

Post game

Keeping the players motivated after the game is a finely tuned balancing act depending oftentimes on the result and outcome of the game. The coach must be skilled in delivering the appropriate messages so as to maintain the players' interest, spirit, positive attitude etc.

PART TWO: DISCIPLINE

The discipline here does not (necessarily) refer to the behaviour responses normally associated with players' actions etc., rather than to the rigours of planning, preparation, organisation and teaching by the coach within the programme. One of the most important slogans for coaches (and players for that matter) is; "By failing to prepare, we are preparing to fail".

Prior planning and preparation for the season, practice and the game, with, meticulous attention to every detail is the key to effective coaching.

To quote Rick Pitino again (from "Success Is A Choice"):

> *"Achievement and success only comes with and through hard work. All great teams, all great people have one common denominator, a second to none work ethic. The intense effort to achieve is always there.*
> *Discipline can be many things. It can be punishment. It can be hard work. To me it is a code of conduct, an organized plan of attack. Discipline is our plan, our awareness of where we are staring from and what road to take to arrive at our destination. There's more to it than simply making the effort, you must have a purpose.*
> *Establish good habits. 'Practice makes perfect' is slightly off the mark. Perfect practice makes perfect. Proper fundamentals are necessary to developing good habits, repetition is the key. Create good habits, then repeat them over and over until they become second nature. This is the discipline that's such an integral part of deserving victory. This is the only way to sustain a high level of excellence."*

Striving for excellence, striving for success is a never ending process and the coach must reflect this within his/her organisation, preparation and teaching. The coach should be a student of the game and learn as much as possible about the game. Acquiring basketball knowledge requires alertness and a desire to seize as many opportunities to learn and observe the game as possible from the use of television, video tape, attending clinics and seminars, visiting with fellow coaches and being creative with the situation and material available.

The answer to success in coaching relies predominantly on basic sound teaching abilities. The ability to teach the fundamental skills is critical and the players must understand that their natural ability can only take them to a certain level.

Effective teaching is the process by which planned learning outcomes have been learned to a state of automatic reaction. Learning is maximized in an environment of self-analysis and drills must take account of this. Basketball intelligence should be worked on as actively as physical conditioning. Total preparation of the mental, emotional and physical aspects of athletes will permit greater technical preparation.

The coach must always consider the individual differences of age, playing level, experience, personality, emotional stability and make-up of the players. When the coach steps on the floor, know what you are going to teach, how you are going to teach it and why. Also, know what you want the players to learn and how and why you are going to empower them to learn it.

The players must be not only physically reactive but mentally aware as they repetitively perform the drills that are the basis of the coach's teaching. Players who learn for themselves the 'how' and 'why' of doing something, will perform with the most confidence. The coach should be constantly trying to improve teaching techniques. Positive instruction is far better than negative. E.g. Instead of saying "Don't throw the ball away" says, "Let's concentrate on making better passes".

Show enthusiasm during teaching, this is contagious and will motivate the players further. Praise as often as possible and when criticism is necessary, make sure it is constructive. Coaches should bear in mind that players can recognise disorganisation in a programme and this adversely affects their efforts. Well planned practice sessions in which all players are kept busy in useful drills, a competent coaching staff all of whom are involved in the teaching process, and off season programmes designed for optimum player development reflect the type of good organisation that contributes to player motivation.

Part Three: Management

Coaching is about man management, leadership and motivation, as well as the technical and tactical aspects. Coaches must be continually trying to inspire and motivate their players to excel on and off the court. Coaches should always try to stay positive and upbeat around their team, they must have the courage of their convictions and display this, they must have and show passion for the game and for the development of their players and they must lead and motivate everyone in the programme towards the desired goals through their positive actions and example.

The basic principles of good business management can be applied also to basketball coaching. Here are some of them:

- Catch players (people) doing something right, or nearly right.
- Players (people) who feel good about themselves produce good results.
- Regard everyone as a potential winner.
- Success is often dependent on doing the commonplace (fundamentals) unusually well.
- Recognise the attitude demotivators.
- Coaches have to be motivated to motivate.
- Participation, progression (improvement), challenges and group belonging are all motivators.
- Show players how being goal-orientated develops drive and will-power.
- Promote and explain positive thinking.
- Ensure the players realize that it is desire and not ability that makes people succeed.
- Stress the value of persistence and perseverance.

Leadership is what the coach should be producing and providing. In order to be effective he/she will need the following traits:

- Be self motivated.
- Have a good sense of fairness.
- Have definite plans; prior, proper preparation.
- Be able to make decisions and stick with/ by them.
- Be a master of detail.
- Be determined to 'fight' for his/her beliefs.

If the coach is being successful with his leadership and management, the team (programme) will reflect this. Through the examples set and the environment created by the coach, the progressive thinking of all members of the group should / will produce the following questions:

- Do I appraise my work life, my private life and my social life with "How can I do it better?"
- Am I worth more as a person/player/coach today than last week?
- Am I following an organized personal development programme to increase my value to others?
- Do I make a positive contribution on and off the court to the team/club?
- Am I setting an excellent example to/for my team members/teammates?

Finally, here are a few principles for motivational leadership:

- Set high goals and actively set about achieving them.
- Expect to be judged by results.
- Expect to be criticised.
- Do something different/better tomorrow.

Part Four: Coaching Styles

There are traditionally three styles: autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire which were covered on the previous level one and two courses.

The democratic style is the most common perhaps but there is little merit in the laissez-faire style as this allows the players to do what they want.

Autocratic style – commanding:

- The coach decides what is to be done.
- The athletes are not involved in the decision making.
- The coach outlines what to do and how to do it.

Autocratic style – promoting:

- The coach decides what is to be done.
- The coach explains what is required and the objectives.
- The athletes are encouraged to ask questions to confirm understanding.
- The coach defines what to do and how to do it.

Democratic style – sharing:

- The coach outlines the training requirements to the players.
- The coach invites ideas or suggestions from the players.
- The coach makes the decision based on these suggestions.
- The coach defines what to do and how to do it.

Democratic style – enabling:

- The coach outlines the requirement to the players.
- The coach defines the training conditions.
- The athletes discuss to explore possible solutions.
- The players make the decision.
- The players define what to do and how to do it.

There are some alternative styles, as identified by Woods, B. (Applying Psychology To Sport, Hodder & Stoughton, 1998)

Command style – direct instruction, coach dictates.
Reciprocal style – athlete takes some responsibility for their own development – monitored by the coach.
Problem solving style – athlete solves problems set by the coach.
Guided discovery – athlete has the freedom to explore various options.

Image and Behaviour

Often in most situations, the coach is 'exposed' within the public arena, be it at the higher levels with fans, media and management scrutiny; or at the lower levels with parents, local government agencies etc. Clearly no matter at what level the players and team members, others within the sport are constant observers of the coach, his methodology, his behaviour, what he says and how he conducts himself on and off the court.

There is a fair amount of responsibility that is associated with the label 'coach' and this must be considered very seriously and in relevant detail by those who would be so named.

One's image should be a reflection of the positive character and sociological traits as well as the desirable sporting traits that we as coaches should be promoting to our players. Coaches cannot adhere to the "do as I say not as I do" theory; because what they say and do are equally as important and should be based morally, ethically and athletically on sound, acceptable, tried and tested and desirable principles.

The coach should strive to be a beacon within the community of a positive and guiding catalyst, an example to others. When the coach is on the court, practice and games, his/her behaviour is once again on show for the 'whole world' to see. If the behaviour is anti-social, unacceptable etc., this is detrimental to the macrocosm that is the sport and all those within it.
Moreover, the coach's undesirable behaviour may detract from the players' achievements, and may have a negative and deleterious affect on performance.

Conversely, the positive, desirable and (generally) acceptable behaviour will enhance and promote the perceived success on and off the court of players. Team, club and of course the coach himself.

(cf. Dunning, M "Hey Coach! Are You Behaving Yourself?" www.bcauk.com)

Communication

It is universally agreed that the coach must be able to communicate in order to be successful and effective, at any and all levels.
Clearly, one needs to be able to communicate with many different people at many different levels and using, perhaps, different forms of communication.

"Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing" (Rollo May).
It is not always about what is said either. The non-verbal communication is equally as important oftentimes as the audible, oratorical or conversational exchanges.

Optimal communication between the team and the coach cannot occur without complete trust. Trust is a perception by athletes that their coach would not do anything that was not in their best interest.

Great coaches realise that trust does not mean that there will always be agreement with decisions that they make. However, when their decisions are made, the best interests of the players and their goals are considered first and foremost.

Great coaches usually have disciplined teams with clear and well-defined roles, rules and responsibilities. But great coaches communicate a feeling of trust and respect by avoiding the desire to always be right.

Communicating with players should be a regular part of any coach's responsibility. It should not occur only when players are in trouble or have done something wrong. When coaches lead by episode, the player often responds emotionally and resists the coach's efforts to communicate. The player may resent the coach's comments and disregard them, or seek revenge upon the coach later in time.

The coach has to be able to appropriately communicate with many people who are directly and indirectly involved with the team and the sport…only then can he/she be effectively doing their job.

Part Five: Preparation

Practice

There is no substitute, if a coach wants to be effective and successful, for the total preparation and the meticulous advanced planning of the practice schedule. This is when and where the coach will have the most influence and make the most valuable contribution to the development of his/her players.

Total preparation of the mental, emotional and physical aspects of players will permit greater technical preparation, and this should be taken into account when preparing every practice session.

The coaching objective is accomplished through continuous repetition of drills. Repetition must be done with high levels of interest and enthusiasm. The coach must be constantly teaching all aspects of the objectives, not only the correct execution of skills, but also the relevant details of what it takes to produce / prepare the excellent player; superb physical conditioning, along with the mental and emotional skills that must also be acquired.

The coach must evaluate every practice to determine if he/she is achieving the desired outcomes. It is up to the coach to ensure that the correct atmosphere and environment prevails for and during practice; every second is precious and the diligent and meticulous planning will allow and promote this ethos.

The practice habits of the players must be of the highest standards and each of them must adhere to the mantra of "best effort" at all times.

Game Preparation

Once again, the meticulous attention to every detail by the coach is an important factor in the success of any coach, player, team and programme. Different coaches have different ways of approaching the preparation process for the up-coming game and opponent. Some coaches simply concentrate on their own team's strategies and execution of them, believing that the opponent will have to adjust to 'us', and if 'we' execute well at both ends of the floor then 'we' will have a better chance of victory.

However, most coaches will probably spend some practice time during the week before the game, highlighting, working on and strategizing some of the opponent's strengths, weaknesses and tendencies. The theory being that if 'we' know what 'they' are going to (tend to) do and when 'they' are going to do it, then 'we' can counter it and promote errors and mistakes. There is merit in both approaches, and once again the limiting factor is time and the most efficient use of it. This decision has to be made by the coach.

One of the most useful, and recently, most thorough sources of information is the scouting report. Individual player statistics, biography, tendencies, strengths and weaknesses can be chronicled in every minute detail. As can the team's information. This is supported by video footage of games along with individual video clips of isolated skills, moves and sequences.

All this information can be packaged in a useful and user-friendly format for coaches and players to scrutinize, study and digest in the days and hours leading up to the game. The coach will then mirror much of this information physically on the practice floor.
The preparation for each game is a critical part of a coach's and team's schedule. The innovative use of modern technology can make everything more efficient and oftentimes, clearer and easier to analyze and understand.

Life Preparation

There are many of life's lessons to be learned as a member of a basketball team. One of the responsibilities as a coach is to expose the players to these as much as one can.

Through good coaching a player learns the value of hard work, sacrifice, personal and group discipline, cooperation, honesty and fair play, competitiveness, enthusiasm, determination, personal pride, integrity, punctuality and other values that contribute to success in life.

Winning should be emphasized. Not the 'winning at all costs' philosophy, but winning fairly under the rules of the game. All successful teams are disciplined. Without discipline team cohesion breaks down, team spirit is destroyed and physical condition suffers.
Discipline is necessary both on and off the court. Motivation is important to team success. Establishing team and individual goals are good motivational tools that help develop the desire, pride, confidence and determination necessary for winning play.

Part Six: Game Coaching

The skill and expertise of the coach with regard to coaching within the game is developed over time. The more experience the coach gets the more games he/she coaches, provided that he is evaluating and analysing his performance, decision-making etc., after each game and learning from it, then the better he/she will become at game coaching.

Most of the influence a coach can/will have however on a particular game will occur at the practices prior to that game. There is very little a coach can do during the actual game to win it or to try not to lose it. The players and their execution will decide the outcome and result of the game, of this there is no doubt. Of course, this is assuming that the coach has not made any or some very bad, negative or undesirable decisions or actions during the game which directly contributed to the result. This does happen sometimes, but rarely.

The psychological aspects of game preparation are important but varied and complex. (More on this subject in Module Six).

Individual players will have their own personal and idiosyncratic ways, rituals etc. to prepare themselves for the game, as do coaches. For some, this mental preparation (arousal) may begin a day or more prior to the actual game and involve visualisation and other techniques.

The coach is responsible for the team's mental state of readiness and preparation. The cerebral elements that must exist alongside all the physical preparation have to be presented by the coach to the players in a detailed yet non confusing way.

The strategies and tactics to be employed during the game may have, in theory at least, already been included by the coach in 'the game plan'. However, one element of game coaching is the ability by the coach to be reactive, flexible and adaptable to game situations. Decisions have to be made oftentimes in split seconds dependent on many varied factors that occur and exist within every basketball game. Whilst every coach will have a time-tested philosophy that he/she will base many of his/her in-game decisions on, nevertheless it is often the case that certain rigid principles cannot be adhered to nor are they applicable to a certain situation at a certain time.

This is one reason why game coaching is not an 'exact science' and once again, it is experience that allows the coach to be able to make (crucial) the (correct) decisions.

The use of time outs and substitutions can also be strategic within the context of the game. With regard to time outs, the coach must ensure that these are 'managed' for maximum efficiency. The players must be instructed on the protocol of the time out huddle, they must listen attentively to the coach. The coach should be precise in the information he/she imparts during this very short but important period of time.

Only two to three points of emphasis should be addressed. The players must be asked if they understand. If the coach is going to diagram a play, then it need to be clear to the players. Time outs can be used to stop 'a run' by the opponents, to alter tempo, to provide rest for your players, to change strategy.

The substitution patterns and use of substitutes is always an emotive and a 'controversial' topic in basketball, at all levels. By the very nature of the game, some players will not play very much, if at all sometimes. Yet every player wants to play the whole game! The coach has a dilemma here and one which needs to be managed and handled sensitively and skilfully.

Many coaches have a systematic and regular rotation of players which they will adhere to every game. In this system, at least the players know 'where they stand', that is, they will know that they will get into the game to play and also when that is likely to occur. Some coaches will utilize most if not all of their players because they are demanding / utilizing a full court pressure defence style of play. Many other coaches rely on their best 5 to 7 players only each game. A coach should have a philosophy about this and be, as much as possible, fairly consistent about he/she substitutes from game to game.

The constant and on-going education and development of players should prevail during games as well as on the practice floor etc. Each player who gets substituted out of the game should receive some form of communication from at least one member of the coaching staff. This should generally take the form of a constructive criticism along with a positive statement, perhaps technical, strategic or motivational.

It is important that the coach is in control and has certain protocols in place for efficient management and discipline of each and every game. Establish a game day ritual for the players and coaching staff. There will be one for home games and a different one for away games. Ensure that the timings for every pre-game activity are set and known and adhered to by all personnel.

Have a set of rules and rituals for the pre-game warm ups; the player introductions; the time out huddles; substitution protocol; role of team manager(s); statistician(s); assistant coaches; dress codes.

The coach must display exemplary behaviour before, during and after games, with media, officials, (parents), fans etc. The behaviour, attitude and decorum of the coach on the sidelines is under constant scrutiny by his players, the referees, the fans, the media, the club and league officials and should therefore be of a high moralistic standard.

Module: Team Preparation

Introduction

If the coach is not organized then neither will the team be. If the team is not organized then it cannot be successful and cannot win. In order for effective teaching / coaching to occur, the coach must ensure that his / her prior planning, the perfect preparation, is meticulously formulated on a daily basis for practices and games.

The old saying, “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail” is a truism that historically and practically is very relevant for coaches and players alike. Coach Bob Knight said, “The will to win has always been overrated as a means of doing so. The will to prepare and the ability to execute are of far greater importance”. Implicit in that statement is the notion that no matter what your talent level is there is no substitute for the hard work that must go into being physically and mentally prepared for competition.

The coach will guide this process but he / she must also be a willing participant in it; the hard working players who will sacrifice time and effort also like to see, and will appreciate the coach who has done and is doing the same.

Here are some thoughts / points to consider pertaining to the preparation of your team:

1. You must work hard everyday to promote your system to your players.
2. Work on fundamentals as well as game situations at every practice.
3. Don’t place limitations on what your players can achieve. The ability of players can always be improved if they are willing to put in the effort and work hard everyday.
4. Communicate with your coaching staff and players. Ask them what they think about the philosophy and the system.
5. Don’t waste time dwelling on players’ deficiencies.
6. Be concerned with what your players are doing away from the basketball court. If they are responsible, disciplined and consistent off the court, it will carry over to the basketball court; this can help you win.
7. You must be a communicator, not only with your players; talk to other coaches, go to clinics, read, review what you’ve done, observe other coaches in various situations. Keep up with the changing nature of the game. Put the time in – necessary for achieving success.
8. Stress to the players that you don’t want them making the same mistake twice. Practice doesn’t make perfect, only perfect practice makes perfect.
9. Set goals. Make them realistic and achievable. Set short term and long term goals.
10. Ensure your team is in great condition.
11. It’s the little things, the details that win games and championships. Be prepared.

Areas of Emphasis

The Areas of Emphasis: Guidelines for Coaching is the first step in refocusing and co-ordinating basketball coaching in Britain. It is only a part of the greater solution to better and more effective teaching and coaching in the UK. Combined with the establishment of a wider base of player development programs focused on teaching the basic skills and concepts, it will springboard British basketball to higher standards of player development and performance. These Areas of Emphasis are the “what is important now” for basketball in this country. They are the immediate focus for coaching, teaching and development of
British players for the future.

While there will be discussion, debate and further clarification of these areas of emphasis, there is no doubt that these guidelines are most important for our British players’ future. At present the majority of our players have not been prepared and developed to their full potential within the UK. This is a point with which every basketball coach at any level in Britain should be most concerned.

Part One: Practice

Planning & Organisation.

Most of the coach's influence on his / her team is going to be exercised on the practice floor. The results of the work done here will reveal themselves in the games. (Talent level and the ability of the players relative to the opponents of course play a part here!).

"The way you practice is the way you play" is another truism which the coach must promote and the players must believe, understand and 'buy into'.

The coach has very little influence on the way the players will actually execute and perform during the game, therefore the practice environment and practice time is a 'sanctuary', a special place, a most precious and valuable period of preparation.

There cannot and must not be any distractions or wasted time. There should be a required standard of behaviour, a work ethic and a respect for the game.

"Practice habits" is the term to encompass the requisite and desirable qualities and behaviour.

In order to get the most out of the practice session, plan meticulously for every minute of practice, which includes time before and after practice also. Your efficiency and that of your players will increase with this planning.
Over time this investment of effort will exhibit itself in the on-court performance, efficiency, work ethic and eventually, success of the players and team.

In addition to planning, the organisation of the practice schedule is a key factor that is in terms of the management of staff, equipment, and periodisation for drills, scrimmage etc.

Considerations:

1. Vary and change your drills and the order of your drills.
2. Keep score on all shooting drills.
3. 'Perfection' is the result of execution and repetition.
4. Dynamic flexibility stretching at beginning of practice; static stretching at end of practice during cool down.
5. Keep drills short 5 – 10 minutes.
6. Coach's responsibility is to teach.
7. Sometimes, introduce new concepts, strategies at the end of practice when players are tired. Forcing players to concentrate when they are tired will carry over to games and help winning.
8. Positive reaction to stress and tiredness should be simulated during practice.
9. Emphasize fundamentals. Demand correct execution at all times, through constant repetition.

Use of Practice Time.

There are two main considerations for the practice session:

(i) Skill development.

(ii) Game preparation.

With regard to skill development, this must be further broken down into individual and team. The practical work to be done will fall into three categories:

(i) Drills.

(ii) Controlled scrimmage.

(iii) Review of scouting reports for upcoming opponent.

The coach must decide how much time he / she is going to devote to preparing specifically for an opponent. With limited practice time, this is a questionable use of it. Also, when and how are the players going to work on their conditioning? Again, the decision for the coach, how much actual practice time can he / she afford to devote specifically to this? In the ideal situation, of daily practice, then these issues are not a major factor, as there is enough time to devote to all areas of consideration.

Drills.

"Drills are the mother of skill", they are the vehicles through which coaches will teach and players will learn, acquire and sustain skills. It is only through repetitious practice that skills are "grooved" that is, become habitual. The adage "practice makes permanent" is a very important thing to remember when drilling…"only perfect practice makes perfect" is the maxim.

Considerations:

1. Drills should be simple and competitive and should cover as many techniques as possible.
2. Drills for fundamentals, simulating game conditions whenever possible, should be the staple of every practice.
3. Don't use too many drills and "drills for drills sake"; make them applicable to your offensive and defensive philosophy.
4. Drills are good only when they are completely understood by the players. Give explanations. Praise the players who are performing correctly. Analyze and correct any mistakes.
5. Keep drills short and interesting. Players should be interested in seeking to attain perfection of the fundamentals.
6. There are three steps to learning: (i) The player must be interested and ready to learn. The coach can only teach the fundamentals to a fully attentive and receptive player. Stress accuracy before speed. (ii) Practice and repetition. (iii) Examination ie. performing in the game.
7. Teaching of technique: (i) Coach should demonstrate – explain the mechanics and relevance to team play and philosophy. (ii) Players practice the drill slowly until movements have been mastered, coach should analyze, correct, constructively criticize. (iii) Players should go "game speed".
8. Coaches must be constantly observant and make corrections immediately. Demand near perfect or perfect performance from every player.
9. Perform as many drills as possible under game conditions or under some kind of pressure.

Scrimmage Time.

