

# ASSIST 38

FIBA ASSIST MAGAZINE FOR BASKETBALL ENTHUSIASTS EVERYWHERE MAY / JUNE 2009



**FIBA**

We Are Basketball

**SERGIO SCARIOLO**  
OFFENSE WITH THE PLAYER IN  
HIGH POSITION

**ADAM FILIPPI**  
THE ART OF SCOUTING:  
EVALUATING TALENT

**MIKE BRUNGARDT**  
THE HILL: STRENGTH, POWER  
AND CONDITIONING

**ALAN RICHARDSON**  
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# FIBA

We Are Basketball

## FIBA ASSIST MAGAZINE

IS A PUBLICATION OF FIBA  
International Basketball Federation  
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CH-1216 Cointrin/Geneva Switzerland  
Tel. +41-22-545.0000, Fax +41-22-545.0099  
www.fiba.com / e-mail: info@fiba.com

**IN COLLABORATION WITH** Giganti del Basket,  
Edizioni Cantelli, Italy

## PARTNER

WABC (World Association of Basketball  
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Italy, Tel. +39-051-6328811,  
Fax +39-051 6328815  
E-mail: fibaassist@cantelli.net  
Printed in Italy.

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The magazine is published 6 times per year.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Filippo Arduino, Gastone Marchesi, Mirco Melloni,  
Corrado de Belvis, Gerald Couzens, Raffaele Imbrog-  
no and Lisa Cavallini.

Thanks also to Jerod Haase of University of North  
Carolina.

## 2009-10 FIBA CALENDAR

### 2009

#### JUNE 2009

07 - 20.06 EuroBasket Women in  
Latvia (Liepaja, Valmiera  
and Riga)

#### JULY 2009

02 - 12.07 FIBA U19 World  
Championship for Men in  
Auckland (NZL)  
23.07 - 02.08 FIBA U19 World  
Championship for Women  
in Bangkok (THA)

#### AUGUST 2009

05 - 15.08 FIBA Africa Championship  
for Men in Libya (Benghazi  
and Tripoli)  
06 - 16.08 FIBA Asia Championship  
for Men in China, Tianjin  
City  
23 - 25.08 FIBA Oceania  
Championship for Men in  
Sydney (AUS) and  
Wellington (NZL)  
26 - 06.09 FIBA Americas  
Championship for Men in  
Puerto Rico  
31 - 02.09 FIBA Oceania  
Championship for Women  
in Wellington (NZL) and  
Canberra (AUS)

#### SEPTEMBER 2009

03 - 13.09 FIBA Africa Championship  
for Women (site tbc)  
07 - 20.09 EuroBasket Men in Poland  
(Gdansk, Poznan, Warsaw,  
Wroclaw, Bydgoszcz, Lodz  
and Katowice)  
23 - 27.09 FIBA Americas  
Championship for Women  
in Mato Grosso (BRA)

#### NOVEMBER 2009

FIBA Asia Championship  
for Women (site and date  
to be confirmed)

### 2010

#### AUGUST 2010

28 - 12.09 FIBA World Championship  
for Men in Turkey (Ankara,  
Antalya, Izmir and Istanbul)

#### SEPTEMBER 2010

23 - 03.10 FIBA World Championship  
for Women in Czech  
Republic (Ostrava, Brno)

## COACHES

### FUNDAMENTALS AND YOUTH BASKETBALL

Five Angles of the Ball Screen **4**

by Ganon Baker

### OFFENSE

Analysis of Last Shot Situations **10**

by Andrea Capobianco

Offense with the Player in High Position **18**

by Sergio Scariolo

### DEFENSE

Multiple Defenses **24**

by Roy Williams

### HOOP MARKET

It's Almost Summertime **30**

by Raffaele Imbrogno

## REFEREES AND GAME ADMINISTRATION

Visualisation, Imagery **32**

by Alan Richardson

Right or Wrong? **35**

## SPORT MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

### EXECUTIVES AND MARKETING

The Art of Scouting: Evaluating Talent **36**

by Adam Filippi

## DOCTORS, CONDITIONING COACHES AND TRAINERS

### CONDITIONING COACHES

The Hill: Strength, Power and Conditioning **40**

by Mike Brungardt

## NEWS

ONE-ON-ONE **44**

PLANET BASKETBALL **46**

OFF-THE-COURT **50**

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**FIBA**

We Are Basketball



by Ganon Baker

# FIVE ANGLES OF THE BALL SCREEN

**Ganon Baker, former assistant coach at Hampton, Belmont Abbey, and Coastal Carolina, was also playercoach of a team in Iceland. He teaches one-on-one moves at camps and clinics all over the US, and he was also invited to give clinics in Australia and New Zealand. He produced five videos and DVDs on these moves with Championship Productions.**

I have been working out players for 16 years. This includes high school, college, European pros, NBA, and WNBA players.

Even now, I am still amazed at how effective the ball screen is at every level. The two most dominant "plays" in the

game consist of a dominant player and a ball screen. You must pay attention to some details to make these plays work. If you have proper spacing, a decent big man, and a good point guard, then the ball screen can be your greatest asset. However, your point guard and big man must know their options and how to read a play. Let's take a look.

First of all, coaches must teach each player involved in the screen how to execute movement effectively to create space.

## THE SCREENER SHOULD:

1. Sprint to the screen. This way, the defense can't be attached and stop the ball handler.







2

2. Aim for the buttocks of the defender of the ball handler. This will ensure that there will be contact between the screener and ball handler's defender (photo 1, 2 and 3).
3. The screener should drop their hips, with their feet shoulder-width apart. This helps them absorb contact (photo 4).

#### THE BALL HANDLER SHOULD:

1. With the dribble or in the triple threat, get the defender below the screen. Occupy so they don't deny (photo 5).
2. Attack the screener's foot or the defender's top foot with two dribbles. This makes the defense stretch out and will create openings or confusion (photo 6, 7 and 8).
3. They should not hesitate in their decision-making. To make the correct reads the guard must be confident in their reactions. Let's look at them.

#### THE BALL HANDLER SOLUTIONS INCLUDE:

1. They can "turn the corner". Drive to the basket (diagr. 1).
2. Split the screen. When the defender hedges too high, they can drive between the defense and the screener (diagr. 2).
3. Reject it. The ball handler goes opposite the screen if the defense is on top of the screen (diagr. 3).
4. Stretch the defense. They can use a "bounce off" dribble (a slow slide dribble) if the defense doubles up on the ball handler or the screener's defender stays with the ball handler (diagr. 4).
5. Pull up behind the screen and shoot. If the defender goes under the screen, then the ball handler can take one or two dribbles and shoot (diagr. 5).

#### THE SOLUTIONS FOR THE SCREENER ARE:

1. Pop. If they are a shooter and space is available, they take two steps to their next spot or two slides.
2. Pull. If they are a finisher, no one is between them and the basket, and a spot is filled to pop, you drive hard to the basket.
3. Slip. If while screening, no one is be-

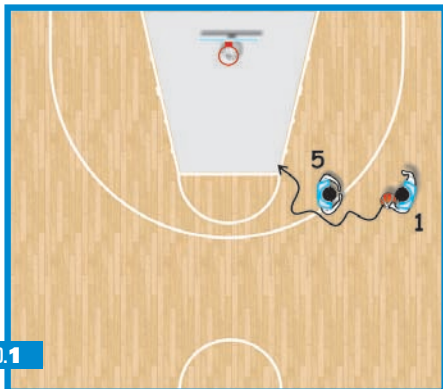


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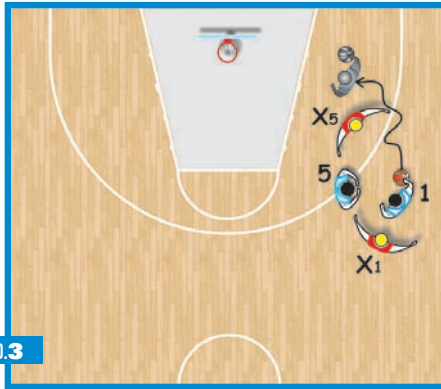


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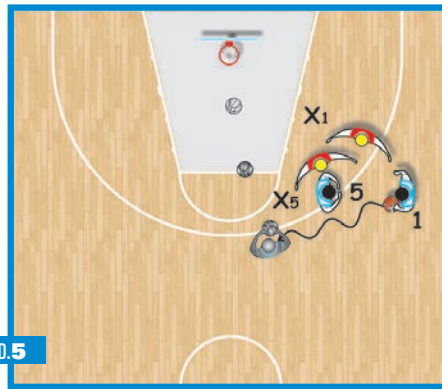