A significant amount of the practice should be given over to the actual playing of the game; scrimmage time must be utilized well and usefully in an efficient, coach-led and meaningful way.
Having ' controlled scrimmage' or a 'conditioned game' is of more benefit to the players and the team. Here, the coach can highlight or emphasize particular aspects of the offensive or defensive strategies that need to be concentrated upon.
The players are thus more focussed and can pay particular attention to the execution of those specified areas.
Always keep score and try to make the scrimmage significant, relevant and meaningful to and for the players and of course, the team.

Another example of a useful and popular alternative within the scrimmage time, although this needs to be used infrequently, is the "situational scrimmage". This is where the coach will describe a game situation, the two teams now have to play out that scenario and make the necessary and relevant adjustments and decisions as well as the execution of these, in order to try to 'win' that game.

General Thoughts.

1. No wasted time – ever! Have 'active rest' e.g. shoot free throws.
2. Allow sufficient water breaks depending on length of practice, age group, temperature in the gym.
3. Name the drills; get players used to the ones that you are going to tend to use almost every practice.
4. Use all / as many baskets as you can / have. Avoid players waiting in drill lines.
5. Include work on individual fundamentals and conditioning at every practice. Also, shooting drills.
6. As a guide, split practice up so that you always include two thirds of the time for skill development, stretching, conditioning and one third of the time for controlled scrimmage.
7. Practices should be no longer than approximately two and a half hours.

Part Two: Strategy – Team Tactics

The coach has to make up his / her mind, based on one's own philosophy and beliefs and also the type of personnel on the team, exactly what the team is going to run and execute on the floor.
Under consideration should be the following:

1. Offence.
2. Defence.
3. Transition.
4. Late game situations.
5. Free throw situations.
6. Out of bounds.
7. Last shot strategy.
8. Special situations.

The type of offence and defence the coach chooses and the team employs has already been discussed in previous modules; suffice to say, that the aims and objectives of all the details of the offences and defences must be made clear to and understood by all personnel.

However, within the overall strategy for these two areas of the game, there must be some attention paid and practice time devoted to a couple of further details. For example, on offence when a play breaks down, what needs to happen? Do you want a certain player to have the ball? Is it a 'clear out' situation? At what point in the shot clock do you want penetration?

On defence, have you opted for full court or half court? Is it going to be pressure or sagging? If it is pressure you would like, is it man for man or zone? Are you trapping? Fanning? Funnelling? What do you want to do on the in-bounder? If it is full court pressure, when and how will you fall back into and what are the rotations for, the quarter court defence? Will you have a signal? If so, who calls it?

If you want to double team the post player (or for that matter a perimeter player), when is it going to happen? Where from? Do you want to exclusively front low post?

These are small, but important details that must be made clear to and practised by all players.

How about your transition game?

What do you want to do on offence to defence? If it is a missed shot, do you want to pressure the rebounder or the outlet pass receiver? If so with whom? Do you have a designated player? Where will you send your one and two men? (i.e. the guards).

On defence to offence transition, on an opponent's made field goal, do you have a designated in-bounder? Will it be inbounded to one man only? (Pressure permitting). How do you want to get it out and in?
What are your wing men doing up court? Crossing or popping to wings / corners?

Late game, with two minutes remaining, what is your strategy if your team is up? How about if it is down?
The players need to know, and have practised e.g. clock management, score management, when and who to foul (if necessary), when not to foul.
Do you have a delay game or 'stall' offence? (e.g. 4 corners).

On free throw situations, do you want to utilize for example a sideline fast break? Will it be only after a made free throw or either? If you are down 2 with only one free throw and almost no time remaining, do you want to purposely miss the free throw and try to get a put-back field goal? How will you do this?

Defensively, will you ensure you line up your two players on the side of the opponent's strongest rebounder and 'pinch' him in with both guys? In which case, who is going to box out the shooter?

On offensive out of bounds situations, do you want to aggressively try to score or just get the ball in safely? What are the options?

On the defensive out of bounds, what is your strategy regarding changing the defence? How about the in-bounder, are you going to guard him? Never? What about with only a few seconds remaining (shot clock or game clock)? Who will you put there?

What is the strategy for offensive out of bounds with full shot clock and with less than 5 seconds on shot clock or game clock?

The next strategy to discuss is the last shot scenario. Again, the coach must prepare the players at the offensive end and also, if they have to defend the opponent's last shot.
How to manage the clock? What shot do we want, need?
Defensively, do we want to foul, not foul? (Never foul the jump shooter though).
What defence are we in? What offence are we running?
Are we in the bonus yet? Are they?

These scenarios must all be discussed with the players and can be "stage-managed" at practice.

Finally, there are special situations that may arise, for example, certain players who are in foul trouble at certain times of the game; what to do when the team gets into the bonus situation; decisions about utilizing combination defences.

Part Three: Pre-Season & Off-Season

Out of season development and maintenance of skills and conditioning is a key element for the serious player at any and all levels. The coach must plan, advise and if possible supervise, monitor, measure and analyse content and progress of what his / her players are doing in the out of season time.
For the coach, this period of the year should include:

1. Formulation of a master plan.
2. Conditioning programme.
3. Periodisation of training.
4. Individual player workouts.

Here are some examples of the coach's considerations for the pre-season:

1. Prepare the master plan – set your aims and objectives and goals for what you want to achieve technically and how and when you expect to achieve it.
2. Organize whatever it is you have to with regard to equipment, facilities, administration and resources for the season.
3. Prepare a players' handbook.
4. Decide on your conditioning programme and periodisation of training.
5. Decide on your offensive and defensive strategy and goals for individual players and the team.

If the regular season runs from late September until early April; the post season for example would run until early May; the off season would be perhaps mid to late May or early June until early or mid August; the pre season would be mid to late August until late September.

In the off season the emphasis should be on strength and endurance (maintenance and gains) along with some basketball training.

During the pre season, power, agility and quickness along with heavier basketball training would be the general prescription.

The basketball time during, especially the off season, should be spent learning new techniques and skills and / or perfecting (these and) already existing sound fundamentals.

If the coach or members of the coaching staff are able to work with the players either individually or in small groups, this is of major benefit. The individual improvement programme should have been formulated and issued by the head coach and an evaluation process put in place, if possible.

The coach should also spend this time in pursuing and enhancing his / her continuous professional development (CPD). Also, allowing time to attend coaching clinics and other sport science conferences etc. Plus time to analyze video tape, discuss ideas and strategy with the assistant coaches and also other colleagues and acquaintances in the coaching (fraternity) profession.

It is also a time to meet with team owners, general managers and others regarding off the court team and club matters. Perhaps to also visit with existing and potential sponsors or philanthropists etc.

Of course, it is also a prime time for the scouting and recruiting of any potentially new players for the up-coming season and / or future seasons.

Physiology in Basketball

Introduction

As a basketball coach you are required to understand the importance of fitness and the methods adopted to develop the appropriate components relevant to the sport.

In order to plan the coaching session, the Level 2 coach must know the major systems of the human body, including both acute and chronic responses to exercise. The coach should be aware of the principles of training and how they are applied in order to improve specific components of fitness. He/she will have knowledge of the basic food types and how nutrition affects athletic performance. The coach should also have an appreciation of the physical differences between the child and adult basketball player, being aware of the common changes associated with growth and maturation. This section is designed to develop this knowledge and therefore on successful completion you should:

- Know the major body systems and their response and adaptation to training
- Be aware of the principles of training and how they are applied to improve specific components of fitness.
- Appreciate the basic principles of nutrition and how it influences performance.
- Appreciate the difference between child and adult players, acknowledging the common physical changes of maturation.

In addition you may find the following resource useful to support your learning. Brookes, T. (2004) *How the Body Works in Sport*, Sports Coach UK, UK

What is Energy?

For a muscle to contract the human body must provide energy. Within the body energy for exercise, growth and repair is stored in a chemical compound known as adenosine triphosphate (ATP).

The Energy Systems

The energy stored as ATP in the body is limited, providing approximately 2 seconds of all out exercise. Therefore in order that an individual can exercise for longer than this, ATP must be continually re-synthesised. This is done via two main mechanisms:

1. Anaerobic Energy Production

This is the production of ATP without the use of oxygen. This is achieved through two main energy systems.

a. **Phosphogen (ATP-PC) System:** This system provides energy for up to 10 seconds of maximal work. It is commonly used for activities of high intensity and short duration.
b. **Lactic Acid System:** This system produces energy rapidly from the breakdown of glucose or glycogen without oxygen. The rate of energy production is in the region of 45-50% lower than that of the ATP-PC system, however, can be used to maintain high intensity activity for anywhere between 30 - 120 seconds.

2. Aerobic Energy Production

When available, oxygen is used to breakdown carbohydrates, fats and sometimes proteins. The aerobic system is slower in its re-synthesis of ATP due to the more complex series of reactions required, although it does produce nearly 13 times more than that produced by the anaerobic systems. The aerobic system also depends heavily on the delivery of oxygen, from the environment, by the cardio-respiratory system (heart and lungs) to the working muscles.

Task 1

In the table below look at the activities provided and identify whether you think energy for that activity is provided aerobically or anaerobically, and which energy system would predominate.

Table 1: Mechanisms of energy provision for common Basketball activities

Activity	Aerobic or Anaerobic	Main energy system
30 minute steady run		
20 m sprint to score a fast break		
Playing a full 40 minute game		
Jumping for a rebound		
Full court pressure defence		
A box out		

Nutrition for Exercise

A well-balanced diet is essential for healthy living. This is even more crucial for the basketball player, to ensure that he/she has the appropriate foods to fuel training and competition, allow optimal recovery and maintain optimal health.

Foods are broken down into the broader categories of carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins and minerals. All of these are taken from the food we consume and each plays a specific role in the functioning of the human body (Table 2).

Table 2

Food type	Function	Sources	Intake Goals
Carbohydrates	The most important fuel stored in the liver and muscles to enable muscles to do work. Broken down into: **Simple carbohydrates** are prominent in commercially available sources and have little nutritional value. They are quickly absorbed and produce a rapid rise in blood glucose. **Complex carbohydrates** are derived from plant or animal sources, with a high nutritional value. These also contain other nutrients, including dietary fibre. They are absorbed more slowly.	**Simple**: fruit, sweets, biscuits, sugar, honey, fizzy drinks **Complex**: pasta, rice, grains, breads, cereals, potatoes.	Approximately 7-10 g per kg body mass per day, predominantly from 'complex' sources.
Fats	An essential nutrient for energy provision and storage of vitamins and minerals, however, is detrimental to health and performance when consumed in excess. Saturated fat intake increases blood cholesterol and promotes heart disease Unsaturated fats are essential for protecting against heart disease.	Saturated: animal fats, butter, cheese, whole milk, mayonnaise, ice cream, chocolate and lard Unsaturated: some margarines, nuts, sesame and sunflower oils	Should be <30% of dietary intake, of which 70-75% should be unsaturated fats
Protein	Broken down into amino acids, this is used for the development of muscle, enzymes and hormones. Often referred to as the 'building blocks' for growth in the body.	Meat, fish poultry, eggs, milk, yogurt, cheese and nuts.	Approximately 1-2 g per kg body mass per day
Fluid (water)	Makes up 40-70% of total body mass, water is essential for most bodily functions. It transports food, oxygen and waste products; gives structure and		

Food type	Function	Sources	Intake Goals
	shape to the body and helps maintain body temperature.		
Vitamins	Essential for human function but do not contribute to energy production. Must be obtained from food or dietary supplements.	Vitamin A: yellow and orange fruit and vegetables, eggs, dairy products. B vitamins: wholegrain bread and cereals, brown rice, pasta. Vitamin C: citrus, tropical and berry fruits. Vitamin E: wholegrain bread and cereals, nuts and seeds.	
Minerals	Makes up approximately 4% of body mass, they maintain bone structure, nerve and muscle function. Excessive amounts can be lost through sweating.	Iron: liver, beef, turkey, chicken, fish, green leafy vegetables. Calcium: dairy products, dark green vegetables.	

Task 2

John and Frank are two amateur basketball players who both play for the Phoenix Rangers. They are asked by their coach to give a breakdown of their typical daily diet.

In groups, critically evaluate each player's diet and its suitability for an active lifestyle, nominate a spokesperson to feed back answer.

JOHN	FRANK
Breakfast Weetabix (x 3) with full fat milk 1 mug of tea	**Breakfast** A cup of orange juice
Morning snack 1 apple 1 cappuccino	**Morning snack** Mars bar 1 litre bottle of water
Lunch Turkey salad sandwich 1 banana 1 mug of tea	**Lunch** 1 x Mr Porky meat and potato pie 1 x 75 ml carton of orange juice A bag of crisps
Afternoon snack Cereal bar One mug of coffee	**Afternoon snack** 1 x 75ml carton of orange juice
Evening meal Chicken and fresh vegetable stir fry Yogurt	**Evening meal** Sausage, chips and gravy
Extras 2 pints of lager shandy after training	**Extras** A bottle of water after training followed by 5 pints of bitter and a kebab.

Principles of Training

The major focus of any training programme is to cause an improvement through biological adaptation. Several principles must be adhered to in order to achieve the desired adaptation with any training programme. These are shown below.

Table 3: Principles of training

PRINCIPLE	DEFINITION
Frequency	The number of times that the player is exposed to the stimulus
Intensity	Training intensity is prescribed at an appropriate percentage of the players' functional capacity and based on the demands of the game, in order to produce a positive training effect.
Volume	Training volume refers to the total quantity of work performed.
Overload	The biological system, or part thereof, will only adapt to a training stimulus if the prescribed training load stresses it beyond its present capacity.
Specificity	Training is based on a needs analysis of the game and replicates the physiological demands players are exposed to during play.
Recovery	Recovery periods within and between training sessions are prescribed in accordance with the energy systems restoration and performance characteristics.
Individuality	The programme is designed on the positional demands of play and individual strengths and weaknesses.

Task 3

1. How might you ensure your training programme adheres to the principle of 'overload'?

Answer:

2. Give examples of how you might control training 'intensity'?

Answer:

3. You want to improve a) sprint speed and b) endurance of your players. How could this be done ensuring that your training adopts the principle of specificity?

Answer:

4. How might you adapt your training to consider individual differences of the players?

Answer:

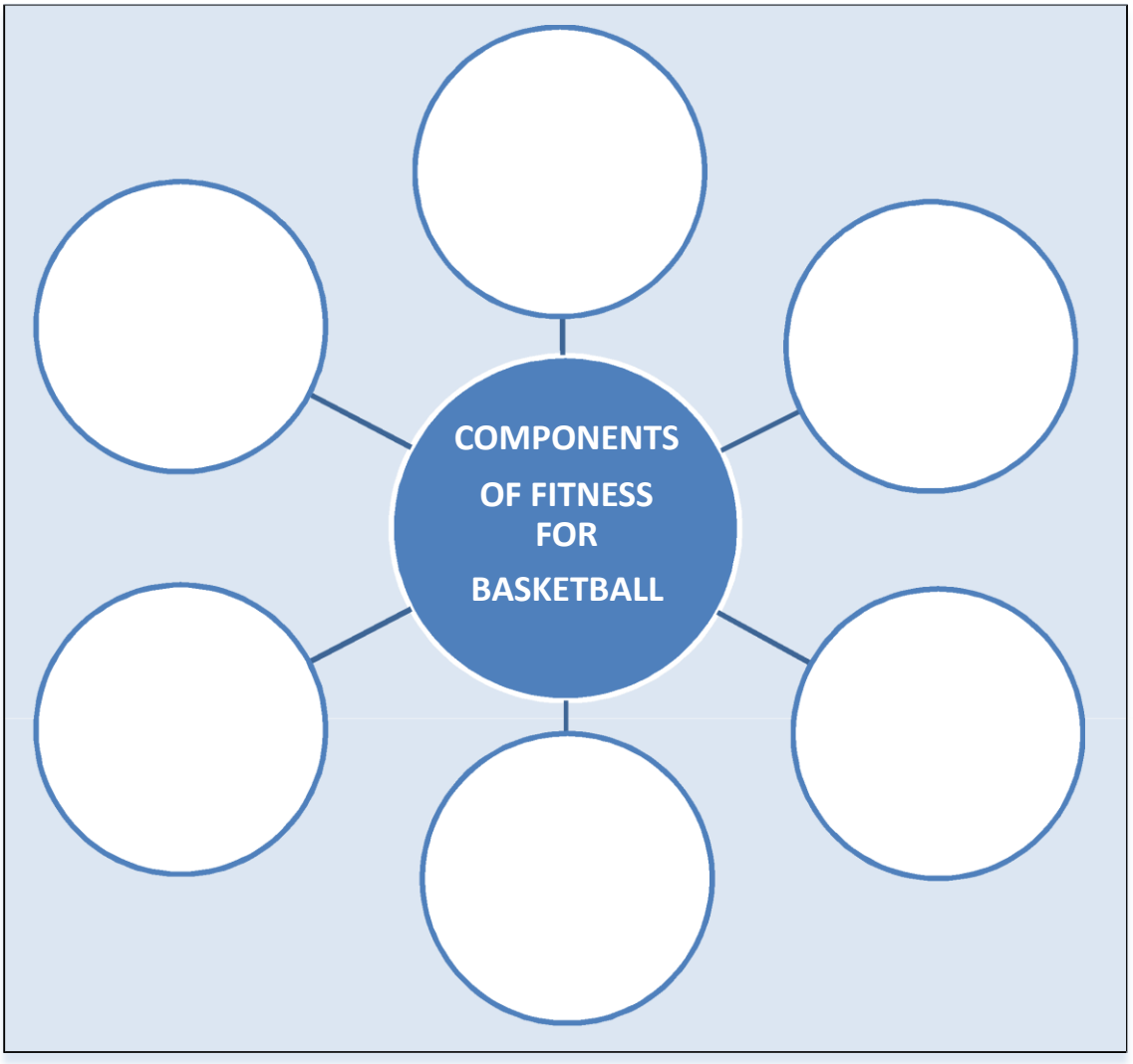
Components of Fitness for Basketball

Fitness is a general term that refers to the ability of the body to handle physical demands. Fitness is made up of several elements (or components), some of which are more pertinent to certain sports. As a basketball coach you should understand the major components of fitness that are appropriate to the sport.

Task 4

Using your understanding of the game, identify the components of fitness that characterise the modern basketball players and provide examples to illustrate where these components are common during a game.

Figure 1. Components of Fitness for Basketball



In order to develop each of the components listed above it is common to adopt various training methods. As a basketball coach you will need to understand specific methods of training and what component of fitness they are attempting to address. As you develop your coaching knowledge you will begin to understand how training programmes are structured and learn about more advanced training techniques. However, to start it is imperative that you demonstrate an understanding of the basic training methods pertinent to basketball.

Developing Fitness for Basketball

Within this section you will again find a series of tasks, all of which are to be completed on-course as part of the practical elements. The material here will further develop your knowledge on approaches to developing fitness for basketball.

The warm-up
The warm-up is an integral part of the training process, which aims to prepare the athlete both physiologically and psychologically for an event (playing/training) and in doing so, may reduce the chance of injury.

The warm-up up can be divided into two distinct parts.

(i) **General warm-up** involves non-specific, general body movements and stretching designed to prepare the body to increase its level of activity. Initially, the warm-up commences with some form of low intensity exercise to increase the heart rate, improve muscle blood flow and improve nerve conductivity. This is usually followed by dynamic stretching exercises*, which work the muscle groups through general ranges of motion.

(ii) **Specific warm-up** provides a skill rehearsal relevant to the activity the player is preparing for. This could take the form of a defensive slide-step, etc. The warm-up can then progress to more specific elements of the activity such as close outs or shell drill.

Task 5a

Devise a 10-minute warm-up session to prepare a group of players prior to a game.

You should use the proforma provided on the page opposite to detail the components of the warm-up, which should then be used by the group prior to one of the practical sessions.

You should use information in appendix 1, your learner resource manual and How the Body Works in Sport (2004), p. 62-66, to identify stretches specific muscle groups and their actions.

The cool-down
After exercise players should perform at a low intensity followed by specific stretching exercises. This helps the metabolism return to resting levels and in association with appropriate fluid intake and nutrition, a cool-down should help promote recovery. This period also allows an opportunity to further develop specific flexibility.*

Task 5b

Devise a 10-minute cool down to be used by a group of players after a game. You should use the proforma provided on the page opposite to detail the components of the cool down, which should then be used by the group following one of the practical sessions.

You should use information in appendix 1 and 2 and 'How the Body Works in Sport' (2004), p. 62-66, to identify stretches, specific muscle groups and their actions.

*Specific stretching methods will be covered in more detail at Level 3 or can be found in *recommended reading*.

Warm-up/Cool-down Proforma

Group: **Date:** **Time:**

Type of session: GAME/ TRAINING **No. in group:**

Element	Diagram (where appropriate)	Major muscle group/action	Purpose
General warm-up			
Specific warm-up			
Cool down			

Aerobic Endurance

Aerobic endurance is the capacity of the body to work for prolonged periods of time and is reliant upon the body's ability to supply and utilise oxygen. It is essential to allow players to perform for the duration of a game and an appropriate level of aerobic endurance will also contribute to better recovery following 'all out', maximal intensity exercise (e.g. sprinting).

Some of the most popular training methods to improve aerobic endurance include:

Method	Definition	Example
Long, slow distance training.	Involves prolonged (> 20 minutes) exercise (i.e. running, cycling, rowing) at low intensities.	Running or cycling for 40 minutes at a work intensity between 60-70% maximum heart rate.
Interval training	Short to moderate bouts of exercise interspersed with periods of active or passive rest.	4 x 5 minutes at 80% maximum heart rate, with 4 minutes rest between each work bout.
Fartlek training	Combines continuous and interval training, in which periods of intense effort alternate with periods of less strenuous effort in a continuous workout.	Jog 2 minutes, cruise 1 minute, jog 2 minutes, sprint 20 sec, walk 40 seconds. Repeat 4 times (Total 24 minutes).
Circuit training	A series of different exercises (usually 6-12 stations), that are performed systematically for a given time period or for a set volume of work with or without rest between each. Circuit training can develop both local muscular endurance and cardiovascular endurance.	Press–ups, lunges, 5 metre shuttles, punch bag, sit-ups. Work for 45 seconds, rest for 15 seconds, complete 4 circuits.
Small-sided games	Game-related activities lasting between 2 and 5 minutes.	4 v 4. Play for 5 minutes, rest for 2 minutes, repeat 4 times.