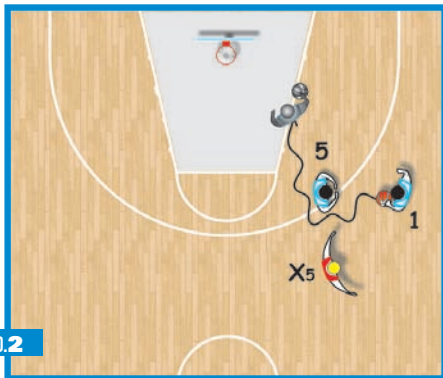
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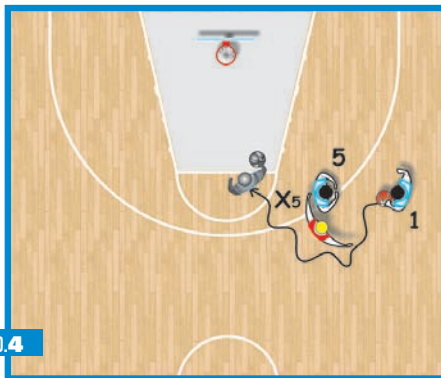
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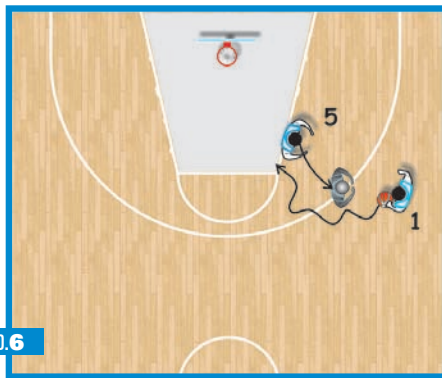
D.5



D.2



D.4



D.6

tween you and the basket, you sprint to the basket.

After the ball handler clears the screener, then they should roll or pop. A two-second or two-dribble measure is good to use.

Now there are five possible angles of the ball screen that we teach here at

Ganon Baker Basketball Services.

These are important to know because as a coach you can use them in your offensive system without always having to reset.

You can run these in the context of the offense.

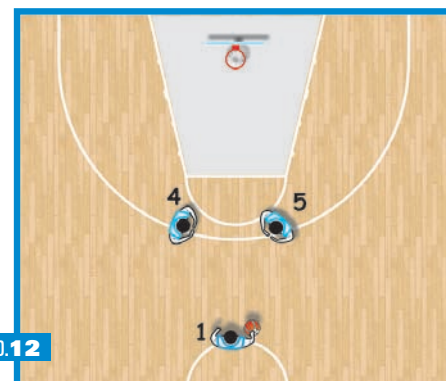
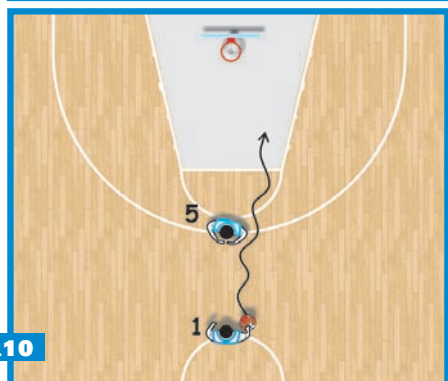
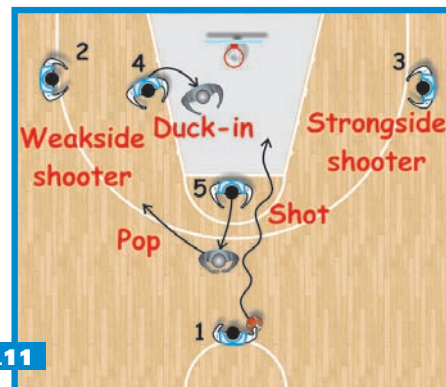
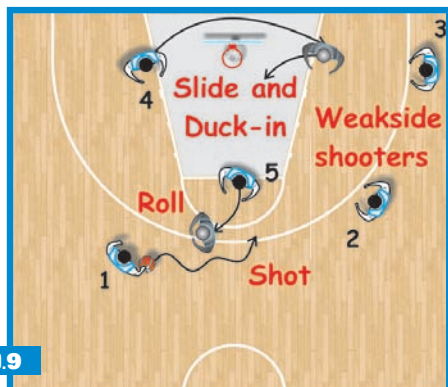
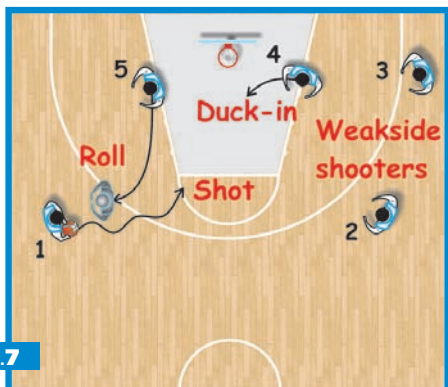
When practicing by yourself, you must



5









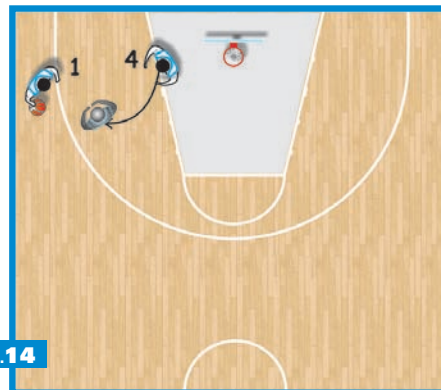
know what kind of shots you can take and where to get them.

### THE FIVE ANGLES OF THE BALL SCREEN

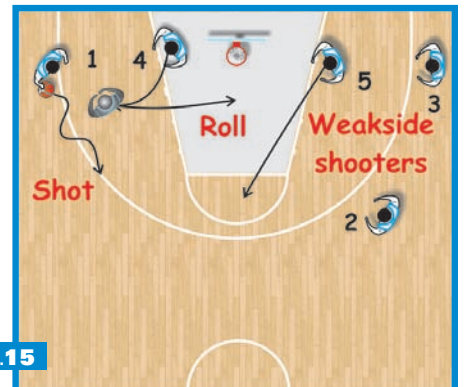
1. Side. This is the most popular of the five angles of the ball screen in college, Europe, NBA, and WNBA. Make sure the screen is not too close to the sideline. From this, you can expect the screener to roll/pop, the guard to take a jump shot or go to the basket, a player on the weak side to drop towards the basket for a pass, or the player on the weak side to take a shot (diagr. 6 and 7).
2. Middle. This is most popular with high school players because of the spacing of the court (diagr. 8). Screener's feet are pointed at either sideline (diagr. 9).
3. Flat. Same set as a high/middle ball screen, but the screener's feet are facing half court line as you can see



D.13



D.14



D.15

in diagrams 10 and 11. The screener can pop either way.

4. Horns. The flat and horns set is very popular in the WNBA and NBA (diagr. 12 and 13).
5. Baseline step-up. This is becoming more popular on all levels. Make sure the screener stays away from the sideline (diagr. 14 and 15).





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by Andrea Capobianco

# ANALYSIS OF LAST SHOT SITUATIONS





Andrea Capobianco begins his career in 1994, as assistant coach of Battipaglia, in A2, the Italian second league. After three years spent as head coach of Salerno in the Italian minors, in 2000/2001 becomes assistant coach of Avellino in Serie A (Italian first league). He returns in Salerno as head coach and remains three years. In December 2006 becomes head coach of

Jesi in A2. In 2007/2008 he wins the Coppa Italia of the second league. In 2008/2009 is head coach of Teramo in Serie A and wins the Best Coach of the Year Award.

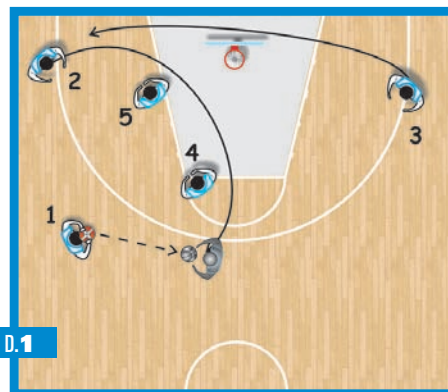
*"...an attentive and precise preparation stimulates creativity and helps in finding solutions to the unpredictable"*

A. Capobianco

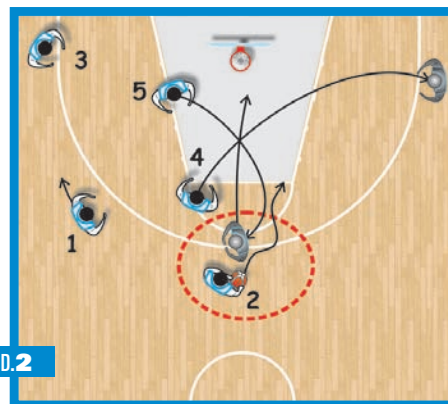
The last-shot situation is a frequent event, partially predictable, and therefore something you can work on in practice sessions. The first set (diagr. 1 and 2) is a situation in which the team uses the pick-and-roll to take advantage of the defense. In the first diagram, 2, after having used the stagger screen, receives the ball from 1 and plays a pick-and-roll with 5. At the same time 4, 1,







D.1



D.2

and 2 set themselves up in their proper spots.