Monitoring training intensity for improving aerobic endurance

We have already highlighted the need to control the 'intensity' of exercise as one of the key principles of training. The most appropriate method used for quantifying training intensity is by the measurement of heart rate. Heart rate is used

particularly with aerobic based training due to its relationship with oxygen uptake that shows as heart rate increases so does oxygen uptake.

Heart rate monitoring has become an effective method of assessing training intensity, particularly with the availability of easy-to-use heart rate monitors, however, the easiest and most common method is to record heart rate via palpation. This involves counting the number of beats in a minute, recorded at the pulse (Figure 2a and 2b).

See Task 7 for more details on recording heart rate.

It is common to base aerobic training on particular percentages of maximum heart rate, normally between 60 and 70% maximum heart rate. Maximum heart rate can be obtained by taking the players heart rate immediately on completion of maximal aerobic tests such as the 20-metre multistage fitness test, although the use of a heart rate monitor is recommended. Alternatively, a prediction of maximal heart rate can be made using the following equation:

Maximum heart rate = 220 – age.

Hence for a 20 year old basketball player.

Maximum heart rate = 220 – age
= 220 – 20
= 200 beats per minute

Assuming then we wish to train the individual at 75% of maximum heart rate, the following calculation should be used.

Training heart rate = Training intensity(% of maximum) x maximum heart rate
= (75/100) x 200
= 150 beats per minute

Task 6 (Practical session task/On-course)

1. Record your own resting heart rate by counting your pulse for 15 seconds (NB do this in a seated position)

Pulse count for 15 s = _____beats

Resting heart rate = Pulse count x 4 (i.e. to calculate beats per minute)
= _____x 4
= _____beats per minute

2. Using yourself as the subject, calculate the heart rate training intensities for:

a. A long steady run at 70% maximum heart rate

Maximum heart rate = 220 – age
= 220 – _____
= _____beats per minute

Training heart rate = (Training intensity % of maximum) x maximum heart rate
= (70/100) x _____
= _____ beats per minute

An interval session, with exercise intensity of 85% maximum heart rate

Maximum heart rate = _____ beats per minute (taken from previous page)

Training heart rate = (Training intensity % of maximum) x maximum heart rate
= (85/100) x _____
= _____ beats per minute

3. Using the small sided-game explained below, have each player record their heart rate on completion of the game using the procedure outlined in part 1 of this task. Record the heart rate for each player and calculate this value as a percentage of their maximum heart rate. Values should be recorded in the table below and discussed with the tutor.

Table 1. Heart rate response of players to a 3 v 3 small-sided game.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maximum heart rate [220-age] (beats per minute)								
Heart rate after game (beats per minute)								
Heart rate after game (% maximum heart rate)								

4. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using this type of game for developing aerobic endurance with your tutor.

Strength and Power

Strength is the ability of a muscle or group of muscles to exert force, while power is the ability of muscles to generate the greatest amount of force in the shortest possible time (i.e. Power = force x velocity). As such, strength and power are key elements and essential in Basketball for activities such as tackling, running and evading opposing players.

Resistance training is a common mode of exercise that involves exerting force against a given load in order to develop strength and/or power. Frequent participation in a structured resistance programme results in the following adaptations:

- Improved muscle fibre recruitment
- Improved muscle co-ordination
- Increased muscle size (hypertrophy)
- Improved muscle endurance
- Increased tendon and ligament strength
- Increased bone density

Strength training should adhere to the following principles (Birch et al, 2005).

Development of joint flexibility should be achieved by training through the joint(s) full range of motion. This limits strain around the joint and may prevent any potential injury due to limited flexibility.

Training specific muscle movement should be the focus of the resistance programme, ensuring the player is 'functionally' prepared. The use of multi-joint type exercises reflects the nature by which strength is used in Basketball and should therefore dominate in any resistance programme. Adoption of bodybuilding, single-joint actions training methods should be avoided.

Core strength is essential to ensure that the Basketball player can effectively use the strength of the limbs. A strong trunk (muscles of the abdomen and back) should be developed before focusing on limb strength.

Development of tendon strength occurs with resistance training, but at a slower speed that that associated with muscle adaptation. Therefore the progression in strength training should be appropriately paced to avoid injury to ligaments and tendons. This is particularly important in the younger player.

Methods of Developing Strength & Power

Method	Description
Free weights	The use of barbells and dumbbells acting as the load against which various exercises can be performed
Machine weights	The loads can be varied from a series of graded weights selected via a pin system and usually moved through some form of pulley mechanism. A much safer method for less experienced athletes, although some degree of training specificity is lost.
Callisthenics	Exercises that primarily use body mass as the opposing load, e.g. press-ups, chins, dips, squat thrusts etc.
Plyometrics	Based on the principle that the more a muscle is loaded before contraction, the greater the force produced on contraction. Exercises take the form of rapid hopping, jumping and throwing exercises, performed against the athletes' body mass. Note that this is an advanced training technique that should only be performed by athletes with a sound level of muscular strength.

Intensity of resistance training is usually controlled using the repetition maximum (RM) system, i.e. the maximum load an individual can lift for a given number of repetitions. The following table should be completed in the seminar session as part of the discussion on resistance training.

Task 7

Strength Goal	Intensity (% 1 RM)	Repetitions	Sets	Rest period (min)	Speed of lifting
Power					
Muscle endurance					

Speed

Speed is a major component of basketball performance, often being the determining factor in many game situations (e.g. scoring or preventing a try, beating a defender, chasing or returning a kick).

It is important that speed training is incorporated into the basketball training programme. More importantly it is imperative that it is developed with the principle of SPECIFICITY in mind. For example, the speed requirements of a Basketball player differ from those of a 100 metre sprinter. Basketball players cover average distances of 10-20 metres when sprinting much of which is multi directional, hence incorporating the element of **agility**.

Some of the major principles that should be addressed when developing speed for basketball include:

Reaction time refers to the time between the presentation of a stimulus (e.g. outlet pass) and the response of the individual (e.g. player accelerates forward from the defensive line to make the tackle). This can be improved through exposure of the athlete to situations that replicate those similar to the game.

Acceleration is the ability to achieve maximum speed in the minimum time and is essential for the basketball player given the average sprint distance of 10-20 metres. Acceleration is also governed by running technique, which should include fast footwork, a driving arm action and forward leaning body position. The coach should be aware that this differs from the classic sprint start given the need of the individual to react to further external stimuli (i.e. other players, the ball) and body position due to ball carriage – adapting the training to be a specific as possible.

Agility is the ability to change direction with the minimum loss of speed. Given the multidirectional nature of basketball (e.g. evasion, retreating 10 metres in defence, kick returns) agility should be incorporated into most speed training drills. Improving agility incorporates development of **balance** to ensure stability is maintained when reacting to a stimulus and **co-ordination of movement**.

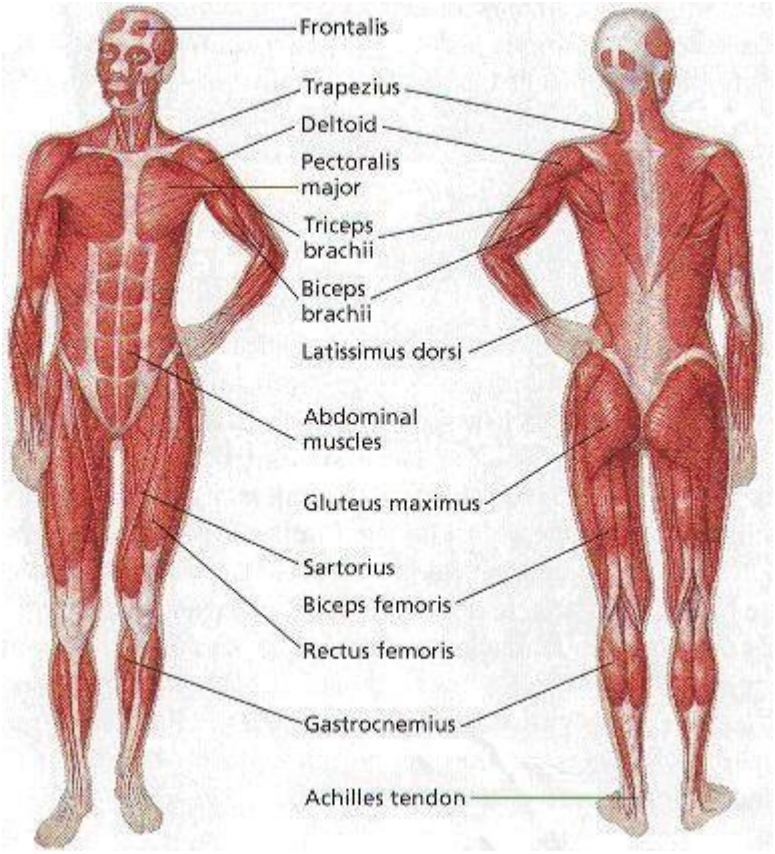
Task 8

Given that speed is an important component of basketball, design a specific training practice based on one of the following scenarios (A-D). You should then demonstrate the practice as part of the practical session.

Develop a practice to improve:

A. speed for the attacking player in a 1 v 1 situation
B. speed in the defensive line
C. players 'scoot' from dummy half
D. speed to score a try following an overlap

Major muscle groups



Recommended Reading

You may find the following references useful in your completion of this section.

Books

Baechle, T. (2002) E*ssentials of Strength Training and Conditioning*, Human Kinetics, Champaign, Illinois.

Birch, K., MacLaren, D. and George, K. (2005) *Instant Notes in Sport and Exercise Physiology*, BIOS Scientific Publishers, UK.

Brookes, T. (2004) *How the Body Works in Sport*, Sports Coach UK, UK

Elliott, B (1999) *Training in Sport: Applying Sport Science*, Wiley, Chichester, UK.

Websites

BBC Sport Health and Fitness, **http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/health_and_fitness**

BBC Schools GCSE Physical Education, **http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/pe/**

BBC Science and Nature: Human Body and Mind, **http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/**

Fitness testing in Basketball

Introduction

Fitness assessment is noted as a fundamental part of any training programme; however, for any testing to be worthwhile we must make every effort for it to be specific to the sport/activity in question, it must measure what we are trying to measure and it must be able to be reproduced and be comparable over time.

Fitness testing plays a fundamental part in the evaluation of long term athlete development; it permits evaluation of growth and maturation, enables monitoring of the training programme, development of individualised training interventions and prediction of performance (Duthie, 2006). Therefore, this should be an acknowledged and integrated part of the coach's armoury.

At the end of this section you should be able to:

- Identify the fitness components appropriate to Basketball and relevant methods for their assessment
- Administer a simple battery of fitness tests ensuring the principles of specificity, validity and reliability of each test
- Interpret results in relation to comparable norms and identify relevant strengths and weaknesses of the individual and team in terms of training programme design.

Principle of fitness testing

What are the benefits of fitness testing?

Fitness testing has many benefits as part of the training programme for all athletes. Reasons why it is used include:

- To assess the functional capacity of the player(s)
- Identify strengths and weakness of the player/team
- To aid in the design of training programmes
- To assess the effectiveness of a training programme
- To educate
- To motivate

What testing will not do

In some cases testing can be over-used or used inappropriately. In all instances you must think why you want to implement testing as part of your programme. It should also be remembered that testing is not a magical tool for predicting elite players, nor is it a method of selecting the best players. It is a very small but valuable component. When used effectively it can pay dividends and complement your overall programme.

Effective testing (Adapted from MacDougal et al., 1996)

In order to ensure an effective testing programme there are several factors that must be considered:

i. *The variables that are selected are relevant to that sport.* This means that before you start you need to evaluate the fitness components appropriate to your sport/position. This will in effect determine the type and nature of the tests selected. For example, you may decide that speed is an important component for a player; however, you must then decide over what distance you must assess this. A test over 100 metres would be highly irrelevant as very few players cover this distance in one sprint effort; a more appropriate distance may be 10-20 metres.

ii. *The tests that are selected are VALID and RELIABLE.* When we say that a test is valid we are saying that it actually measures what it claims to measure. For example, a strength test that you select actually measures strength. Reliability refers to the reproducibility or consistency of the test. Therefore if we use a test over

time will the results that we obtain be consistent. For example, if we used a test to assess strength and then after 6 weeks of training repeated the test, are the subsequent changes in strength purely down to the training programme? A reliable test would tell you this.

iii. The test protocols are specific to the sport/activity in question. To have optimal relevance and practical application to the sport or activity is of major importance when selecting the test. For example, using a rowing machine to test maximal aerobic power of a Basketball player is not particularly relevant, as the movement patterns and nature of rowing bears little resemblance to those experienced in basketball.

iv. Accessibility to equipment. The ability to access equipment due to facilities or finance may limit the testing that is to be carried out. However, at no time should the coach attempt to sacrifice any of the above factors when faced with this situation.

v. Test administration is strictly controlled. Ensure that the procedures of the test are carried out accordingly and consistently. For example, if you perform the 20-metre multistage fitness test (bleep test) in a sports hall, ensure you perform the same procedures next time you repeat the tests. (See section on Subject & Environment Preparation)

vi. Testing should be repeated at regular intervals. One-off testing is of little practical benefit to you as a coach. The main purpose of testing is to monitor the effectiveness of training programmes; therefore scheduled re-testing is a must.

Subject & environment preparation

When conducting fitness tests, you must always strive to maintain consistency so that any changes in fitness can be purely attributed to the training programme. Below are factors for consideration.

Test environment

Remember that when performing repeat testing, changes in the environment, i.e. weather, floor surface, WILL affect results. You should always look to maintain consistency by controlling as many variables as possible.

Subject preparation (See Appendix 1 for Player Pre-Test Questionnaire)

The health status and condition of the player is of paramount importance and to ensure consistency of results this should be regularly monitored prior to any testing. Questions to consider are:

i. Has the player had any recent injury or illness that will impair their performance or render them unable to be tested?

ii. How hard has the player trained in previous days leading up to the testing session?

iii. What period of training is the player in?

iv. Is the player on medication, if so, has it got a bearing on performance?

Informed consent (see Appendix 2)

Players (or parents/guardians if under 16) must provide written informed consent before the player undergoes any testing. This should state that the individual (and/or parent/guardian) is fully aware of the procedures and happy to participate/ allow the child to participate.

Equipment and tester

The same tester and equipment should be used each time that the testing is carried out. This will ensure the consistency of results across time. Any relevant calibration should be carried out prior to testing and all equipment should be thoroughly checked for working order.

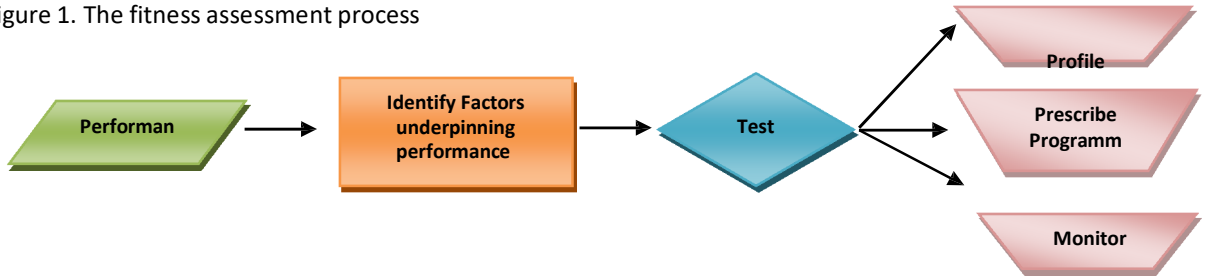
Scheduling of tests

As a coach you should schedule fitness testing into the yearly programme. Usually it is advised to place testing sessions at the start and end of specific training periods to assess their effectiveness. This information is then utilised to devise and direct the subsequent training programmes. See the module on Periodisation for a more detailed description.

Devising a fitness testing programme: the process

When integrating fitness testing into the coaching programme, the coach must first identify the process that must be applied to ensure effective testing. Figure 1 outlines the model in terms of devising and implementing a fitness testing battery.

Figure 1. The fitness assessment process



Brewer and Davis (1995) suggest that Basketball is a game of physical contact, played over two forty-minute halves, that involves low-intensity exercise, interspersed with intermittent periods of high intensity exercise. Basketball is therefore multi-dimensional in terms of fitness components, as are most team sports. It also has the added complexity of the integration of skills and specific positional requirements. Testing should in all instances attempt to remember that specificity of testing is of paramount importance. The main barrier is that there are no tests of physical fitness that combine all of the components relevant to Basketball into one-test, and this is highly unlikely due to the diverse nature of components and difficulty in ensuring test reliability and validity. Therefore the remaining option is to select specific, individual tests and interpret them in terms of Basketball performance (Table 1). It is also important that the tests selected comply with all of the aforementioned principles (i.e. validity, reliability, specificity) and that they utilise equipment and facilities that are accessible.

Table 1 Proposed fitness testing battery for Basketball players

Fitness component	Test	Rationale
Anthropometry	Stature (cm) Body mass (kg) Sum of skinfolds (mm)	This will provide a clear indication of the athletes' structural status and also provide quantitative information in relation to growth and the effects of training. Relevant information will also be of benefit, where necessary, in advising athletes in terms of nutritional intake.
Power	Vertical jump (cm)	Explosive leg power is necessary for performance and also allows monitoring of the resistance-training programme.
Strength	Bench press (kg)	The ability to generate force in the upper body is essential. This is also useful for monitoring adaptation to the resistance training programme
Speed	5, 10, 20m sprint(s)	The ability to accelerate is crucial for performance in basketball. Sprint ability over the specified distances will allow appropriate assessment.
Agility	505 Agility test (orIllinoisAgilityTest)	Players must be able to effectively perform a change direction with minimum loss of speed.
Endurance	20 m multistage fitness test (level: shuttle)	A moderate maximal aerobic power is necessary to facilitate recovery and allow the player to optimally contribute for 40 minutes of game time.

Testing order

Due to time restrictions you will normally run your battery of tests in one session. Therefore it is vital that you place the tests in an appropriate order that will ensure optimal performance by the participant in each test. This means that tests which have a detrimental effect on subsequent tests, i.e. fatigue, should be placed later on in the schedule. A general rule of thumb is to have least fatiguing tests first working towards those which produce complete exhaustion. Hence:

- Anthropometric tests (stature, body mass, skinfolds)
- Vertical jump
- Sprints
- 20 m multistage fitness test

These guidelines are devised to ensure that VALIDITY and RELIABILITY are ensured in the delivery of physiological testing within the long term development of the basketball athlete. Without these the data generated would be meaningless, particularly when considering the individual on a longitudinal basis.

The guidelines are devised to identify the rationale for the test, the relevance to particular age groups, the frequency and the specific procedures for the test in order to ensure correct implementation and interpretation. Key points are emphasised within each section to help ensure validity and reliability of each test is secured.

Profiling

Following testing, the physical strengths and weaknesses of the athlete can then be established. The most commonly adopted approach is to compare the individual against his/her peers using some form of ranking procedure in order to quantify the physical components. Provided within this document are percentile rankings from British National Camp and Scholarship players, which can be used to establish profiles for individual players at junior level. Unfortunately, similar data for adult players is not easily accessible. Athletes can also compare themselves against a table of norms, usually relative to their age. Some example comparison tables are provided in Appendix 4.

Programming

From profiling the player and identifying areas for attention, the coach can then approach the strength and conditioning programme. Weaker areas should be addressed, also taking into consideration aspects of growth, maturation and playing level.

Monitoring

To be effective testing must be repeated at appropriate intervals in the training programme. It must be remembered that the most important aspect is to establish the effectiveness of the training programme for the individual and, where appropriate, evaluate the effects of growth and maturation on physical performance.

Anthropometric Guideline

Measurement: Stature (height and sitting height)

Age group(s): All

Frequency: Monthly

Rationale: Provides an appropriate way to evaluate growth and identify biological maturity.

Equipment: Accurately calibrated wall mounted stadiometer

Key points: Maximum distance from the floor to the vertex of the head. Measurement is to be made using the stretch stature technique with the head in the Frankfort plane (see next page).

Procedure for stretch stature

- Position the head in the Frankfort plane (see figure 2) and identify the highest point on the skull (the vertex). This is when the orbitale (lower edge of eye socket) is in the horizontal plane with the tragion (notch above the flap of the ear).
- Have the subject stand erect (barefoot) heels together and arms hanging naturally by the sides.
- Heels, buttocks and upper back should be in contact with the wall.
- Have the subject take in a deep breath (keeping the heels on the floor) and by gently cupping the head apply gentle traction, stretching the subject (see figure 3).
- Lower the stadiometer headpiece to make contact with the vertex of the head.
- The subject steps away and the reading is taken to the nearest tenth of a centimetre.

Procedure for sitting height

- Position the head in the Frankfort plane (see figure 2) and identify the highest point on the skull (the vertex).
- Have the subject against the wall, with upper back and (in some cases) the back of the head in contact with the wall.
- Have the subject take in a deep breath (keeping the heels on the floor) and by gently cupping the head apply gentle traction, stretching the subject.
- Lower the stadiometer headpiece to make contact with the vertex of the head.
- The reading is taken to the nearest tenth of a centimetre.

Figure 2 - Frankfort Plane
O = Orbital
T = Tragion
V = Vertex

Figure 3 - Stretch Stature Method

Measurement: Body composition via skinfold thickness

Age group: All

Frequency: Quarterly

Rationale: Considering the need for accuracy, precision and a need to assess large groups relatively quickly the measurement of skinfolds is the most appropriate choice with athletic populations. Use of skinfold measurements to assess adiposity are based upon the assumptions that skinfolds are a good measure of subcutaneous fat and that there is a good relationship between subcutaneous fat and total body fat.

Equipment: Accurately calibrated callipers with a constant spring pressure of 10 g≈mm2 throughout entire range (i.e. Harpenden)

Key points: Measurement to be made on dry skin on the right side of the body. No prior exercise/exertion (i.e. rested state)

Site selection: It is important that the sites selected allow an appropriate estimation of the athlete's body composition and for this reason the selection of pertinent upper and lower body sites is necessary. Therefore the seven sites of biceps, triceps, subscapular, iliac crest, abdomen, anterior thigh, and medial calf are to be used.

Procedure

- Sites should be accurately identified according to anatomical location and marked using a non-permanent marker
- Skinfold grasped firmly with thumb and index finger and pulled gently away from muscle and bone.
- Callipers are placed perpendicular to the fold at the marked site, approximately 1cm below the finger and thumb.