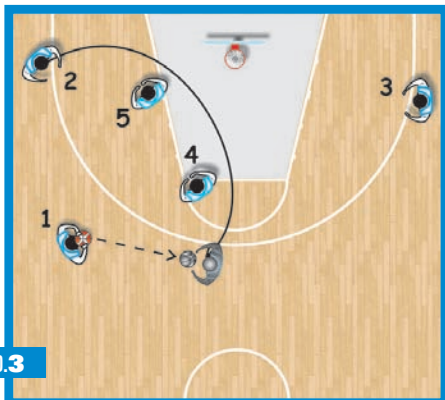
In the second case (diagr. 3 and 4), the team will take advantage of a 1-on-1 situation. The start is the same as the first set. It will be important to maintain offensive spacing to preserve the offensive advantage. Move in too close, and you give the advantage back to the defense.

In the third situation (diagr. 5 and 6), the team will take advantage of a 1-on-1 in the low (or medium) post. The start is the same as the last two situations but 2, once he's received the ball, dribbles towards the opposite side from where he's gotten the pass. At this point, 3 screens for 5 and then goes high (screen-the-screener situation), or else goes far away from the ball. When 5 receives the ball to play 1-on-1, the spacing must be maintained by the other players in order to keep the advantage over the defense.

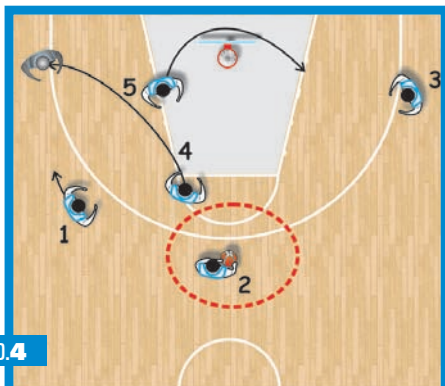
Which play should be used and when? Who will be the player who will make the offensive move? The player that is eventually chosen will be one who is able (technically, tactically, physically, and mentally) to take advantage of the defense and maintain it. And if the defense changes and helps out, he must be able to find and pass to an open teammate.

The sets I have described are the same ones we use normally throughout the game. What makes it all special, however,

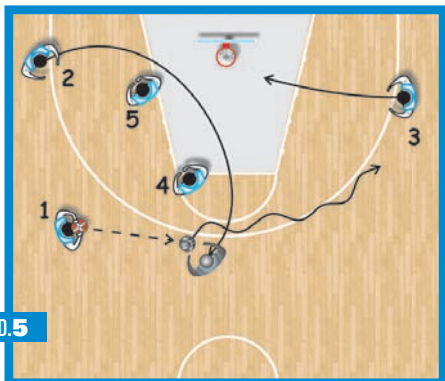




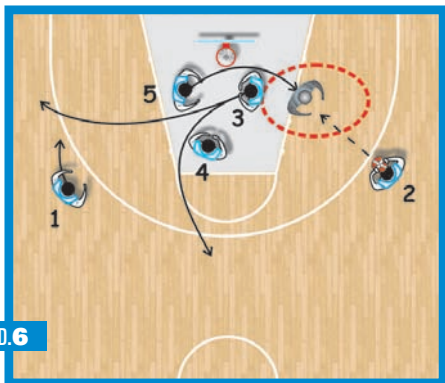
D.3



D.4



D.5



D.6

is the word "decisive." A decisive move is what makes these plays work, and having the player who can make the decisive move is the one to take the last shot. Basketball is a game filled with emotional ups and downs. Capitalizing on the ups and minimizing the downs is what will help you win more games than you lose. I want my players to be integrated basketball players. That is, they are attuned to the technical and physical aspects of the game as it











takes place on the court, but they also have a psychological relationship with themselves and the other players as the game is on going.

There are several last-shot situations to consider. I want to keep chance out of the equation and go to a higher level and make use of categories. Think of these categories as containers in which you can insert various situation. For example, in the category "Take advantage on offense," we will insert all situations in which one or more players play to achieve that goal. The situations need to be clear and comprehensive, and we can practice to take advantage of these situations.

In the model called "integrated basketball" and described in the book "Becoming Coach", the general categories in which are included the technical, physical and psychological aspects, and in which we expect to find all the situations that happen on the court are:

- ▼ Space.
- ▼ Time.
- ▼ Self-government.
- ▼ Teamwork.
- ▼ Balance.

It's impossible to foresee everything in a practice basketball situation. You can have a big model, but it won't be as big as reality. For this reason, I suggest that you insert new and unexpected situations. Training for these totally unexpected situations of your own design helps increase the instinct and thinking capability of your players. It is instinct and thinking that are two important crutches that will help your team confront any possible adversity in a last-shot situation.

Let's look at a common last-shot situation. Your team is down by two points with 15 seconds left in the game. In a situation like this, the psychological component becomes absolutely fundamental; the most important component, actually. Why are players often scared of taking the last shot? Why are their hands trembling? Or why does a bad free-throw shooter suddenly become a great free-throw shooter when he is under pressure? Why does a player step up and ask for the ball so he can take the last shot?

Thinking this over, it becomes clear that understanding the player's psychological capabilities is essential and often crucial when a coach selects a player for his team, and even more important in a last-shot situation.

Let's look at some of the psychological skills that your players should have":

1. Emotional capacity. This is the ability of managing your emotions and your team-



mates' (and rivals') emotions. I define it as the ability of conserving or increasing the technical and physical skills in high-pressure situations. There are players who normally have poor shooting percentages but in high-pressure situations they are absolutely reliable; it's important to value the individual numbers in the moments of highest pressure of the game.

Here are some other capacities to look for:

2. Capacity to think independently.
3. Capacity to take care of yourself and the team.
4. Capacity of self-sacrifice.
5. Capacity of self-assertion.
6. Capacity of self-criticism.

Another important aspect is to understand the strength and weakness of your rivals. When you know this, you are able to take advantage of every opportunity. Ask yourself: "Which player on the opposing team is the worst defender? Who doesn't want to sacrifice himself on defense? Who is the defender that, in a high pressure situations, loses the necessary technical and physical skills?"

In the end, the coach must give his best when preparing for an upcoming game, but he also has to be fully conscious of the inherent psychological weaknesses of his players. Understand that we are human beings, and we are not perfect.





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by Sergio Scariolo

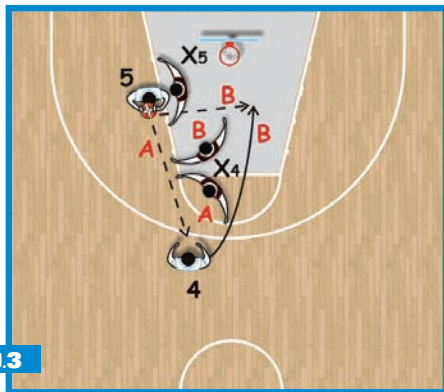
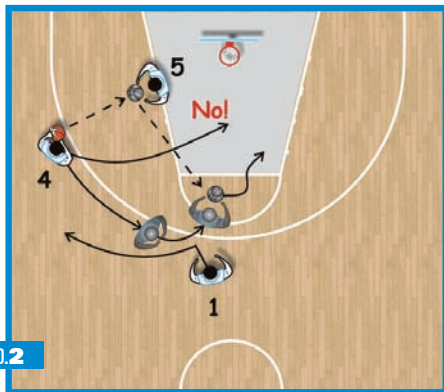
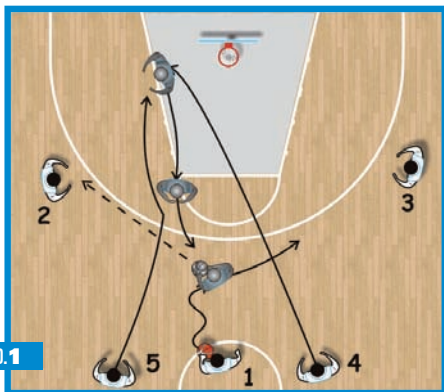
**Sergio Scariolo** began coaching in his hometown, where in 1985 became assistant coach of Basket Brescia (Serie A1). In 1987 he became assistant coach of Scavolini Pesaro (winning the 1988 title), before being promoted head coach in 1989. In two seasons as head coach, he won one Italian title (1990) becoming the youngest head coach winning the Italian title, and played a Korac Cup final (1990) and an Euroclub Final Four (1991). In 1991 he moved to Desio, then in 1993 he became head coach of Fortitudo Bologna, where he played one final. In 1997 he moved to Tau Vitoria, where he won the 1999 Spanish Cup and played a final. In 1999 he went to Real Madrid, where he won the 2000 title, then played a final in 2001. In 2003 he became the head coach of Unicaja Malaga, winning the 2005 Spanish Cup and the 2006 title and bringing the team to the 2007 Euroleague Final Four. He became head coach of Khimki, Russia, in December 2008, reaching the final. He is all at once head coach of the Spanish national team for men.