- Maintaining the grasp of the skinfold, callipers are fully released. The dial should be read to the nearest 0.1mm, 1-2 seconds after the grip has been fully released. Ensure that this is consistent.
- A minimum of three measurements should be taken from each site. If repeated tests vary by more than 1mm, the test should be repeated once the fat has become uncompressed (i.e. repeat after a minute or so).
- The final value should be the median value of the three values that you are confident in.

Data presentation:

While conversion of data into percentage fat values is regarded as an appropriate measure with athletic populations, a more purposeful and scientifically acceptable application of the skinfold measure is now suggested to be expression of the sum of skinfolds (mm). This would provide an indication of body adiposity and any subsequent changes, while maintaining a higher level of validity.

Table 1 Comparative data for all anthropometric variables (mean, range)

		Stature(cm)	Body mass (kg)	Sum of 4 skinfolds (mm)
U16 (n=116)	Mean	178.5	76.4	43.1
	Range	157.6-190.5	55.6-104.7	21.4-101.8
U15 (n=197)	Mean	174.7	69.8	37.9
	Range	143.7-188.5	35.6-106.7	18.9-98.3
U14 (n=153)	Mean	169.6	61.4	35.0
	Range	141.5-189.4	32.1-94.7	17.2-103.1

All data compiled from National and Regional Camps .For further help in profiling players please use the appropriate percentile ranking tables presented in later

Skinfold Site Locations

Triceps
A vertical fold on the back of the upper arm, positioned directly in the middle of the shoulder and elbow.

Biceps
A vertical fold on the front of the upper arm, positioned directly in the middle of the shoulder and elbow.

Subscapular
A diagonal fold positioned 1-2 cm below the lowest angle of the shoulder blade (scapula)

Iliac crest
A diagonal fold immediately above the crest of the pelvis, positioned in a line that splits the body into front and back (i.e. frontal plane)

Abdominal
A vertical fold 5 cm to the right side of the navel(belly button)

Thigh
A vertical fold on the front of the thigh, positioned directly in the midway between the knee cap (patella) and the crease of the groin.

Medial calf
A vertical fold positioned on the inside of the calf, level with the maximum girth of the calf muscle.

Assessment of Leg Power

ASSESSMENT OF LEG POWER USING VERTICAL JUMP PROCEDURES

Measurement: Instantaneous leg power using a countermovement jump

Age group(s): All

Frequency: Quarterly

Rationale: Explosive power is a key requirement for success in a large number of athletic skills. Vertical jump procedures provide a sound method to study dynamic muscle function of the lower body.

Equipment: Optojump infrared timing system, or similar.

Key points: The subjects' hands should remain on the hips at all times. Encourage participants to dip and drive as quickly as possible and jump for maximum height.

Procedure:

- After a sufficient warm-up, the subject steps into the test area and stands with feet flat on the floor.
- The subjects' hands should remain on the hips at all times
- From a stationary upright starting position the subject must rapidly flex the knees to approximately 900, taking off from two feet. Participants are encouraged to dip and drive as quickly as possible and be instructed to jump for maximum height.
- On landing the subject is allowed to bend the knees to absorb the impact.
- Three attempts are allowed with a minimum of 30 s between attempts. The highest distance attained is taken for analysis.

Table 2 Comparative data for vertical jump test

		Jump height (cm)
U16 (n=187)	Mean	42.7
	Range	26.0-58.0
U15 (n=190)	Mean	40.8
	Minimum	27.0-56.0
U14 (n=188)	Mean	38.9
	Range	27.0-53.0

For further help in profiling players please use the appropriate percentile ranking tables presented in Appendix 3.

Assessment of Endurance Performance

ASSESSMENT OF ENDURANCE PERFORMANCE USING THE 20 m MULTISTAGE FITNESS TEST (20 MSFT)

Measurement: Endurance performance

Age group(s): All

Frequency: Quarterly

Rationale: Basketball places a huge demand on the aerobic energy system and the ability of the body to supply oxygen to the working muscle. Maximum oxygen uptake *(VO2max)* is the highest rate at which an individual can consume oxygen during exercise and hence limits the capacity to perform such exercise.

Equipment: Suitable, reliable running surface, calibrated CD and player.

Key points: Running surface should be non-slip and have limited influence from environmental conditions. Athletes should be grouped accordingly to ensure motivation and maximal effort.

Procedure

- Calibrate the speed of the MP3 file or CD. If the time between bleeps are shorter or longer than 60s, correct the 20 metre running distance accordingly: **s = 20 x t/60**
- Where s is the corrected distance (m) and t is the time (seconds) measured by the stopwatch.
- Measure the 20m distance and mark it clearly with cones. Where possible, i.e. indoors, mark using either tape or chalk a straight line at each end of the 20 m course.
- Allow players to warm-up prior to beginning test using a steady jog and specified stretches. Try to lead the stretches and keep these consistent over time.
- Players should (where appropriate) wear a recordable heart rate monitor to ensure that maximum effort is achieved.
- Have players line up on the start line and clearly explain the instructions of the test. This is very important and should include the following:
    i. The test requires each participant to run to the sound of the bleeps, progressively increasing speed until exhaustion is reached. This is a maximum test.
    ii. The tape will emit a single bleep at specific intervals starting at a running speed of 8.5 kmh-1. The player must try to be at the opposite end of the 20 m track by the time the next bleep sounds. After approximately each minute, the time interval between the bleeps decreases and running speed increases by 0.5 km≈h-1.
    iii. The player MUST place one foot on or behind the 20m mark at the sound of each bleep. Warnings are given to players who do not touch the line and failure to reach the line on TWO consecutive occasion's results in elimination form the test.
- Once eliminated, player must have their score recorded, this being the level and number of shuttles immediately previous to the bleep on which they were eliminated.
- After completing the test, players should cool-down, stretch and drink fluid.

Table 3 Comparative data for 20 m Multistage Fitness Test

		Level (decimal)	Predicted VO2 max (ml.kg-1.min-1)
U16 (n=166)	Mean	11.15	50.3
	Range	6.0-14.15	32.9-61.1
U15 (n=172)	Mean	10.52	48.5
	Minimum	6.0-13.85	32.9-60.6
U14 (n=186)	Mean	10.09	47.2
	Range	5.0-14.15	29.9-61.1

Note. It has been common practice to convert the levels and shuttles score into a predicted maximum oxygen uptake value (also known as VO2 max); however, such values have been shown to underestimate true VO2 max readings by approximately 5 ml.kg-1.min-1 in junior players (Twist, Lamb, Nicholas & Webb, 2007). Therefore, in ensuring validity, it is recommended that values are reported as the level and shuttle achieved. Predicted VO2 max values are provided for comparison. For further help in profiling players please use the appropriate percentile ranking tables presented in Appendix 3.

20-metre Multistage Fitness Test Data Collection Sheet

Squad/Team : Date : Time: Tester: Location:

	Name	Level	Shuttle	End Heart Rate ($b.min^{-1}$)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				

Level	Shuttle
5	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
6	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0
7	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0
8	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1
9	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1
10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1
11	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2
12	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2
13	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3
14	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3
15	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3
16	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3 1 4
17	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3 1 4
18	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3 1 4 1 5
19	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3 1 4 1 5
20	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3 1 4 1 5 1 6
21	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1 0 1 1 1 2 1 3 1 4 1 5 1 6

ASSESSMENT OF SPRINT SPEED AND AGILITY

Measurement: Sprint speed

Age group(s): All

Frequency: Quarterly

Rationale: Speed is an essential component for most team sports, with the average distance covered at speed by basketball players being 5-15 m (i.e. acceleration). Speed over longer distances (i.e. maximum speed) is less frequently observed, nonetheless is still an important component that should be assessed.

Equipment: Electronic infra red timing gates (e.g. Brower Speedtrap II, USA)

Key points: Ensure that the running track is non-slip, reliable and accurately marked. Footwear should be appropriate for the surface. Consistency on repeated tests is essential.

Procedures

Standing Sprint

- Mark out accurately specific distances in a straight line using a tape measure and cones.
- Timing gates are positioned at 0 (start) and specified distances (preferably 5, 10 and 20 m).
- Ensure the participant is thoroughly warmed up and stretched. Also ensuring that appropriate footwear is used.
- The start position is with the start foot up to the starting line.
- The participant is permitted three trials. Allow approximately 2 minutes between each to allow optimal recovery.
- From the three sprints the best (i.e. fastest time) is taken as the players acceleration capability over the respective distance.

505 Agility Test

- Using the tape measure and masking tape, mark out the points of the course as per diagram below.
- The timing gate should be placed at the 5 mark (Point A)
- Instruct subject to assume the starting position at the start line.
- After a signal, the subject should start when ready.
- The subject should sprint from the starting through point A at which point the timer is started, to the zero line. They are then required to turn on either the left or right foot, and accelerate off the line back through Point A, where timer is stopped.
- Record the time taken to cover the 10 m distance to the nearest 0.01 s.
- The subject completes three trials turning on their preferred foot. Alternatively three trials may be given turning on both the left and right feet; that is, six trials in total.
- The fastest time is recorded as the best score for each foot.

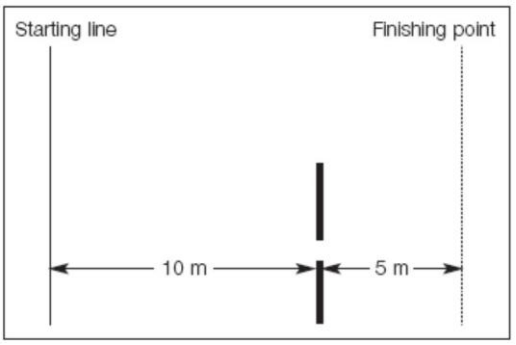


Table 4 Comparative data for all sprint and agility tests

Group		10 m sprint (s)	20 m sprint (s)	40 m sprint (s)	505 agility left (s)	505 agility right (s)
National U14 (n=187)	Mean	1.93	3.35	5.78	2.58	2.57
	Range	1.69-2.19	2.88-3.75	5.20-6.29	2.12-3.03	2.25-2.94
National U15 (n=191)	Mean	1.91	3.29	5.62	2.50	2.48
	Range	1.66-2.22	2.75-3.71	5.27-6.06	2.16-2.96	2.15-2.96
National U16 (n=169)	Mean	1.87	3.17	5.46	2.46	2.45
	Range	1.62-2.37	2.76-3.84	5.11-5.95	2.21-2.94	2.10-2.13

For further help in profiling players please use the appropriate percentile ranking tables presented in Appendix 3.

Upper Body Maximal Strength

ASSESSMENT OF UPPER BODY MAXIMAL STRENGTH

Measurement: Repetition maximum (5RM) bench press

Age group: 14-15 years onwards.

Frequency: In accordance with resistance programme

Rationale: Following appropriate foundation work, the implementation of specific resistance training is a key training element in basketball.

Equipment: Accurately calibrated weight discs, Olympic bar and bench.

Key points: Maximum should be achieved within three trials. Two spotters should be used at all times. Ensure good technique is maintained. NB: Athletes should have undergone an appropriate resistance preparation programme prior to maximum testing.

Procedures

- Allow the athlete an appropriate warm up consisting of 10 repetitions at 50% of the predicted 5RM load followed by stretching.
- The bar should be gripped appropriately and lowered to the chest.
- The 5RM value should ideally be achieved within three trials, with consecutive trials corresponding to 75%, 90% and the 100% of 5RM. Where this is not the case, testing should be continued until the 5RM value is achieved in the shortest number of trials possible.
- All trials should be interspersed with a 2 minute recovery.
- Athletes should be discouraged at all times from bad technique, including bouncing the bar off the chest and lifting the hips from the bench arching the back.

References

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Topend Sports Network. (2011). [online]. 20m Multistage Fitness Test (Beep Test) Instructions. Last accessed on 26th September 2011 at; http://www.topendsports.com/testing/beep-norms.htm

Chan, D. (1999). [online]. Fitness Testing Assignment: Basketball. Last accessed on 26th September 2011 at; http://podiatry.curtin.edu.au/resources/educational-resources/exphys/99/basketball.cfm

Suggested reading

Gore, C. (2000). Physiological Testing of Elite Athletes. Australian Sports Commission, Champaign, IL Human Kinetics.

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Pre-test Questionnaire

Personal

Name:	Test date:
Date of birth:	
Address:	
Contact number:	
Name of emergency contact:	
Relationship to you:	
Contact number for emergency contact:	

1. Have you in the past had a serious illness or accident? Yes No
If Yes, please provide details:

_____

_____

_____

2. Do you have or have ever suffered from:

Asthma	Yes	No
Diabetes	Yes	No
Bronchitis	Yes	No
Epilepsy	Yes	No
High Blood Pressure	Yes	No
A Heart Condition	Yes	No
Fainting or Dizzy spells	Yes	No
Any joint or bone problems	Yes	No
Any pain in your chest when exercising	Yes	No

If you have answered yes to any of the above please provide further details

_____

_____

_____

3. Has a doctor ever said that you have a heart condition and that you should only do physical activity recommended by a doctor. Yes No

4. Are you currently taking any medication? Yes No
If Yes, please provide details:

_____

5. Have you consulted your doctor the last 3 months? Yes No

If Yes, please provide details:

6. Is there any other reason you should not take part in physiological testing? Yes No

If Yes, please provide details:

Assumption of Risk

I hereby state that I have read, understood and answered honestly the questions above. I also state that I wish to participate in activities which may include aerobic exercise, resistance exercise and stretching.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Informed Consent Form for Fitness Testing

Informed Consent Form for fitness testing (EXAMPLE)

Section A (Please read the whole form before signing it).

_____coach at: _____(club), will be running a series of fitness tests which may include:

- Maximal exercise using a shuttle run test, where the player will be required to run back and forth over a 20 m track until exhaustion
- Body measurements, including body mass, height and body fat
- Running speed over 10 m and 40 m
- Measurement of leg power using jumping for maximal height
- Maximal strength using free -weight apparatus (this will only be for experienced players)
- Body composition analysis techniques

Note:

- Details of the procedures for these tests are available from the coach
- Foreseeable discomforts and risks, which may occur during or after these tests, include headaches and lethargy depending upon the test.

Section B

- I have been informed that the aims and objectives of the tests
- I understand that the results may be published, however my identity will remain confidential and will only be known to the coach named above.
- I have read the above information and the risks; demands and benefits of the tests have been explained to me. I knowingly assume the risks involved. I also understand that my/my child's (delete as appropriate) consent may be withdrawn and participation terminated at any time, without penalty or loss of benefit to myself/my child (delete as appropriate). I/my child am/is not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies, by signing this consent form. There will be a copy of this consent form given to me.

Name of player (Printed):_____

Signature of player_____**Date:**_____

Signature of parent/guardian:_____**Date:**_____
(if player is under 16years)

Section C - For the coach;

• I certify that I have explained to the above individual the purpose and nature, possible risks and purpose of these fitness tests and/or through other instruction.
• Furthermore, I certify that I have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature.
• I have provided the player with a copy of this consent form.

Signature of coach:_____ **Date:**_____

Percentile Rank Scores

PERCENTILE RANK SCORES OF DIFFERENT FITNESS TESTS FOR BASKETBALL PLAYERS

UNDER 14

% RANK	Stature (cm)	Body Mass (kg)	SKF (mm)	CMJ (cm)	20 MSFT (level)	5m (s)	10m (s)	20m (s)	505L (s)	505R (s)
90	178.7	74.8	21.8	46.00	11.92	1.03	1.81	3.15	2.37	2.38
80	176.0	69.8	24.3	43.00	11.28	1.05	1.85	3.20	2.45	2.44
70	173.9	66.4	26.8	41.00	10.99	1.07	1.87	3.26	2.51	2.50
60	172.5	63.5	28.1	40.00	10.51	1.08	1.89	3.30	2.55	2.53
50	171.0	61.1	30.1	39.00	10.18	1.09	1.92	3.33	2.59	2.58
40	168.7	58.9	33.1	38.00	10.00	1.11	1.95	3.38	2.62	2.61
30	166.8	56.4	36.2	36.00	9.60	1.13	1.99	3.43	2.67	2.65
20	163.6	52.2	43.2	34.80	8.91	1.16	2.03	3.51	2.72	2.69
10	158.4	47.5	57.7	32.90	8.09	1.18	2.07	3.60	2.77	2.77

UNDER 15

% RANK	Stature (cm)	Body Mass (kg)	SKF (mm)	CMJ (cm)	20 MSFT (level)	5m (s)	10m (s)	20m (s)	505L (s)	505R (s)
90	182.5	83.9	23.5	48.0	12.51	1.03	1.80	3.10	2.33	2.33
80	180.0	79.0	25.1	45.0	12.08	1.04	1.82	3.17	2.36	2.37
70	178.2	74.5	26.8	43.7	11.50	1.05	1.85	3.22	2.41	2.40
60	176.5	71.4	29.2	42.0	11.00	1.07	1.88	3.25	2.44	2.42
50	175.1	68.2	32.6	41.0	10.50	1.09	1.91	3.30	2.48	2.45
40	173.9	65.3	36.3	39.0	10.11	1.11	1.94	3.33	2.52	2.49
30	172.2	62.9	41.6	37.3	9.82	1.12	1.96	3.37	2.58	2.54
20	170.6	61.0	48.9	37.0	9.27	1.13	1.99	3.41	2.63	2.60
10	166.3	57.9	59.7	35.0	8.27	1.16	2.03	3.50	2.69	2.65

UNDER 16

RANK	(cm)	Mass (kg)	(mm)	(cm)	MSFT (level)	(s)	(s)	(s)	(s)	(s)
90	186.9	88.5	26.0	36.0	12.94	0.97	1.70	2.96	2.29	2.33
80	183.7	85.0	29.0	38.0	12.08	1.00	1.75	3.02	2.33	2.37
70	182.0	80.2	32.5	39.4	11.75	1.02	1.79	3.07	2.37	2.40
60	180.3	77.6	35.1	41.0	11.35	1.03	1.81	3.11	2.40	2.42
50	178.9	75.6	37.6	43.0	11.13	1.05	1.85	3.15	2.44	2.45
40	177.5	73.3	41.5	44.0	10.98	1.07	1.88	3.20	2.47	2.49
30	175.3	71.2	45.8	46.0	10.55	1.10	1.93	3.26	2.49	2.52
20	173.4	68.3	55.3	47.4	10.09	1.13	1.99	3.34	2.56	2.57
10	170.9	64.3	67.5	50.2	9.52	1.18	2.07	3.43	2.62	2.62

Example comparative tables

Power

Vertical Jump Norms for comparison

	Female Senior	Female Junior	Male Senior	Male Junior
N=	132	121	-	26
Mean	46.6	46.2	-	65.5
SD	5.6	5.6	-	7.1
Minimum	35	31	-	50
Maximum	60	60	-	85

N= Number of athletes tested.
Score is measured in cm.

Table adapted from Chan (2011).

Endurance

Aerobic Fitness Test - Multi Stage Fitness Run (bleep test)

Males

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
12-13 yrs	<3.3	3.4-5.1	5.2-6.4	6.5-7.5	7.6-8.8	8.9-10.9	>10.9
14-15 yrs	<4.7	4.7-6.1	6.2-7.4	7.5-8.9	8.10-9.8	9.9-12.2	>12.2
16-17 yrs	<5.1	5.1-6.8	6.9-8.2	8.3-9.9	9.10-11.3	11.4-13.7	>13.7
18-25 yrs	<5.2	5.2-7.1	7.2-8.5	8.6-10.1	10.2-11.5	11.6-13.10	>13.10
26-35 yrs	<5.2	5.2-6.5	6.6-7.9	7.10-8.9	8.10-10.6	10.7-12.9	>12.9
36-45 yrs	<3.8	3.8-5.3	5.4-6.4	6.5-7.7	7.8-8.9	8.10-11.3	>11.3
46-55 yrs	<3.6	3.6-4.6	4.7-5.5	5.6-6.6	6.7-7.7	7.8-9.5	>9.5
56-65 yrs	<2.7	2.7-3.6	3.7-4.8	4.9-5.6	5.7-6.8	6.9-8.4	>8.4
>65 yrs	<2.2	2.2-2.5	2.6-3.7	3.8-4.8	4.9-6.1	6.2-7.2	>7.2

Females

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
12-13 yrs	<2.6	2.6-3.5	3.6-5.1	5.2-6.1	6.2-7.4	7.5-9.3	>9.3
14-15 yrs	<3.3	3.4-5.2	5.3-6.4	6.5-7.5	7.5-8.7	8.8-10.7	>10.7
16-17 yrs	<4.2	4.2-5.6	5.7-7.1	7.2-8.4	8.5-9.7	9.8-11.10	>11.1
18-25 yrs	<4.5	4.5-5.7	5.8-7.2	7.3-8.6	8.7-10.1	10.2-12.7	>12.7
26-35 yrs	<3.8	3.8-5.2	5.3-6.5	6.6-7.7	7.8-9.4	9.5-11.5	>11.5
36-45 yrs	<2.7	2.7-3.7	3.8-5.3	5.4-6.2	6.3-7.4	7.5-9.5	>9.5
46-55 yrs	<2.8	2.5-3.5	3.6-4.4	4.5-5.3	5.4-6.2	6.3-8.1	>8.1
56-65 yrs	<2.2	2.2-2.6	2.7-3.5	3.6-4.4	4.5-5.6	5.7-7.2	>7.2
>65 yrs	<1.5	1.5-2.1	2.2-2.6	2.7-3.4	3.5-4.3	4.4-5.7	>5.7

Measurement given Level followed by shuttles, i.e. 5.7 is Level 5, Shuttles 7.

Table adapted from Topend Sports Network 2011

Physical Conditioning of Players

Introduction

Basketball is a game which can be described as 'intermittent' in nature; meaning that there are periods of low intensity activity interspersed with periods of high intensity work (Gabbett, 2005). In addition, the game lasts over approximately two 40-minute halves with players undertaking multi-directional movements while being involved in contact situations throughout the game.

The intentions of this section are to cover the major physiological issues of conditioning for basketball, and thus develop the coaches understanding of its implementation in the coaching programme.