The game philosophy of a coach often depends more on the manpower that a coach has at his disposal than on the philosophy itself. Thus, philosophy turns into flexibility. In Europe, there is the tendency nowadays to play with four players on the perimeter and one inside the lane. As a coach, I've grown up with the philosophy of three players on the perimeter and two players inside, and my players on the perimeter didn't give me the chance to take out a 4 with the characteristics of a shooter. However, through the years my philosophy has been evolving. Injuries to some key players forced me to play with four players outside and only one inside, making some adjust-

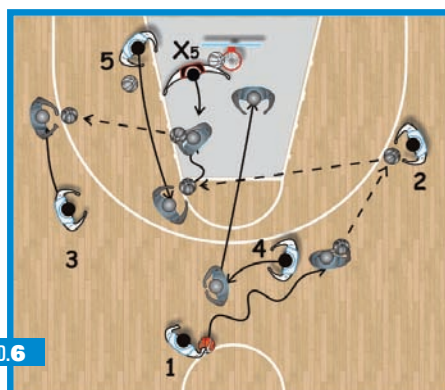
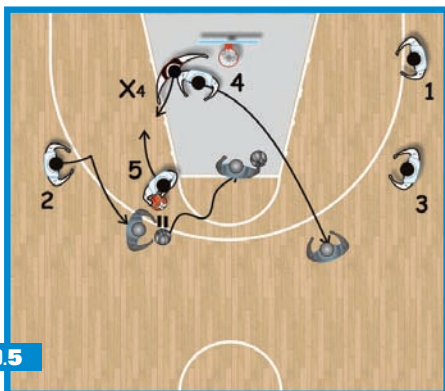
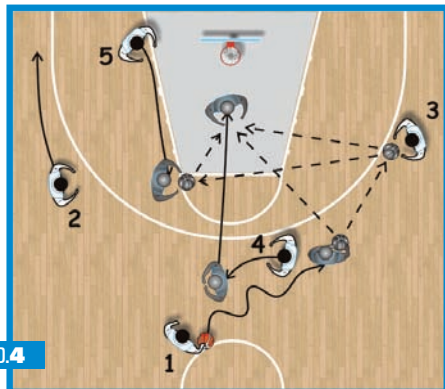
# OFFENSE WITH A PLAYER IN THE HIGH POSITION











ments, but following the set three-two, without changing it completely. Usually, I look for certain movements in order to take advantage of the spacing. I'm now going to describe some situations with three and four players open on the perimeter, outside the three-point line.