Aims of the section

At the end of this section you should be able to:

- Understand basic principles related to energy systems, muscle fibre type and their relevance to basketball performance.
- Understand the energy demands of basketball as well as other team sports classed as 'maximal intensity intermittent sports'
- Understand and apply the principle of specificity to the conditioning programme
- Identify various methods of quantifying the intensity of training
- Identify and apply the principles of intensity and specificity appropriate to various phases of the conditioning programme.

An introduction to exercise physiology

In this section we will consider some of the principles of exercise physiology that explain how the human body functions and responds to exercise.

The energy systems

The human body must provide energy for the muscle to contract. Within the body energy for exercise, growth and repair is stored in a chemical compound known as adenosine triphosphate (ATP). Within the body we only store approximately 80 - 100 grams of ATP in our entire muscular system, enough to perform maximal exercise for a couple of seconds. However, if we consider that to function normally every day we use an amount of ATP somewhere in the region of 75% of our own body mass, while a marathon runner can use approximately 50 - 80 kg of ATP to complete a race, the body must have some mechanism in place to remake (re-synthesise) ATP to produce energy.

The purpose of any training programme is to improve the performer's ability to maintain ATP resynthesis. Therefore assuming that the player maintains the required amounts of ATP at the required rate, fatigue is delayed. Fatigue is defined as a failure to maintain the required or expected force or power output (Hawley & Burke, 1998)

The ability of the body to remake ATP within the muscle cells, in order to maintain a required level of exercise, is facilitated by three energy systems.

1. The creatine phosphate (ATP-PC) system
2. The anaerobic glycolysis or lactic acid system
3. The aerobic system

The Creatine Phosphate (ATP-PC) system

Creatine phosphate (PC) is a chemical stored within the muscle, similar to ATP and can be broken down without the presence of oxygen, and is therefore termed anaerobic (meaning without oxygen). As the PC is broken down, the splitting process provides energy, which in turn is used to resynthesise ATP. Although PC can 'produce' energy very rapidly it is unfortunately in limited supply within the muscle cell and can only maintain ATP levels for approximately 8

– 10 seconds. Similarly, once PC is depleted, the ability of the performer to maintain exercise at the required rate (i.e. very high intensity) is reduced and will only be resynthesised during very low intensity exercise or complete rest.

Because the ATP-PC system can resynthesise ATP at a very fast rate, it has relevance to activities in basketball such as short sprints and explosive jumps.

The anaerobic glycolytic or lactic acid system

As the name suggests, this is a system that functions without the presence of oxygen and utilises the conversion of glycogen to lactic acid in the production of energy. The rate of energy production is in the region of 45-50% lower than that of the creatine phosphate system, however, can be used to maintain high intensity activity for anywhere between 30 - 120 seconds. The major downfall of this energy system is that as the lactic acid accumulates within the muscle, the acid component induces fatigue, and consequently reduces power output, due to the body's inability to function in acidic conditions.

The relevance of the anaerobic glycolysis system to basketball can be seen in situations of prolonged (i.e. 30 – 60 s) high intensity exercise.

The aerobic system

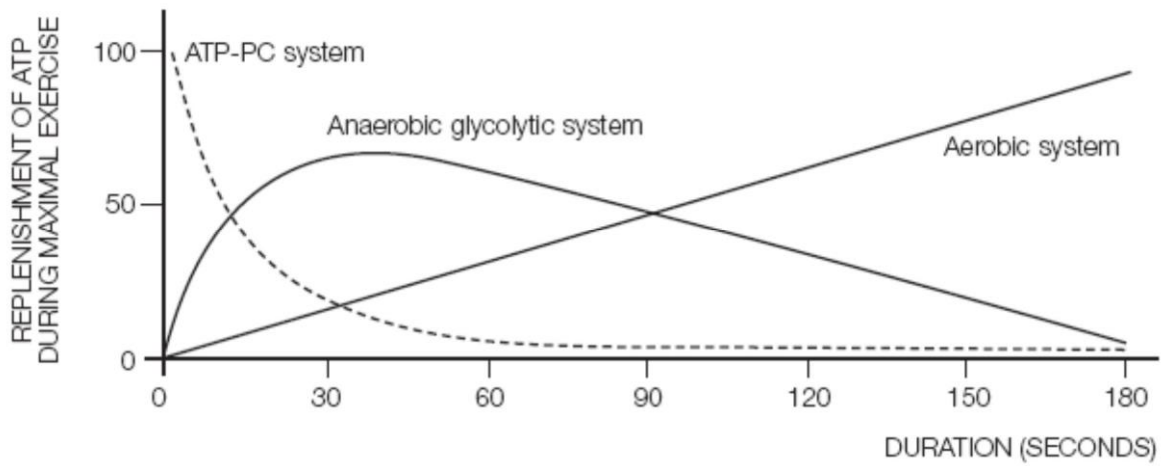
The aerobic system can, as the name suggests, only function in the presence of oxygen within the muscle. When available, oxygen is used to break down carbohydrates, fats and sometimes proteins within a structure called the mitochondria. The aerobic system is slower in its re-synthesis of ATP due to the more complex series of reactions required, although it does produce nearly 13 times more than that produced by the anaerobic systems. The aerobic system also depends heavily on the delivery of oxygen, from the environment, by the cardio-respiratory system (heart and lungs) to the working muscles.

Endurance athletes would appear to be those that benefit most from the aerobic system, however, team sport athletes also require an efficient aerobic system, although not to the standards of elite marathon runners. This must be capable of maintaining performance over the duration of a game, but more importantly to assist in recovery between high intensity work bouts.

The integration of energy systems

The three systems do not operate independently of each other but all work at the same time within the same muscle cell (Figure 1). The fundamental feature that dictates the predominance of one system over another is the intensity and duration of the exercise being conducted and thus the rate of ATP re-synthesis required (Figure 2).

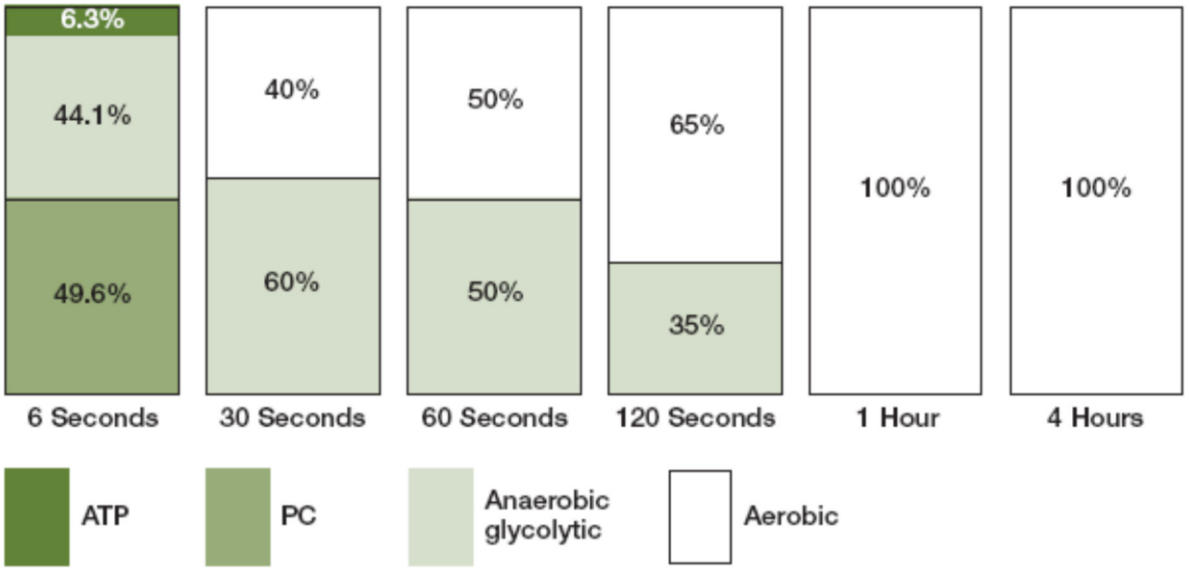
Figure 1: Relative contribution of the three energy systems during maximal work



The contribution of the various energy systems to maximal exercise lasting from a few seconds to several hours are shown in more detail in Figure 2. However, this is a very simplistic approach, assuming that from the outset of exercise

the individual is working at maximum effort. This can only be assumed to be average contributions of each energy system. These assumptions are difficult to interpret in relation to intermittent type sports, such as Basketball.

Figure 2: The contribution of different energy systems to the requirements of high-intensity exercise.



Types of Muscle Fibre

Muscle is a specialised structure that performs many functions, one of which is the ability to generate force. Skeletal muscle is made up of individual muscle fibres, which are generally classified into three distinct types, based upon their contractile and energy producing characteristics:

• Slow-twitch (Type I) fibres

Slow-twitch predominantly generates energy via the aerobic energy system, although they can generate energy anaerobically. They are characterised by a high density of capillaries and mitochondria, geared towards aerobic metabolism. The results of which is a much slower rate of contraction and relaxation, a much more fatigue resistant fibre than their fast-twitch counterparts and much more suited to prolonged exercise. These fibres are predominantly recruited in activities of long duration.

• Fast Twitch (Type II) fibres

These fibres have a high affinity to generate energy rapidly for quick, powerful actions. The speed of contraction is shown to be up to 3 – 5 times faster than slow twitch fibres (McArdle et al., 1996). Fast-twitch fibres predominantly rely on short-term glycolytic systems for energy production and are thus activated in short, explosive actions that depend mostly on anaerobic metabolism for energy. These fibres are further divided into subdivisions called Type IIa and Type IIb.

i. *Type IIa (fast oxidative glycolytic)*
This type of fibre, although it maintains the characteristics of fast-twitch fibres, has the added advantage of a moderately well developed capacity for both aerobic and anaerobic transfer.

ii. *Type IIb (fast-glycolytic)*
These are the 'true' fast-twitch fibres and possess the greatest anaerobic potential. Again having a very fast speed of contraction, relaxation and high force capacity, this fibre is easily fatigued within a very short period of time.

An individual muscle will not only differ in the number and size of the fibres, but also in the proportions of fast and slow twitch fibres present. Most people possess on average 45-55% slow twitch fibres in arm and leg muscles, while of the remaining fast-twitch fibres, the proportion of IIa and IIb fibres is probably equal. There are definite fibre

differences exhibited between different athletic groups. Endurance athletes normally possess a larger percentage of slow-twitch fibres in the muscles used in their main sport, while power athletes tend to demonstrate greater proportions of fast-twitch fibres with a lower aerobic capacity.

Fibre type recruitment

We have identified that Type I and Type II fibres favour the aerobic and anaerobic system respectively. However, specific training will induce specific adaptations that improve the capabilities of particular fibres to cope with new demands (Jenkins & Reaburn, 1996). For example, if a sprinter were to undergo 10 weeks of prolonged, slow endurance training, his/her muscles would improve their ability to produce energy via the aerobic energy system. From the point of basketball conditioning, this is important in terms of training specificity.

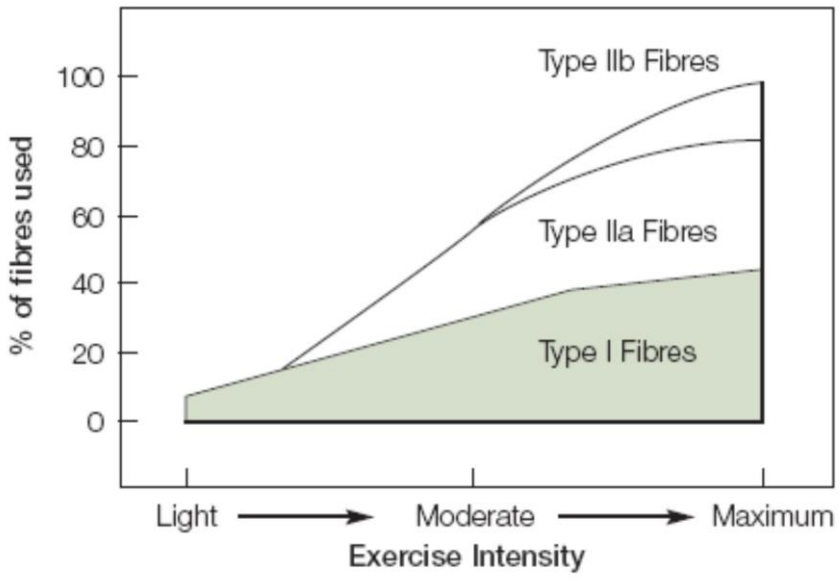
The motor unit and patterns of recruitment

A motor unit is a nerve and the muscle fibres are stimulated to contract and relax. The nerve that stimulates it controls the speed of muscle fibre contraction; a fast nerve will control a Type II fibre, while a Type I fibre will be controlled by a slow nerve. As it is the nerve that determines the muscles speed of contraction, all muscles in a given motor unit will be of the same type. If we were to consider starting from a walk and gradually building up the pace over 400m until we were at maximum speed, the recruitment *(i.e. selected for use)* of muscle fibres would follow a ramp like progression from Type I to Type IIa to Type IIb as the intensity increased (Figure 1). This is known as the size principle of motor unit recruitment.

Figure 1

The recruitment order of muscle fibres during exercise of increasing intensity: 'the size principle of motor unit recruitment'.

This progressive recruitment is only relevant to exercise which increases in intensity in a gradual manner. However, the important concept is that all fibres are recruited during high intensity exercise, whereas in low intensity exercise only Type I fibres are selected.



The implications of this are that for training to be effective it must be specific in terms of motor unit recruitment, *i.e. the speed and intensity of training must be appropriate to ensure that the correct fibres are trained.*

Physiological demands of Basketball

Evidence from Meir et al. (2001) indicates that at the highest level basketball players cover approximately 4000-5000 m in their active phases and another 1000m during the passives phases within a competitive game. This consists of periods of low and high intensity activity (Table 1) Table 1 Comparison of movement patterns for forwards and backs during competitive match-play (adapted from Gabbett, 2005)

	Forwards	Guards
Low intensity	24.0	37.5
Walking (%)	18.6	21.4
Cruising (%)	11.3	6.3
Jogging forwards (%)		
High intensity	2.2	0.7
Jogging backwards	1.1	0.9
Sprinting		
Distance covered (m)	9929	8458

In addition, it has been shown that the average heart rate during competitive play spends a considerable proportion of time above 80% maximal heart rate.

Importance of aerobic fitness to the player

Aerobic fitness is typically defined by the maximal oxygen uptake (VO_2max), which is the maximum amount of oxygen an individual can take in and utilise while breathing normal air (Astrand et al., 2003). It allows athletes to perform prolonged activity and enables faster recovery during high intensity intermittent exercise.

In basketball players typical VO_2max values range between 38-68 ml/kg/min, with values rising as playing standard improves. There appears to be no observed difference in VO_2max between forwards and guards, which may either be a result of a lack of position specific training or the need for players to be able to play in a number of positions. Table 2 provides a comparison of VO_2max values for basketball and other sports.

Table 2. Typical *VO_2* max values for different sports

Sport	*VO_2* max (ml/kg/min)
Basketball	40-60
Soccer	50-70
Marathon runners	60-80
Untrained	30-40

The aerobic demands indicate that players average above 80% VO_2max during competitive match play (Coutts et al., 2003). This combined with the detail from time-motion and heart rate analysis strongly suggests that basketball is an endurance sport requiring a moderate to high maximum oxygen uptake.

Principles of developing aerobic fitness

The major focus of any training programme is to facilitate improvement through biological adaptation. These adaptations must be created via the application of specific principles of training such as overload, frequency, type of training, specificity, intensity, duration and recovery.

Training intensity for developing aerobic fitness

Training intensity refers to ‘how hard’ the individual should train to elicit the necessary response, and in conjunction with specificity, is possibly the most important training principle. The difficulty arises in how we actually quantify training intensity, particularly given the necessity for practical and accessible methods. The most widely accepted method is to use heart rate monitoring.

Heart rate

Heart rate monitoring has become an effective method of assessing training intensity, particularly with the availability of easy-to-use heart rate monitors. Heart rate is used, particularly with aerobic based training, due to its linear relationship with oxygen uptake, i.e. as heart rate increases so does oxygen uptake.

It is common to base training on particular percentages of maximum heart rate, with a value of 70% of maximum heart rate suggested as a minimum to evoke a training effect in healthy individuals. We have already discussed the intensities identified during match play for basketball, with approximately two-thirds of the time spent with heart rates above 80% of maximal values.

Maximum heart rate can be obtained by taking the players heart rate immediately on completion of maximal aerobic tests such as the 20-metre multistage fitness test, although the use of a heart rate monitor is recommended. Alternatively, a prediction of maximal heart rate can be made using the following equation:

Maximum heart rate = 220 – age.

Hence, for a 20 year old basketball player.

Maximum heart rate = 220 – age
= 220 – 20
= 200 beats per minute

Assuming then we wish to train the individual at 80% of maximum value, the following calculation:

Training heart rate = Training intensity(% of maximum) x maximum heart rate
= (80/100) x 200
= 160 beats per minute

Specificity of aerobic training

Aerobic fitness can be developed via a number of training methods, including steady paced activity, interval training, Fartlek training, circuits and small-sided games/practices (refer to Level 2 for descriptions on these methods of training). Specificity refers to the adaptations of the human body depending on the type of overload imposed upon it.

For example, coaches who realise the need for aerobic fitness, set about its development and improvement by using the preferred methods of continuous, steady paced training methods. Although this will improve aerobic functioning of the body, i.e. improvements in cardiovascular function, it will only develop aerobic fitness specific to that method of training, i.e. the body's ability to run continuously at a steady pace.

This does not suggest that continuous steady paced training is of no benefit to the basketball player, it has its place, particularly with those players who initially have very poor aerobic fitness levels. However, in designing the conditioning programme the coach must set about presenting a periodised and well-structured programme, which is specific to the demands of basketball.

The limited time that coaches have with players, particularly at semi-professional and amateur level, also enhances the need to focus on skill elements of the game. Table 3 provides a concise summary of the aerobic training focus for each phase of the year.

Table 3

Phase	Focus	Example training method
Off-season	Maintain aerobic fitness and limit unnecessary weight gain through games and various activities	• Steady paced running/cycling/rowing • General circuit training
General Preparation	Develop maximal aerobic power	• Fartlek endurance runs • Circuit type training

		• Small-sided games/practices • High intensity intervals
Specific Preparation	Specific aerobic fitness at high intensity	• Small-sided games/practices • High intensity intervals
Competition	Maintain specific aerobic fitness	• Small-sided games/practices

Putting it all together

Combining repetitions, sets and work intensity to achieve the intended outcome is a complex process with a variety of possible permutations. Provided in the following tables (4a, 4b and 4c) are some broad outlines to assist the coach in constructing the aerobic training programme at different phases of the year. These should be used in conjunction with the information provided in the periodisation section.

Table 4a *Suggested training principles for the general preparation phase*

Age Group	Conditioning Recommendations	Time per repetition/game (min: sec)	Repetitions	Sets	Work intensity(%HR_{max})	Work/ rest ratio	Predominant energy system
6-11	General small sided games	2:00-3:00	6-10	1-2	>70	1:2 to 1:1	Aerobic
	Basic circuits – press-ups; sit-ups; squat thrusts etc	N/A	8-12	1-2	75-80	1:2 to 1:1	Aerobic
12-15	General small sided games	3:00-4:00	3-4	2-4	>80	1:1	Aerobic
	Fartlek runs	12:00-15:00	1	1	Varied	N/A	Aerobic
	Basic circuits – press-ups; sit-ups; squat thrusts etc	N/A	10-15	2-4	75-80	1:1	Aerobic
16+	General small sided games	3:00-5:00	4-6	2-4	>80	1:1 to 1:0.25	Aerobic
	Fartlek runs	12:00-20:00	1	1-4	Varied	N/A	Aerobic
	Basic circuits – press-ups; sit-ups; squat thrusts etc	N/A	8-12	3-5	>75	1:1 to 1:0.25	Aerobic

Table 4b *Suggested training principles for the specific preparation phase*

Age Group	Conditioning Recommendations	Time per repetition/game (min: sec)	Repetitions	Sets	Work intensity(%HR_{max})	Work/ rest ratio	Predominant energy system
6-11	General small sided games	2:00-3:00	6-10	1-2	>80	1:2 to 1:1	Aerobic
	Basic circuits – press-ups; sit-ups; squat thrusts etc	N/A	8-12	1-2	75-80	1:2 to 1:1	Aerobic
12-15	Specific small sided games	2:00-4:00	3-4	2-4	>80	1:1	Aerobic
	Specific practices	0:30-1.00	3-4	3-5	80 max	1:1 to 1:2	Aerobic/ Lactic acid
	Specific circuits – press-ups; sit-ups; squat thrusts etc	N/A	10-15	2-3	75-80	1:1	Aerobic
16+	Specific small sided games	1:00-3:00	3-6	2-4	>85	1:1	Aerobic/ Lactic acid
	Specific practices	0:30-1.00	3-6	4-6	max	1:1 to 1:2	Lactic acid/ Aerobic

Table 4c *Suggested training principles for the competition phase*

Age Group	Conditioning Recommendations	Time per repetition/game (min: sec)	Repetitions	Sets	Work intensity(%HR_{max})	Work/ rest ratio	Predominant energy system
6-11	General small sided games	2:00-3:00	3-5	1-3	>80	1:2 to 1:1	Aerobic
	Basic circuits – press-ups; sit-ups; squat thrusts etc	N/A	N/A	1-2	>75	1:2 to 1:1	Aerobic
12-15	Specific small sided games	1:00-2:00	3-4	1-3	80-90	1:1	Aerobic/ Lactic acid
	Specific practices	0:30-1.00	3-4	1-3	>85	1:1 to 1:2	Aerobic/ Lactic acid
16+	Specific small sided games	1:00-2:00	4-6	1-3	>85	1:1	Lactic acid/ Aerobic
	Specific practices	0:30-1.00	3-4	1-3	max	1:3 to 1:2	Lactic acid/ Aerobic

NB: There will be much more emphasis on specific power, speed and agility, skills and tactics, plus the addition of weekly games during this period; therefore the volume of work is significantly reduced. Some children may play more than one game per week so the coach should also consider reducing the conditioning volume in light of preventing over-training.

Speed and Agility Development

Basketball players must possess speed and agility to be effective in both offensive and defensive situations. Some of the major principles that should be addressed when developing speed for basketball include:

Reaction time refers to the time between the presentation of a stimulus (e.g. outlet pass) and the response of the individual (e.g. player accelerates forward from the back court). This can be improved through exposure of the athlete to situations that replicate those similar to the game.

Acceleration is the ability to achieve maximum speed in the minimum time and is essential for the basketball player given the average sprint distance of 10-20 metres. Acceleration is also governed by running technique, which should include fast footwork, a driving arm action and forward leaning body position. The coach should be aware that this differs from the classic sprint start given the need of the individual to react to further external stimuli (i.e. other players, the ball) and body position due to ball handling – adapting the training to be as specific as possible.

Agility is the ability to change direction with the minimum loss of speed. Given the multidirectional nature of basketball (e.g. evasion, retreating) agility should be incorporated into most speed training drills. Improving agility incorporates development of **balance** to ensure stability is maintained when reacting to a stimulus and **co-ordination of movement**. Agility can be defined as 'programmed' where the patterns of movement are known by the athlete and 'random' where the individual must react to a given stimulus.

Incorporating speed and agility work into the coaching programme

Given that speed and agility work should, where possible, incorporate the training principle of specificity and that many aspects of skill development necessitate that the player moves at speed (e.g. filling the lanes, transition defence), the coach should always endeavour to emphasise speed development within the coaching programme. Likewise, in ensuring players develop appropriate speed and agility, practices should cover all scenarios.

Speed and agility development are best achieved with the player in a non-fatigued state, and are best performed in the early stages of a training session.

Table 5 provides some examples of practices where the coach could emphasise speed and agility development (specifically acceleration). These are included along with training guidelines and key coaching points to consider.

Table 5. Game specific practices for development of speed and agility

Corner drill

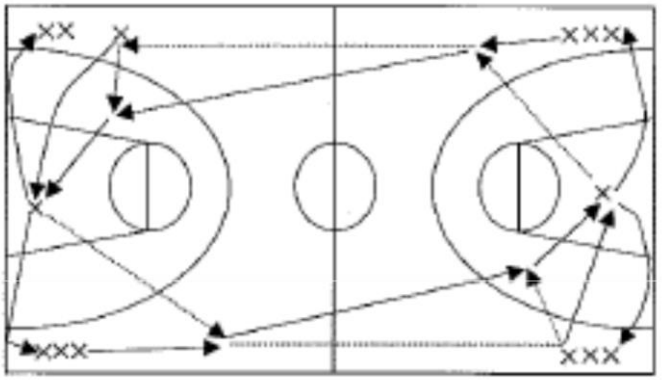
Aim
To develop speed.

Intensity of effort
100%.

Recovery interval
Long recovery while in queue.

Suggested reps
Run drill for five minutes.

Description
Four queues of equal numbers in the corner of the court. At least 12 players are needed for this drill to work on developing speed (if there are fewer players the drill should be used to develop speed endurance as the recovery times will be shortened). The drill should be run as shown in the diagram with two balls, starting at opposite ends. The player who feeds the ball in should rebound, make the outlet pass then join the next queue. Once players have laid up, they should turn right and join the feeding queue.



Practice	Training principles	Coaching points to consider
Offence 1. 1 v 1/2 v 2 (attacker) 2. Hit & offload 3. Scoot play (dummy half) 4. Support play 5. Kick return	• Acceleration 2-20 m • Max speed 40-60 m • 2 sets of 4-8 reps • 1-3min recovery	• Acceleration • Include getting up from floor • Emphasise footwork • Technique on change of direction • Balance (centre of gravity), co-ordination • Reaction to stimulus • Programmed agility • Random agility
Defence 1. 1 v 1/2 v 2 (defender) 2. Getting 'onside' 3. Marker play 4. Cover defence		

Further reading

Brewer, C. (2005) Strength and Conditioning for Games Players, sports coach UK, Leeds, UK, pp. 117-134.

Flexibility

Flexibility is the range of motion around a joint or series of joints in the body. It reflects the ability of the muscle and tendon to stretch within the physical restrictions of the joint. Remember that flexibility is specific to the joint or series of joints around which movement occurs; flexibility in one joint does not necessarily mean flexibility at another joint within the body.

Flexibility is determined by both internal and external factors.

Internal factors include:

- **Joint type and structure:** different joints have different structures resulting in different ranges of motion. For example a ball and socket joint (i.e. shoulder) has a greater range of motion than a hinge joint (i.e. knee)

- **Internal and external resistance:** the resistance in and around the joint caused by tightness of the soft tissue structures such as muscle, tendon and ligaments, as well as skin.

External factors include:

- **Age:** decreases in muscle compliance as a result of reduced physical activity and development of certain conditions (e.g. arthritis) causes a reduction in flexibility with increased age.
- **Sex:** Specific movements and joints appear to be more flexible in females, which may be a result of differences in bone structure (e.g. pelvis) and concentrations of certain hormones.
- **Training status:** a lack of exercise or physical activity leads to a reduction in flexibility. This is primarily caused by shortening of the muscle length and connective tissue, resulting in a reduced range of motion about the joint. Likewise, overuse of muscles and adoption of poor body posture leads to increased muscle stiffness and muscle shortening.

Why stretch?

Increases in joint flexibility enable the athlete to perform skills within a greater range of motion and potentially decrease the risk of injury. Following activity, muscle tissue adopts a shorter resting length, which if ignored results in a long-term reduction in the joint range of motion.

Repeated elongation of muscle via stretching exercises, results in permanent adaptation of the connective tissue, to maintain optimal range of motion.

Methods of developing flexibility

Although it is important that an athlete includes stretching as a part of their pre and post training/competition preparations, it is advisable that this element of training is included as a separate entity. The following approaches should be incorporated within the basketball conditioning programme.

Dynamic flexibility

Dynamic flexibility is the maximum range of motion possible in a joint during movement (Brewer, 2005). Dynamic stretches, using sport-specific actions, are commonly adopted before training or competition in order to prepare the neuromuscular system. Traditional dynamic stretches include shoulder rotations, high knees, walking lunges and butt flicks, while basketball specific actions (side-step/diagonal lunge, fend, trunk rotations) can also be included. It is advisable that the intensity of stretches progresses steadily from easy to more dynamic actions to prevent the risk of injury.

The coach is encouraged to read Strength and Conditioning for Games Players for a more detailed outline of dynamic stretches.

Static flexibility

Static stretching is the most traditionally accepted form of stretching, involving elongation of the muscle to the end point of the range of movement and holding for between 5-30 seconds. The stretch is regulated by the individual within comfortable limits of the joints' range of motion (i.e. no pain).

This is normally the safest method to adopt when attempting to improve flexibility, although some have suggested that it has little place in preparing the body prior to exercise as it does not replicate the specific musculature actions of dynamic activity.

Proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF) stretching

PNF incorporates passive stretching (i.e. force applied by a partner or device) to develop the range of motion around a joint. The most common technique is the contract-relax method, where the muscle is passively stretched to its full range (i.e. by the partner/device), followed by an active contraction and then relaxation. On relaxation the end range of motion is increased.

It has been suggested that PNF stretches allow a greater increase in the range of motion around a joint when compared to static stretches.

The coach should address the recommended further reading to further develop their knowledge of stretching techniques before addressing this issue practically.

Further reading
Brewer, C. (2005) Strength and Conditioning for Games Players, sports coach UK, Leeds, UK, pp. 135-156.

Putting it all together

Implications for coaching the amateur or part-time player

For the coach dealing with players on a part-time or amateur basis, separate strength and conditioning sessions co-ordinated by a specialist coach are, more often than not, an unattainable luxury. In this situation, the coach must look to incorporate the strength and conditioning elements into the training schedule. The need to develop specific fitness attributes of players while incorporating relevant skills is necessary not only to ensure optimal development, but also to maximise the time available.

All strength and conditioning sessions should incorporate the following:

1. Warm-up
   - General
   - Specific
2. Speed, agility and footwork development
3. Specific strength and power development
4. Specific endurance
5. Cool-down

Obviously, the focus of the training cycle will determine the training focus and volume; however, table 6 provides an example training session to illustrate the point.

Time	Session
20 min	**Warm-up (General)** 1. Passing drill, e.g. 4 corners, pass and follow 2. Gentle dynamic stretch (major muscle groups) 3. Passing drill, repeat above at increased tempo, e.g. include another ball 4. Dynamic stretch, (hip flexors/extensors, butt flicks, lunges, groin, shoulders, chest) **Warm-up (Specific)** 1. Cross drill 2. Dynamic stretch 3. Cross drill into 2 v 2 with 4 passes (progress eventually to contact & offloads Water
20 min	**Speed and agility development** Forwards/pivots: 2 v 2 in a 10 x 15 m grid. Players start, one on each corner, sprint to opposite corner, attacking team pick up ball and then attack against defenders working unders or overs. 3 x 4 reps per player, 90 recovery. Emphasise acceleration, footwork and communication. Outside backs: 1 v 1 in 15 x 30 m grid. Defender kicks ball behind attacker who turns to retrieve ball, defender retreats to own try line then turns to defend (touch tackle) against attacker who has retrieved ball from kick and then attempts to score. 4 x 3 reps, 2 minute walk recovery. Emphasise balance, reaction to stimulus, speed and footwork to beat defender. Water
10 min	**Strength and Power** Water

30 min	**Technical/tactical**
20 min	**Endurance** 6 v 6 game simulation (attack v defence) 20 x 50 m channel. 4 x 4 minutes, 1 minute recovery.
15 min	**Cool-down** Steady jog PNF stretching (chest, shoulders, hamstrings, quads, groin)

In summary

Basketball can be described as an intermittent sport, requiring appropriate development of all energy systems. In particular, players need a moderate to high aerobic power combined with strength, power, speed and agility to play at the highest level. The wide range of physical attributes, combined with high skill levels, mean that training must be specific to ensure optimal development, but also to maximise the time available.

References

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Task 1 - Underpinning physiology

1. Describe the three main pathways by which energy is formed in the body, using sport-specific examples to explain your answer.

Energy system	Description	Sport-specific example

2. During a transition drill, continuous 3 v 2 defensive set lasting approximately 60-seconds, estimate the % contribution from each energy system.

Energy system	% contribution

3. List and describe the major muscle fibre types

Fibre type	Description

4. Discuss, in relation to muscle fibre adaptation, why it is important to avoid long distance, steady-paced endurance training when designing an aerobic training programme for the basketball player.

Task 2 - Developing aerobic fitness

1. Discuss why aerobic fitness is such an important component for the basketball player.

2. Aerobic fitness can be developed via the use of small-sided games/practices. In the table below, list some of the advantages and disadvantages of this approach.

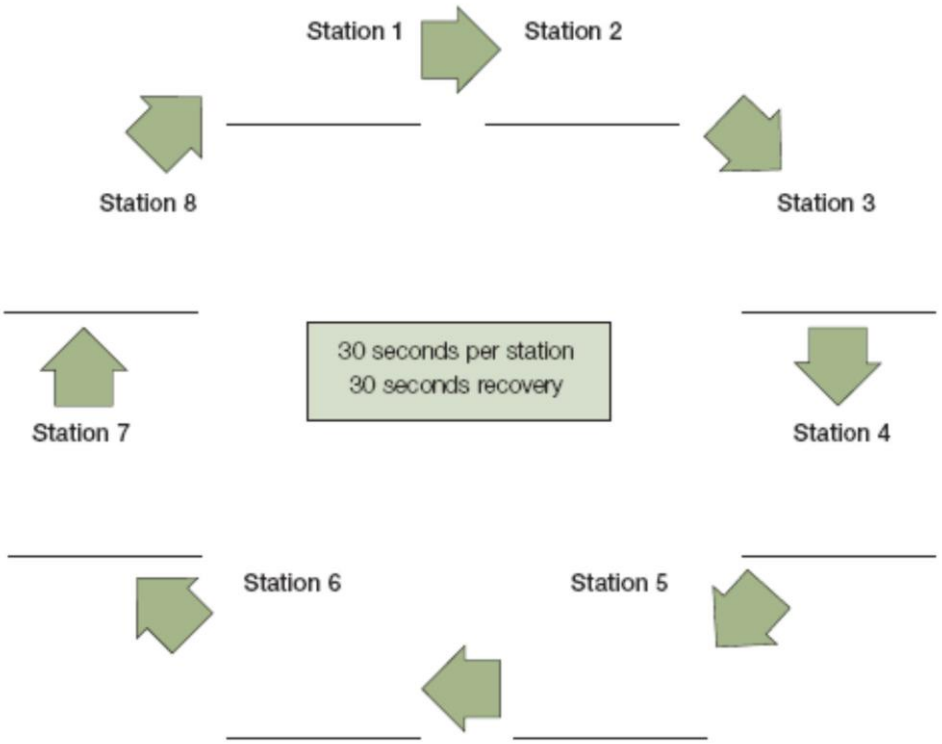
Advantages	Disadvantages

3. Completing the table below, provide examples of training practices for each phase of the training year including training emphasis, practice, intensity, volume and work to rest ratio.

Phase	Training Emphasis	Practice Type	Intensity	Volume	Work to rest
Off- Season	Maintain aerobic	Rowing	70% HRmax	1 x 30 min	NA
General preparation					
Specific preparation					
Competition					

4. Circuit training is an acknowledged method for developing aerobic fitness in all age groups. Working to the guidelines of 8 stations, 30 seconds per station with 30 seconds recovery between exercises, devise a basketball-specific circuit. Complete the diagram Task 2 (Q4) below.

Task 2 (Q4) - Basketball specific circuit to develop aerobic fitness



Station	Exercise	Description
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		

Task 2 (Q5) - Small-sided practice to develop aerobic fitness

Technical element:		Area dimensions:		Player numbers:	
Intended work intensity:		Repetition duration:		Repetitions and sets:	
Work to rest ratio:					
General drill details:					
Comments:					

Coaches should demonstrate this practice as part of the practical element

Task 3 - Developing speed and agility

1. Discuss why speed and agility are important components for the basketball player, providing examples to explain your answer.

2. Devise two practices that incorporate a speed and agility component, focusing on a) offence and b) defence. You should include detail of the practice, repetitions, sets and recovery.

Description of practice	Reps	Sets	Recovery	Key coaching points
Offence				
Defence				

Task 4 - Developing flexibility

1. Why should the conditioning programme include flexibility training?

2. Identify FOUR factors that would affect an individual's flexibility.

3. Devise a suitable stretching routine for the following scenarios, including as much detail as possible about the exercise (e.g. type of stretch, number of repetitions, and time of stretch) and why you have selected each exercise.

   a. Pre-match/training

   b. General flexibility development

4. Given the reluctance of many players to engage in flexibility training, write a 1 page document to be handed to your players identifying the benefits of flexibility training. This should be included in your coaching portfolio.

Psychology

Introduction

As a Level One basketball coach you need to understand the multitude of qualities and knowledge that fuse together to make a good coach. One area that contributes to this knowledge and can instil such qualities is the area of sport psychology. You therefore need to have a clear understanding about what sport psychology is, how it applies to your sport, and why it is important for coaches to understand and implement sport psychology principles into their preparation and practice. You will also need to understand some of the many motives underpinning participation and performance.

You will need to have an awareness of basic principles of motivation and personality that underpin understanding of individual behaviour. This awareness should help you to shape motivation, behaviour, enthusiasm and enjoyment for basketball throughout the training sessions that you plan and deliver.

This section is designed to develop this knowledge and on successful completion you should:

- Have an understanding of what sport psychology is and how it applies to basketball and coaching practice.
- Appreciate some of the major differences in personality and motivational types and how this can impact upon coaching effectiveness.
- Be aware of individual differences and how to manage them most effectively in your sessions.
- Have been introduced to some strategies that can help you to integrate the above knowledge into your coaching practice.

Section A: What is Sport Psychology?

'Sport psychology is the scientific study of people and their behaviours in sport and exercise contexts and the practical application of that knowledge' (Gill, 2000). Applied sport psychology is the part that relates to practically applying that scientific knowledge through working with coaches and athletes as a sport psychology consultant.

However, whilst in recent years applied sport psychology has become more accepted and has received increasing media attention, the role of an **Applied Sport Psychologist** (ASP) and what they actually 'do' – has remained something of a mystery to many coaches and athletes alike.

Task 1

Have a go at identifying what you think the role of an Applied Sport Psychologist might be if they came to work with the team that you coach. What kinds of things would you expect them to do? How would you judge their effectiveness?

Essentially current applied sport psychology practice focuses on enhancing personal development and performance – on helping athletes reach their potential and consistently attain strong performances through the partnership between coach, athlete and ASP. The most simplistic way of viewing the difference between coach and ASP is that the coach focuses on the technical and physical aspects of sport whereas the ASP focuses on the mental aspects.

Importantly though both coaches and ASP's have the same goals and are involved in sport for the same things – to enhance the personal development and performance of the players they work with.

Consider the following questions:

- Would understanding what motivates people to get involved in basketball and to continue playing be useful for a coach?
- Would understanding how these motives for involvement change throughout an athlete's lifespan be important?
- Would understanding whether certain players are psychologically more suited to playing, continuing and being successful at basketball be interesting?
- Would knowing how to shape motivation, behaviour, personalities, enthusiasm and enjoyment through coaching practices make you a more successful coach?

If you answered 'yes' to any of the above questions then you have already begun to acknowledge the potential relevance and importance of integrating sport psychology practice into your coaching sessions. You have begun to realise the importance of getting to know your athlete's minds as well as their bodies.

> *The mind is the athlete; the body is simply the means it uses to run faster or longer, jump higher, shoot straighter, kick better, swim harder, hit further or box better.*
>
> Bryce Courtney, The Power of One, 1992

Section B – Understanding your Players

Coaches often relate to their team very well but sometimes this is at the expense of getting to know individual players. Given that each individual on your team probably has slightly different reasons for participating in basketball, and has slightly different likes and dislikes, you are much more likely to create an effective coaching session if you can relate well to each individual within the group rather than the group as a whole. Getting to know your players as people and not simply as basketball players will be of benefit.

Task 2

Try to design a player information sheet that each of your current team could complete (as well as new players) to help you to get to know them a little better both as basketball players and individuals outside of this environment (see appendix 1 for an example of a player information sheet once you have finished!)

E.g. List the 3 most important things you enjoy about playing basketball.
E.g. Who is your basketball idol and why?

Understanding Your Players Personalities

One of the things that make us unique is our personality. Some aspects of our personality are stable and some change from situation to situation. These are called traits and states.

- **Traits** – are stable and enduring internal attributes. They are inflexible aspects of personality and do not change.
- **States** – are the more unstable aspects of personality and can change with time, experience and the situation.

The players you coach will all have different personality traits and states. Some of those that have been heavily researched within sport psychology are trait and state anxiety, trait and state sport confidence, mood states, self-esteem and tests of attention and concentration. These individual differences mean that players each come to your training sessions with different wants and needs.

Consider a player who is quite anxious at both training and matches. This anxiety appears to be present regardless of whether he/she is working individually or as part of a team; irrespective of whether he/she is rehearsing a well-learnt skill or trying to learn a new one. It is likely that this player suffers from **high trait anxiety**, which means that he/she experiences high state anxiety in numerous situations. On the other hand consider a player who shows very little nerves or anxiety in any training scenario but who becomes extremely anxious just prior to competition. He/she is likely to have **low trait anxiety** and only suffer from **state anxiety** brought on from that specific situation.

Another way to identify different types of personalities is through measuring a player's level of introversion and extroversion. You will no doubt have noticed through your coaching experiences that some players you work with are extroverts and some are introverts.

- **Introverts** – direct interest inwards towards their own thoughts and feelings rather than the wider social world.
- **Extroverts** – direct interest outwards towards social contacts. More concerned with external events than inner feelings

Task 3

How do you distinguish between those players who are introverts and those that are extroverts? How might they behave differently?

Introverts	**Extroverts**

What could you do to meet the needs of players who you consider to have high levels of introversion/extroversion in your sessions?

Introversion	**Extroversion**

Coaches should not underestimate their potential impact upon a player's personality. When working with impressionable young athletes the coaching environment you set up can heighten or alleviate anxiety, increase or decrease self-confidence, or motivate or demotivate the individuals within it.

Understanding your Players Motivation

What is Motivation?

In simple terms motivation refers to the direction and intensity of effort. A coach who turns up to practice every week (direction) and has spent a great deal of time preparing a session (intensity) is said to be highly motivated. A coach who simply turns up without preparing adequately is showing directional motivation but no intensity.

Task 4

Using your current coaching experiences as a guide, try to identify as many possible reasons as you can why individuals participate in basketball.

The above task begins to highlight that individuals are motivated to become involved and remain committed to their sport for different reasons – they are motivated by different things. Two of the most common types of motivation are **intrinsic** and **extrinsic**.

- **Intrinsic** – this type of motivation refers to individuals who enjoy competition, focus on having fun and want to learn skills to the best of their ability. Their motivation is internal
- **Extrinsic** – this type of motivation refers to individuals who train and compete because they feel they ought to, or because they might gain some reward or recognition for doing so e.g., trophies, money, endorsements. Their motivation is external.

Coaches should be aware that as psychological maturation unfolds player's motivations for playing basketball might also alter. Research suggests that young children are intrinsically motivated to play sport.

Consider a child who could practice a skill all day long without any reward, who runs around the court with no other goal in mind apart from to enjoy themselves and become a better player. Now contrast this with an older child who trains and competes because he/she feels he/she ought to or because he/she wants recognition from you as a coach or his teammates. He/she constantly competes with the rest of the group and expects some sort of tangible reward if he/she is successful (e.g. to be singled out by you as a good player in front of others, to receive a pat on the back, or a prize)

The ages at which these changes in motivation occur is notional and will vary from player to player although research suggests that the most likely time is between the ages of 10-11. Providing a coaching environment which motivates

those players who remain intrinsically motivated whilst providing enough extrinsic rewards for those who are externally motivated is a delicate balancing act, the success of which might have implications for player's commitment to basketball.

Task 5

Considering the different ways that your players might be motivated try to design a one hour session which will meet the needs of a group of players who want the following from basketball.

1. To socialise, have fun and be with friends

2. To improve their skills, fitness and strength

3. To compete successfully

Basically all individuals, no matter what their age are motivated to feel competent. Perceptions of and judgements about competence will vary from person to person but if you know your players well enough to make them feel competent throughout the sessions you coach you are much more likely to retain motivated, happy players.

Task 6

Develop a weekly checklist of things you, as a coach, need to do to understand and communicate effectively with your players.

Player Information Sheet – Example

This sheet is intended to help me get to know you a little better both as players and as individuals outside of basketball. Please try to fill in the sheet as completely as possible.

List the 3 things you most enjoy about playing basketball

1)

2)

3)

List the 3 things you least enjoy about playing basketball

1)

2)

3)

Who is your basketball idol and why?

Who is your favourite team and why?

What are the things you most like to do in training?

What are the best things about matches?

What is your favourite type of music? Favourite song at the moment?

What is your favourite food?

What is your favourite film?

What do you think your strengths are as a player?

What do you think your weaknesses are as a player / areas for improvement?

How would a TV commentator summarise you as a player?

List the 3 most important things you need to do to get better this season?

1)

2)

3)

Psychology Part 2

Introduction

As a Level Two Basketball coach you need to have an awareness of the fundamental principles of motivation and personality which will underpin understanding of individual behaviour. The coach should be aware that their planning and delivery should take into account the differing motives and personalities of participants. Furthermore, as coaches will need to be adept at working with individuals at various stages of development, an understanding of psychological change and maturation is essential. The coach should also have an appreciation of the psychological and social changes that might occur between the child and the adult basketball player, and consider their role in this transition.

This section is designed to develop this knowledge and therefore on successful completion you should:

- Have an understanding of contemporary theories of motivation and behaviour
- Be aware of psychological development and maturation and how to adapt basketball coaching behaviour in relation to this
- Be able to use basic psychological skills to enhance motivation and improve skill development/performance

Section A: Motivation

What is motivation?

Motivation can be defined most simply as relating to the direction and intensity of effort. Direction refers to whether an individual seeks out, approaches or is attracted to certain situations. Intensity refers to the level of effort a person puts in.

A basketball player who arrives early to practice, never misses a session (direction) and puts in 100% effort in all aspects of training (intensity) would be said to be highly motivated. However, it is possible that some players may have directional motivation but lack intensity. For example, they might turn up to training every week to feel part of a team (direction) but fail to expend much effort on the training pitch (intensity).

Task 1

Using your current coaching experiences as a guide, try to identify as many possible reasons as you can why individuals participate in basketball.

The above task begins to highlight that individuals are motivated to become involved and remain committed to their sport for different reasons – they are motivated by different things. Two of the most common types of motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic

- **Intrinsic** – this type of motivation refers to individuals who enjoy competition, focus on having fun and want to learn skills to the best of their ability. **Their motivation is internal**.
- **Extrinsic** – this type of motivation refers to individuals who train and compete because they feel they ought to, or because they might gain some reward or recognition for doing so e.g., trophies, money, endorsements. **Their motivation is external**.

Look back at the previous task and see how many of the reasons you identified fall into either intrinsic or extrinsic categories.

Why is it important for coaches to know this?

Coaches should not underestimate their impact upon the climate within which they work: **leaders influence motivation**.

Successful coaches need to be able to understand their players and adapt the learning environment accordingly. Although it is not always easy, getting to know individual personalities and motivational needs within a team will allow you to individualise sessions and get the best from all your players. Remember, each individual will have unique motives for participation.

Achievement Goal Theory

According to this theory three things interact to determine a person's motivation; achievement goals, perceived ability and achievement behaviour.

Achievement goals can be broken down into two types, **outcome** goal orientation and **task** goal orientation

- **Outcome goal orientation** – people who are outcome orientated are motivated to demonstrate high ability and beat others. Their motivation is therefore termed other references
- **Task goal orientation** – People who are task orientated are motivated to improve upon their last performance. Their motivation is therefore termed self-references

These goal orientations (or biases) are important because they interact with individuals' perceptions of competence and ability.

Consider a basketball player who only competes because they want to win trophies, and be the best player in the league. This player has adopted an outcome goal orientation where the focus is on comparing themselves to others. This player will therefore feel good about their selves (have high perceptions of competence and ability) when he/she wins, but will feel bad (have low perceptions of competence and ability) when he/she loses. Therefore every time this player loses their motivation to continue playing may be damaged and dropout is more likely.

Consider another player who plays to see how much they can improve on a weekly, monthly and seasonal basis. They have adopted a task goal orientation where the focus is on improving upon their own past performance. Perceived ability in this case is not based upon comparison with others.

Most people are a mixture of these two motivational orientations however; research indicates that people tend to be higher in either one or the other.

Behaviours Associated With Outcome And Task Orientations

Task 2

Using the knowledge gained above try to generate some ideas regarding the types of behaviour coaches might observe from people with either an outcome orientation or a task orientation.

Outcome Orientation	Task Orientation

Task orientated individuals tend to:

- Have a strong work ethic
- Persist in the face of failure and/or lack of form
- Try hard to master new skills
- Be happy to train individually
- Select challenging tasks for themselves

Outcome orientated individuals tend to:

- Be more overtly competitive
- Use deviant behaviour to gain the desired outcome
- Make excuses for poor performance
- Reduce their efforts if they are losing
- Select tasks where they are guaranteed success

As such the majority of research into this area suggests that it is better for athletes to be higher in task orientation than in outcome orientation

Determining Individual Player Motivation

Having discussed and gained feedback from you about the ways in which you have observed player motivation in the past it would now be useful to create a system or exercise that you could use within your coaching to help you determine player's motivational orientation (outcome or task).

Task 3

Try to think about how you might integrate specific tasks to test for the presence of either an outcome or a task orientation in your players. How would you implement this?

Section B: Psychology of Maturation and Development

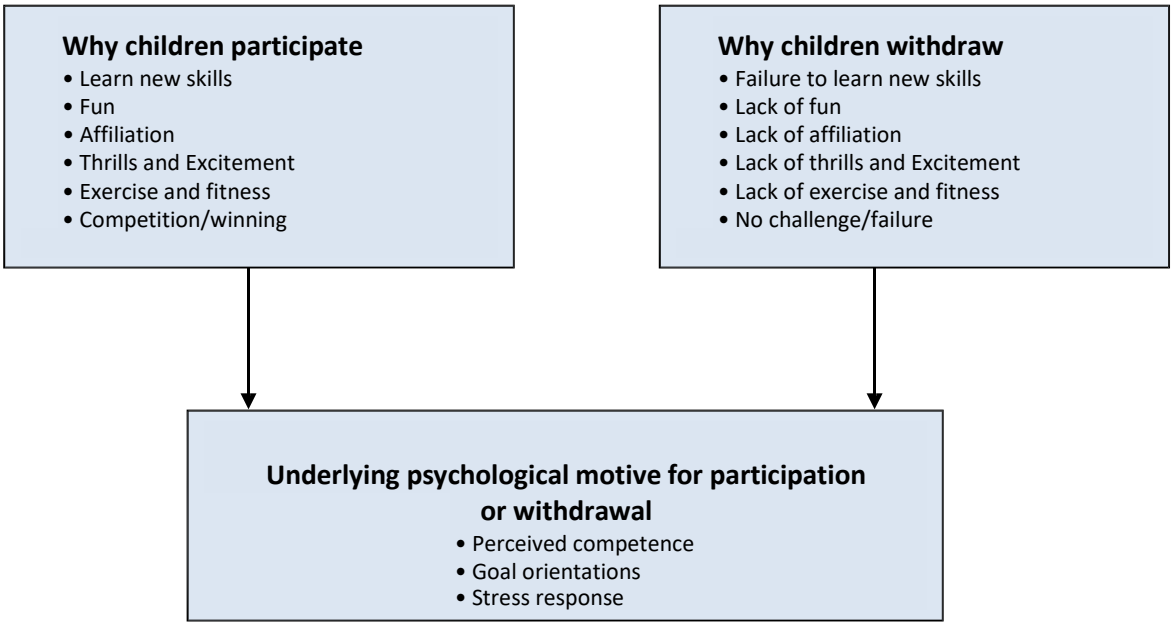
Tracking Participation Through Developmental Years

Children's participation in sport is said to peak between the ages of 10 and 13 and then steadily decline until the ages of 18. Dropout rates for organised youth sport programmes have said to range from 30-40% in any given year. This equates to potentially losing 3 to 4 children out of 10 per season.

Task 4

Consider the above statistics and generate as many reasons as you can for children dropping out of sport. If there are specific ages whereby some of these reasons become more pertinent please also include these alongside the reason given.

Diagram 1



Quite often the reasons young athletes give for participation and dropping out are superficial responses and don't therefore give much insight into the deeper, underlying motives that some sport psychology research has unearthed. For example, many children who drop out often have low perceived competence, tend to be outcome orientated and experience feelings of stress and anxiety associated with their sport.

HOW ARE PARTICIPATION AND MOTIVATION LINKED?

Some of these changes in motivation and therefore participation arise due to changes in perceptions of ability. Research suggests that up until about the age of 10 children cannot differentiate properly between effort and ability. They will play for the sake of playing and are very task orientated and self-references. However from the age of 10 the onset of psychological maturation determines that children begin to notice and care about how they compare to others.

They begin to notice that other children have either higher or lower levels of ability than themselves. They become other-references. They also recognise that putting in 100% effort does not always work if you haven't got ability. As such this transitional stage is an important one for coaches to become aware of as it has implications for motivation, dropout and Long Term Athlete Development.

How can the coaching environment influence dropout?

As coaches you should not underestimate your impact upon both participation and dropout. Research has shown specific coaching behaviours that are associated with both positive and negative psychological development in children. Coaches should try to avoid the following negative approaches to motivation.

- **Intimidation:** An athlete is not playing well in practice, so in front of the team the coach tells him that if he doesn't improve immediately he'll be dropped for the next game.
- **Criticism:** A player makes an error during the first ten minutes of the game which allows the opposition to score and the coach yells 'what is the matter with you at the moment, can't you do anything right'.
- **Training as Punishment:** A coach is unhappy with the team's commitment and effort during practice and tells them all to run suicides until he commands them to stop.
- **Guilt:** 'You should feel ashamed of yourselves today. You let yourselves down, you let me down and you let your parents down'.

Coaches should also be aware of the importance of friends and peers when working with young players. Allowing powerful cliques to form whose members create an outcome oriented environment can be dangerous. Disbanding these cliques and promoting a more task environment will be more positive for the motivation of the group as a whole.

Implications For Coaches

Coaches obviously need to be aware of both the motivational orientations (outcome or task) of their players and the issues of maturation that coincide with changes in perceptions of effort and ability. However, this awareness needs to be coupled with knowledge of how to implement positive changes in their coaching practices to reduce the risk of dropout.

Task 5

Using the knowledge you have gained so far, and reflecting upon your current coaching practices try to identify three things that you could include in your coaching sessions to reduce dropout risk.

Example: Rewarding athletes that make the greatest improvement regardless of their ability.

1.

2.

3.

Many of the things that coaches need to do in order to foster a positive environment that retains participants revolves' around the principle of positive reinforcement. This reinforcement consists of implementing the following things into your coaching.

- **Choosing Effective Rewards** – rewards should meet the needs of those receiving them. Knowing your athletes personalities, goal orientations and stage of development will enable you to decide whether they simply need a smile or a pat on the back or if a medal or a team party is more appropriate.
- **Reward Appropriate Behaviours** – you cannot reward players every time they do something right. You will need to decide on the most important and appropriate behaviours to reward (it's a good idea to learn to reward more behaviours than simply the outcome, or winning)
- **Reward Skill Improvement** – when players are learning new skills it's a good idea to reward small improvements. For example a stand-off might gain possession of the ball in the 5th phase and make the decision to kick for touch. He may execute the kick well but fail to have noticed an opposing player ready to intercept his kick on the sideline.
- **Reward Performance, Not Only Outcome** – Your team may play very well and be implementing the new patterns of play that you have been teaching them with accuracy. However, if they are playing the in-form side and contenders to win the league they may still lose despite this great performance.
- **Reward Effort** – research has shown that children who receive praise related to effort are more likely to persist longer in their chosen sport.
- **Reward Emotional and Social Skills** – players who demonstrate good sportsmanship, judgement and self-control should be praised.
- **Provide Performance Feedback** – giving good technical feedback demonstrates that you care. Research has shown that this type of feedback enhances performance.

Parental Influences

Aside from the coach and the peer group the most important influence upon a child's motivation and involvement in sport are their parents. This influence can either be a positive or a negative one. I am sure as coaches you have experienced parents who fit into both these categories!

The challenge for coaches is to be aware of the ways in which parents can positively affect the experience for children and encourage parents to behave in this way. At the same time trying to eliminate the negative behaviours also needs to be addressed.

One way to do this is to educate parents. Organising a meeting with the parents at the start of the season to discuss the coaches' qualifications and philosophy is recommended. In addition talking about the role played by the parents should help to outline the coaches' expectations.

Section C: Creating a Motivating Learning Environment

Factors To Take Into Consideration – A Recap

Task 6

Please use the table below to list the key factors that you believe may impact upon the motivation of players.

The main things said to impact upon athlete's motivation are

- **Motivational Orientations** – Outcome and ego orientation. If a player is outcome orientated their priority is to demonstrate high ability and beat others. If a player is task orientated they play to improve their skills and build upon their own previous performances.
- **Maturation and Development** – As children grow older their motives for participation change. It is likely that the task orientation they had when they were younger is being challenged by a rising outcome orientation, which places emphasis on social comparison. In addition levels of dropout are likely to be increasing at this time.
- **The Coaching Environment** - Coaches need to be fully aware of their influential position. Coaching behaviours and practices need to be structured appropriately in order to foster a positive learning environment.

Influencing The Learning Environment

Research supports the notion that a task-oriented learning environment can foster intrinsic motivation, task orientation and self-confidence. The acronym **TARGET** was developed to represent some guidelines that would help teachers/coaches foster the correct learning environment.

- **Tasks.** Focus on learning and task involvement. Play down competitive and social comparison aspects and focus more on learning new skills.
- **Authority.** Allowing players to participate in the decision-making process (e.g., giving them a choice of drills).
- **Reward**. Reward for improvement, not social comparison (e.g., if a player reduces their handling errors reward them for this even if they perform less well at this than other players)
- **Grouping.** Create co-operative learning climates within groups. Have players work together to solve problems.
- **Evaluation.** Have evaluations based on personal improvement. Evaluate progress, not just who is best at a given task.

- **Timing.** Proper timing is critical for all the above. Give feedback as soon as is possible after the player performs.

Task 7

Design/adapt a session plan to show evidence of TARGET.

Goal Setting As A Motivational Tool

Research has consistently demonstrated that athletes who set goals properly are more motivated and attain much higher standards than those athletes of a similar ability who don't set them. Goal setting can be used on both an individual and team basis but must be reviewed regularly if it's to be successful. It's just as important for the coach to have goals as it is for the players.

One of the pitfalls of goal setting is that because it's so easy to do it's often overdone or approached and undertaken incorrectly. How many of you have made New Year resolutions that have fallen by the wayside after a matter of days or weeks? How many players have told you that they are going to work hard on something only for you to never witness them doing so?

Adhering to the following principles should help.

Principles Of Good Goal Setting

The acronym **SMARTS** is well used in goal setting literature because it highlights the key criteria that goals should have if they are to be realised.

- **Specific – Goals should indicate precisely what is to be done. 'I want to become a better player' is not specific enough. 'I want to improve my free throw percentage by 10%' is better.**
- **Measurable – is it quantifiable? If you don't have match statistics available to you then the above goal might be hard to measure.**
- **Action oriented – Goals should indicate something that needs to be done.**
- **Realistic – Make sure your goals are achievable with hard work. A coach whose team has been newly promoted and who sets a goal to win the league in the current season and gain immediate promotion once more is not being realistic.**
- **Timely. Make sure you identify a point in time when your goals will be realised.**
- **Self-determined**. Goals should be set by, or have input from the participant. A coach who sets goals solely for his team or for individuals within that team without their input will not foster the motivation necessary in their players to achieve these goals.

Goals can also be outcome, process, or performance based.

- **Outcome goals** typically focus upon the outcome of an event, such as winning a match. The problem with these goals is that they are not entirely controllable by the individual or the team. The team could set a goal of winning a tournament but then come up against a much more experienced team in the second round and lose despite playing well. Similarly, a player could set a goal to win the match but if the rest of the team play poorly it is unlikely that this goal will be realised.
- **Process Goals** focus upon the actions an individual must undertake in order to perform well. For example a player may focus upon his pre-shot routine at the free throw line rather than thinking that he /she must score. Often if process goals are met outcome goals follow.
- **Performance Goals** focus on achieving standards or performance objectives independently of other competitors, usually by comparing performance with previous performance. Improving the free throw percentage made by the team would be an example of a performance goal.

Individuals should also have long, medium and short term goals to work towards.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO INTRODUCE GOAL SETTING

One of the most common ways to introduce goal setting to individuals and teams involves the use of goal setting log-books or diaries. The example below demonstrates how a player with the goal of improving self-control might integrate working towards this goal in both training and competition.

AREA	Details on improvements to make	Present rating (0-10)	Rating in 3 months time	How can these improvements be made – through training and competition?
Self-control	I need to be able to control my emotions and be more consistent in what I show and feel in games. Learn when to be aggressive and when to control myself	5	8	Training – work hard at: i) portraying positive, consistent body language; ii) not being provoked by team mates or opposition Competition – being aggressive at the right times, within the rules of the game. Walk away from any scuffles. Use coaches to give feedback on this on competition day (as well as in training).

Task 8

Think about where you are currently as a coach and choose 4 things that you need to improve over the next 3 months:

1

2

3

4

For each of the improvements above, complete the table overleaf, giving more detail i.e. What specifically do you need to improve, how much do you want to improve in the next three months?

Consider what you can do in training and in competition to make these improvements. Remember to set process, performance and outcome goals.

AREA	Details on improvements to make	Present rating (0-10)	Rating in 3 months time	How can these improvements be made – through training and competition?
1				Training
				Competition
2				Training
				Competition
3				Training
				Competition
4				Training
				Competition

You could then do this on a weekly basis. Below is a template for how you might approach this.

Number one is an example of how to complete the grid.

Aims for this week	**How to attain?**	**Progress on this (0-10)**	**Points for improvement**
1. Be aggressive but controlled in the game on Sunday	i) follow my pre-match preparation plan ii) concentrate on key technical points iii) make sure you ask coach for feedback on the day	8/10 – was aggressive throughout. Managed to maintain control most of the time – but on one occasion I responded to a comment an opponent made when I shouldn't have.	Need to work more with my coach on my plan to get me through the game. Pre-match plan seems to be working well though.
2.			
3.			
4.			

It would be a good idea to then complete the same exercise for goals that you wish to achieve in the next week and then the next training session, always bearing in mind how they will help you to achieve your long term goals.

Psychology – Improving Performance

Introduction

As a Level 3 basketball coach you need to begin to understand the importance of psychological skills and assessment at both an individual and a team level. Being able to use needs analysis types of assessment with individuals and enhance awareness of the dynamics at play within the team will help you to manage a team unit which functions effectively. The coach should be aware that talented individuals do not always make the best team players. Therefore an understanding of team dynamics, cohesion and leadership will make you more adept at planning and delivering sessions and introducing strategies to enhance these dynamics within your squad.

Furthermore, having an awareness of the psychological skills and tools that you can integrate within your coaching practice to enhance individual and team performance is also something that warrants attention at this level.

This section is designed to develop this knowledge and on successful completion of the tasks you should:

- Have an understanding of team dynamics, cohesion and leadership.
- Have an understanding of basic psychological assessment (individual and team).
- Be able to implement these types of assessment into your coaching.
- Have gained additional understanding of specific psychological skills that underpin individual and team performance.
- Be able to use and integrate psychological skills into coaching sessions.

Section A: Assessing the Individual

Every team is made up of a number of individuals who all have different perceptions of their strengths, weaknesses, needs and wants. Understanding, appreciating and accounting for these individual differences within your coaching practice becomes additionally important as the level at which you expect your players to perform at increases.

The **Performance Profile** is a practical tool that coaches can use with their performers to identify their strengths and weaknesses and pinpoint areas for improvement. This 'needs analysis' provides both coach and player with a thought provoking and user friendly guide which can help them to:

- Identify the important components of performance.
- Clarify and agree training priorities.
- Set goals.
- Gauge the success of your coaching.

Performance Profiling is a technique useful for understanding and quantifying perceptions about the player's ability and performance. It will specifically be useful for you as a coach because it should help:

- Increase the awareness you and your performers have about what constitutes top performance.
- Understand the perspective of your player (and vice versa).
- Direct training to meet agreed needs.
- Monitor progress towards agreed goals.
- Analyse competition performances.

Performance profiling has its basis in **Personal Construct Theory** which states that each player has a different way of making sense of their sporting experiences and that in order to understand that viewpoint (and therefore your player) you need to step into their shoes and see the experience from their perspective. You can then identify and discuss any discrepancies that may arise between your own perceptions and those of your players.

Task 1

Imagine one of your players producing a perfect performance or reflect on the performances of a top performer in basketball. Write down the qualities that constitute these top performances under the relevant subheadings. What makes them such a good player? What makes a good performance? Try to generate as many qualities as you can.

Physical (e.g. strength)	Attitudinal (e.g. competitiveness)	Psychological (mental skills, e.g. anxiety control)	Technical (e.g. tactics)

Hopefully you have identified a range of qualities for each category. Now go back to the grid and place an asterisk by the 20 qualities that you feel are the most important.

It is also useful to consider what you mean by each of these qualities as it can then be communicated to others much more effectively.

Task 2

Using a combination of the attitudinal and psychological qualities that you have identified in task one list 5 below and provide a brief definition of each.

Attitudinal or Psychological Quality	Definition
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Using The Performance Profile With Your Players

Now that you have been introduced to what the Performance Profile is and have attempted to work through the first stages of the process yourselves it is time to see how the full process could be implemented with your own players.

The first stage takes the athlete through the same process as you have just completed in task one i.e., generating qualities that they believe underpin top performance (a blank copy of this sheet has been provided for you to photocopy in appendix 1). Prior to your player(s) filling this in it may be useful to communicate to them that there are no right or wrong answers and that they can list as many qualities as they like. Ask them to aim for at least 20. If they struggle you can prompt them, although make sure that you always use the descriptions given by the player.

Once they have done this they should be asked to select the twenty most important qualities required to achieve top performance, define them (as you have done in task 2) and list them in a Performance Profile grid [see below] (a blank copy of which can be found in appendix 2). They are then asked to identify three additional things on this grid

- Their ideal level for each quality (on a scale of 1-10)
- Their current level for each quality (on a scale of 1-10)
- The discrepancy between their ideal level and their current level for each quality.

PERFORMANCE PROFILE GRID

Player Name:	**Position:**		**Date:**
Quality	**Ideal Level (0-10)**	**Current Level (0-10)**	**Discrepancy between Ideal & Current Level**
Motivation	10	8	2
Strength	10	5	5*
Power	10	8	2
Performing under Pressure	10	3	7*
Speed	10	9	1
Confidence	10	6	4*

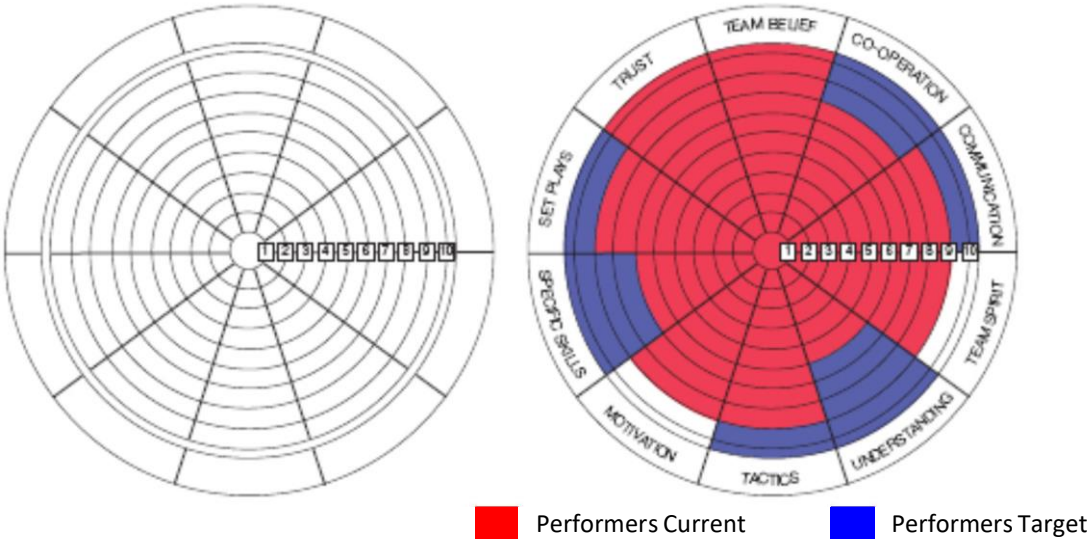
The example above shows a player who considers that their motivation, power and speed are strong aspects of their game, which are near to their ideal level. However, their strength, performance under pressure, and confidence has high discrepancies that warrant further attention *(asterixed above).

As their coach you should also fill out the Performance Profile Grid, assessing your player on each of the qualities that they have generated and defined for you. At the end of this process both you and the player will have independently identified those areas that have the highest discrepancies. These will be the areas that need the most attention.

It is generally recommended that a player only pick out a maximum of three high scores to work on. Any more than this and they might be trying to change too much too soon. Additionally many of these key qualities impact upon other areas of a player's game and therefore by improving these there is often a positive effect upon other areas of performance.

Once this grid is complete players can transfer this data into a much more user - friendly 'dart board' representation of their performance profile grid - The Performance Profile itself.

Team Profile



This visual representation of the profile is popular with athletes as they can instantly see where their strengths and weaknesses are. Often athletes put these up in a locker or carry it in their kit bag to remind themselves of the areas that they need to focus on. The qualities identified by the athlete are written in the outer boxes. Their scores for their current level on each of the qualities are filled in next (see sections highlighted in purple above). Finally their ideal level is filled in. The areas with the biggest discrepancies between ideal and current self are identified in the above diagram by the sections completed in red. A blank copy of the Performance Profile can be found in Appendix 3.

You will also need to identify times in the season that it is best to conduct these profiles. This really depends upon your coaching needs although generally speaking profiles are used 3-4 times a season. As a guideline, it's a good idea to conduct the first profile in pre-season and then distribute the other times equally throughout the season.

What if player and coach disagree on discrepancy ratings?

Of course it is likely that coaches and players will attribute different ratings and different discrepancies to different qualities e.g., whilst a player may consider themselves not to perform well under pressure the coach may consider them a player that they can count on in tight matches. Alternatively, a player may consider himself to be well motivated but the coach may have noticed he has been late to a few sessions recently and has also been the first to leave.

In these cases it is suggested that where the differences between a player's rating and your own **exceeds two points** a conversation about these qualities should occur. These mismatches are often quite revealing and open up communication channels with your players. Through this you might discover reasons why this performer is not gaining as much from your coaching as you have hoped. Or you might find out that they have other issues going on in their lives that are impacting upon their sport. Either way, knowing these things can only enhance your coaching effectiveness.

The Performance Profile has:

- Increased awareness about what constitutes top performance
- Identified players needs
- Clarified player and coaches perceptions
- Opened communication channels

From here it can:

- Help you design appropriate sessions around individual and team needs.
- Appropriately focus goal setting around qualities with high discrepancies.

Section B: Team Dynamics, Cohesion & Leadership

Now that some time has been spent demonstrating how coaches could work with individual players to both identify needs and structure future coaching practice, it is necessary to turn attention back to the team.

Task 3

In discussion with somebody next to you make a list of all the things that you think contribute to making a good team

One of the key ways that a coach can lay the groundwork for a successful team is to understand something about team dynamics. Teams are constantly changing and developing. Understanding the processes that a team must go through to be effective is therefore important. Tuckman (1965) produced a theory that tried to explain this. He proposed that all teams pass through 4 stages as they develop.

- **Forming -** Familiarisation stage. Members of a team compare themselves to each other and assess each other's strengths and weaknesses. People compete for positions.
- **Storming -** Resistance stage. This is characterised by resistance to the leader and resistance to control by the group. Interpersonal conflict and fighting ensue as individuals and the leader establish their roles and status within the group.
- **Norming -** Hostility is replaced by solidarity and cooperation. Conflicts are resolved and a sense of unity emerges. Athletes begin to work together to reach common goals. Team roles are stable.
- **Performing -** team members channel their energies for team success. Team focuses on problem solving. Roles are well defined and accepted and players help one another to succeed. The primary goal is team success.

As experienced coaches you can probably think back to teams you have worked with who have experienced some, if not all of these stages. One important thing that you can do in your role as coach is to attempt to speed this process up to arrive at the 'performing' stage as soon as possible.

Task 4

Consider what you could do to speed up the early stages of group formation and maintain position in the performing stage.
Forming -

Storming -

Norming -

Performing (how to maintain team's location at this stage and not regress) -

There are numerous strategies that the coach could employ to accelerate team development, many of which you will have identified above. However, something that requires consideration here is the concept of group roles.

For a group of individuals to become an effective team the areas of role clarity, role acceptance and role performance must be firmly established. The coaches' role within this process is crucial.

- **Role Clarity -** The extent to which players are clear about their role on the team. It is not unusual for athletes to feel unclear about their role and consequently feel unsure about how they should approach performance. Clear communication from the coach about their expectations of a player and how their role helps the team is critical.
- **Role Acceptance -** The extent to which players are satisfied with their role. Players may demonstrate a high level of role clarity i.e., they know what is expected of them, but they might not accept it. This can have serious effects on team spirit. Often it means the player putting their own needs/wants above the team.
- **Role Performance -** The extent to which players are perceived to be carrying out their roles with success. If clarity and acceptance are present but perceived role performance is lacking i.e., the player isn't doing their job, then team cohesion will be negatively affected

Task 5

What could you do as a coach to ensure that role clarity, role acceptance and role performance are operating effectively within your team?
Role Clarity:

Role Acceptance:

Role Performance:

Team Cohesion

Cohesion has been defined as *'the total field of forces which act on members to remain in the group'* (Festinger, Schacter & Black, 1950). There are considered to be two types of cohesion task and social.

- **Task Cohesion -** The degree to which the coach and team members work together to achieve common goals and objectives. People agree and understand how the team intends to play. Everyone is comfortable with their role. People have sacrificed the 'me' for the 'we'.
- **Social Cohesion -** The degree to which players like each other away from the pitch. Can players relate and communicate with each other? Do they enjoy spending time with each other away from their sport?

Coaches should aim to work on developing both these areas of cohesion to increase the positive effects that this concept can have on team performance. However, building a cohesive team through effective teamwork requires considerable effort. Consider the words of Pat Riley, one of most successful coaches in the National Basketball Association (NBA).

> *...My driving belief is this: great teamwork is the only way to reach our ultimate moments, to create the breakthroughs that define our careers. However, teamwork isn't simple. In fact it can be a frustrating, elusive commodity. That's why there are so many bad teams out there, stuck in neutral or going downhill. Teamwork doesn't appear magically just because someone mouths the words. It doesn't thrive because of the presence of talent or ambition. It doesn't flourish simply because a team have tasted success.*

As coaches you can probably identify with the frustration of having a team than consistently under performs even though it contains some of the most individually talented players you may have seen. On paper these teams may look unbeatable but often when they try to perform together as a cohesive unit things just don't seem to work - in short, there is no team cohesion.

Task 6

Spend a few minutes trying to think of some examples in sporting history of teams that have had great players but have never fulfilled their potential as a unit. Consider the reasons why you think this might have been the case.

Team Example	Reasons

Some of the reasons you gave for the inability of these teams to reach their full potential probably revolved around team dynamics, team cohesion and leadership. You could probably think about examples of teams who have had less talented players in their squad but whose commitment to work hard for each other and their sense of team means they have achieved more than others would have ever thought possible. It is important to remember that a team is more than the sum of its parts.

T ogether **E** veryone **A** chieves **M** ore

DEVELOPING TEAM COHESION

In addition to communicating effectively, accelerating team development, and explaining individual roles in group success other ways to enhance team cohesion and team spirit revolve around forming a team identity (e.g. team kit, team song, social events), and knowing something personal about each of your players (other than their name!). However these things are only an expression of team spirit - where does such unity actually come from? Syer and Connolly (1998) suggest that unity comes from self-discipline, trust, understanding, caring and freedom of expression. They state that it cannot be imposed and suggest that one of the key ways to enhance this unity and cohesion is through conducting ***team meetings***.

Task 7

Think back to the last time you conducted a team meeting with your players. Why did you decide to call this meeting? How did you plan it? When did it take place? What did you gain from it? What did you intend your players to gain from it and how do you know that they gained what you hoped? How did you review it? Consider each of these questions in turn and jot your answers down below.

Team meetings should be conducted throughout the season to allow positive and negative feelings to be honestly, openly, and constructively expressed in a safe environment. Many coaches shy away from conducting such meetings because they do not want to be exposed to criticism and think that such meetings might cause conflict that will impact negatively upon cohesion. However, it is important that teams learn to resolve their internal conflicts and mobilise their resources. In this way teams can talk about learning from mistakes, redefining goals for the season and maintaining good ethics. If these meetings are handled well by the coach so that the team deals with their problems constructively conflict will be dealt with before it begins to fester and erode the team cohesion.

There are 3 types of meeting:

- **Post-Match discussion meetings -** Aim: To review and assess performance at the match and to plan for the next match. These should be held before training on the first day that the team assembles after competition.
- **Team spirit/cohesion meetings -** Aim: to allow a more wide ranging and personal discussion of technical, tactical, social and even political issues that affect the team. These can also be held to generate momentum into a disappointing season. These should be held after a training session or when the team is away overnight or on tour.
- **Pre-competition talk meetings -** Aim: To conduct the team's emotional warm-up. These should be held immediately before a competition. There is no discussion in this meeting and it is therefore the shortest of the three.

All team meetings can be used to increase team cohesion and spirit. As a coach you should plan all meetings in advance and review them afterwards. Spend some time working through the guidelines for conducting team meetings in appendix 4. Then go back to task seven and consider the differences between the type of meetings you have run previously and the types you will run in the future.

Leadership

Of course, none of the above can be achieved successfully without good leadership. Leadership underpins team success and all coaches should be striving to become more effective in this domain.

> *Leadership is essentially the action of an individual to influence others towards set goals (Martens, 1987).*

There are a number of leadership styles but the two most well known are the autocratic and the democratic.

- **Autocratic** coaches will make all the decisions themselves and tell players what to do.
- **Democratic** coaches will share the situation or problem with other people and ask for their input.

Which of the above styles most closely represents your coaching style?

The ideal coach will blend these styles together to achieve best practice. Good leaders take into account the needs of the players, their stage of development, the players' preferred leadership style and the philosophy/type of club they are working at.

Research (e.g. Wein, 2001) demonstrates that young players like coaches who:

- Are well organised at training and games
- Are punctual - start and finish on time
- Dress appropriately
- Communicate well - know how to explain concepts, how to listen and have time for players
- Are emotionally stable - exercise self-control, are calm in the heat of competition and don't lose their temper with players and officials.
- Demonstrate a true interest in players on and off the pitch

Task 8

Rate yourself on these key characteristics that players like in a coaching situation. 1 = never and 5 = always					
I am friendly and have a sense of humour	1	2	3	4	5
I am patient, happy and understanding	1	2	3	4	5
I am firm but fair	1	2	3	4	5
I provide encouragement when it is due	1	2	3	4	5
I help develop their skills	1	2	3	4	5
I show good levels of organisation in training sessions, game arrangements and travel	1	2	3	4	5
I am punctual - I start and finish on time	1	2	3	4	5
I am dressed appropriately - professional appearance	1	2	3	4	5
I know how to explain concepts, how to listen and I always have time for players	1	2	3	4	5
I keep my composure with players, officials, parents and other team managers	1	2	3	4	5
I demonstrate true interest in the players. I am concerned for the player and the person	1	2	3	4	5
Key behaviours and strengths in my leadership 1. 2. 3.					
Key behaviours that I can improve upon during the next month 1. 2. 3.					
Ideas for how to make these improvements 1. 2. 3.					

The modern coach is said to liberate their players and create an environment in which players can take responsibility for their performance knowing they will receive care and support when the going gets tough. To achieve this goal the modern coach must be player-centred instead of task-centred; excellence dominated instead of results dominated, sell ideas instead of yelling instructions and plan carefully instead of relying on instinct. In short they should pursue the 3 E's.

- **Envisioning -** The coach should set a vision of future achievement that could be met if all players buy into it. Challenge players to be the best they can be.
- **Enabling -** Show them how they can meet that vision. Observe players strengths and weaknesses, have meetings with them and set goals for improvement. Ask players their opinions.
- **Empowering -** The modern player must be persuaded, not dominated. Give players some control over personal destiny but remember, ultimately, you remain in charge!

Praise your players. Inspire and motivate your players. Ten years from now it won't matter what your record was. Will your players love you or hate you?

Appendix 1: Generating Qualities for the Performance Profile

Reflect on the performance of a top player in National Team who plays in the same position as you do. What makes them such a good player? What makes a good performance? Try to generate as many qualities as you can and place them under the relevant subheadings

Physical (e.g. strength)	Attitudinal (e.g. competitiveness)	Psychological (mental skills, e.g. anxiety control)	Technical (e.g. tactics)

Appendix Two Performance Profile Grid

Performance Profile Grid

Player Name: **Position:** **Date:**

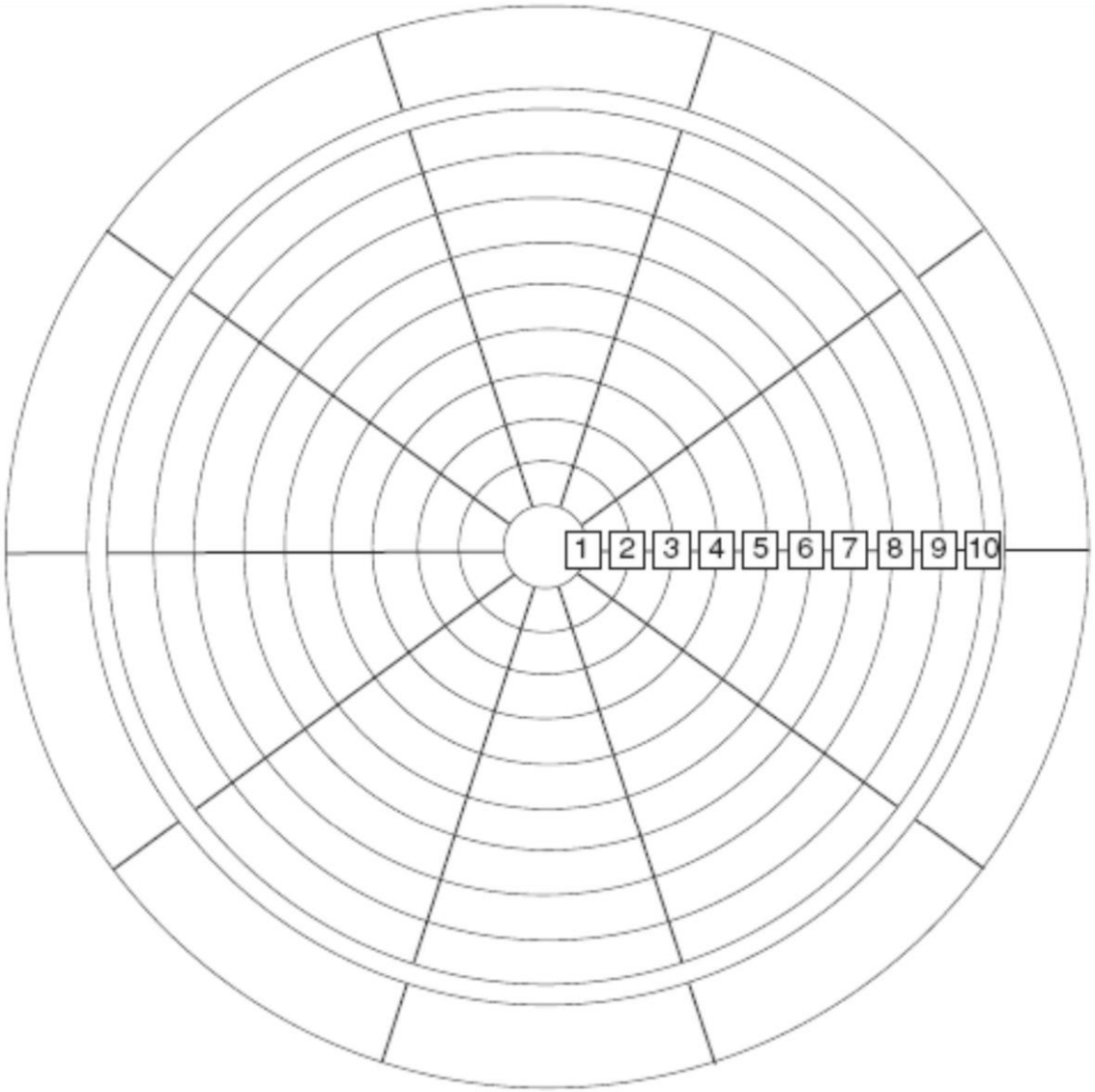
Quality	Ideal Level (0-10)	Current Level (0-10)	Discrepancy between Ideal & Current Level
		Discrepancy between	

Appendix Three: The Performance Profile Wheel

Player:

Position Played:

Date:



Appendix Four: Guidelines for Team Meetings
(adapted from Syer and Connolly, 1998)

Preparing The Meeting

Planning **-** This does not necessarily have to take much time but it should be done sitting down and uninterrupted. If the meeting is to be conducted by more than one person it should be written together.

Choose your Objective Carefully**-** Make sure your objective is clear even if you choose not to share it.

Once the objective is clear you need to consider how it will be achieved. This means taking into account the following factors:

Format **-** Are you going to give a talk or lead a discussion? If it's a discussion meeting will you divide the group? If so, how? According to position, status, length of time they have been at the club, friendships, rivalries etc. Whatever you decide to do make sure the format you choose meets the meetings need. Players should have as many close and personal ties within the team as possible.

Content **-** if it's a discussion meeting you need to decide upon what questions you are going to ask to get the ball rolling. They must be precise and provoking, not something like 'What did you think of the match?' Instead you might ask 'What were our objectives? It's a good idea to start with a positive and ask 'What did we do well?' then 'What did we do wrong?', then 'How can we use this information?' However, don't ask exactly the same questions every week!

Place and Time **-** Discussion of the teams previous performance should not be held immediately after the game - because players tend to respond with emotion rather than reason, but equally should not be left too long because players will lose interest. They should also take place before a training session so that decisions that are taken can be put into practice straight away.

Attendance of Players **-** It is good practice to tell players why other team members are absent and to formally welcome somebody new. Team spirit builds from meeting to meeting as long as there is continuity. Injured players should attend too.

Arrangement of Players **-** If the meeting is a discussion meeting chairs should be arranged in a circle so that everyone can see everyone else. You, the coach, should also be seated in the circle.

During The Meeting

Attune **-** Attention can often be scattered at the start of a meeting. Giving people time to make contact with one another, to express preoccupations and feelings before the meeting begins should be allowed.

Tell the Players how the Meeting is to Proceed **-** outline the format and content of the meeting and state how long it will last (and stick to it!)

Divide Players into Groups **-** Do this before you present your questions

Ask your Prepared Questions **-** Ask them one at a time, giving a time limit for discussion. Make sure you ask the question simply, giving no comment of your own. Write the question down so that players can see it

Bring the Team back Together to Pool Ideas **-** Ask one member of each group to write down their group's answer. When the group comes back together the answers from each group can be read out in turn. Usually this will spark off some new ideas.

To make these circle discussions even more beneficial you should also consider the following:

- Resist giving your opinion. The longer you do this the more attention your opinion will command when it is given.
- Don't get drawn into dialogue or argument. Watch your players - body language is often more revealing than what they are saying
- Listen to your players
- Interrupt irrelevant chat

- Watch for emerging themes
- Discourage generalisations such as 'you', 'we' 'players' etc and encourage people to own their statements by saying 'I'
- Bring the meeting to a positive conclusion - when you hear repetition stop the discussion and say 'it seems the conclusion is...'

Reviewing Meetings

Ideally both coaches and athletes would review a meeting and personal observations, impressions and ideas would be written down afterwards. This would strengthen continuity and the sense of progress being made. Discussions for future meetings would become less repetitive and easier to start.