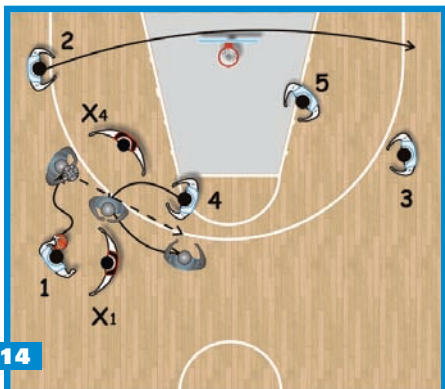
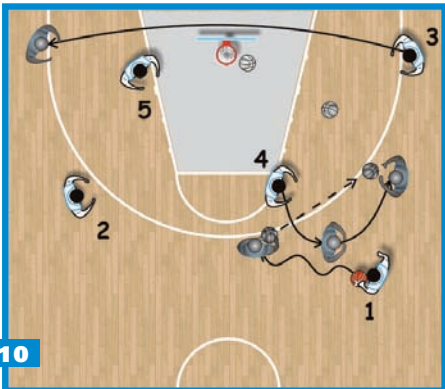
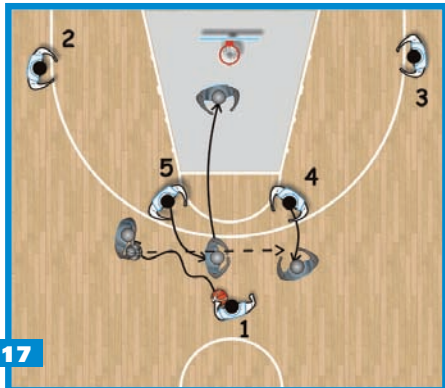
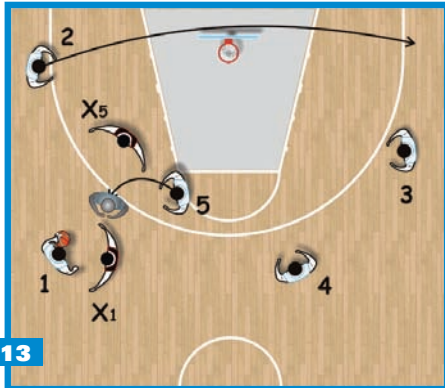
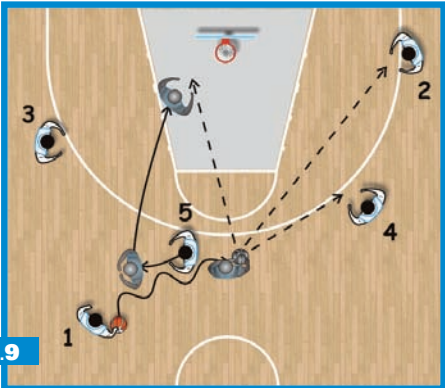
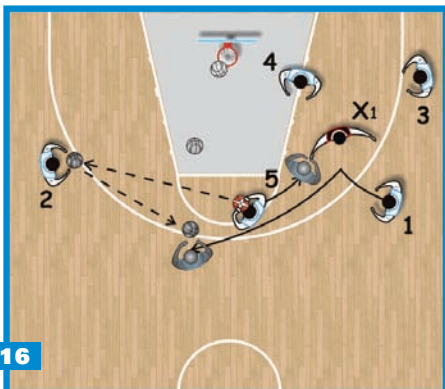
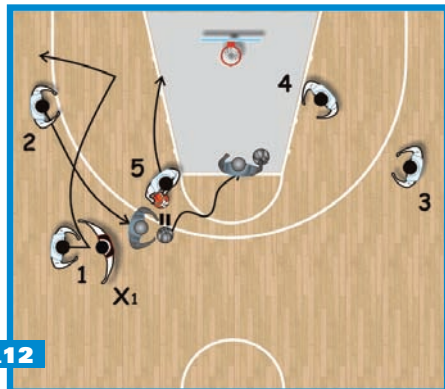
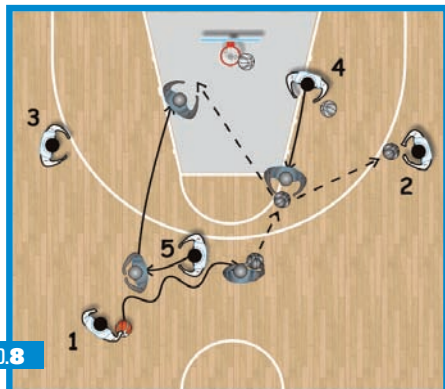
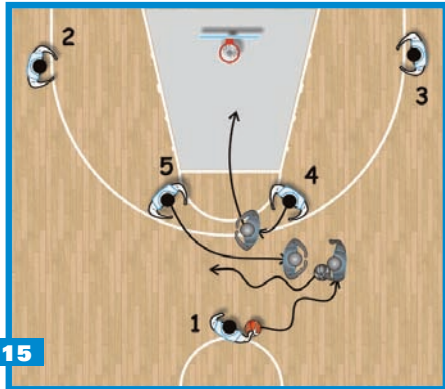
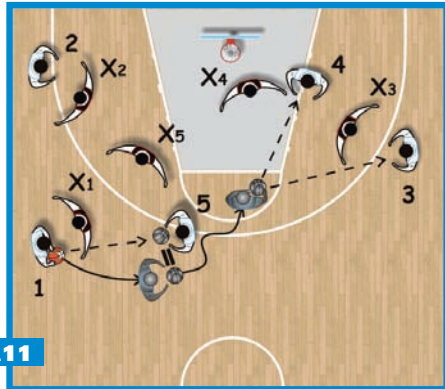
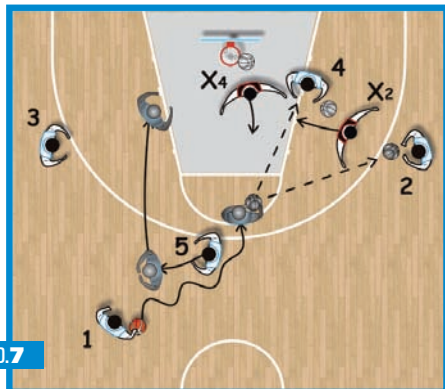
#### TRANSITION

With a set-up consisting of three players outside and two players inside, the first trailer cuts to the low post on the strong side and the second goes to the low post on the opposite side. With a set-up of four players outside and one player inside, the post coming as first -who will not be 5, because is slower- tries to go to the low post on the strong side, not just to take that spot, but above all, with the intention of receiving the ball on the move. If 5 cannot do it, he backscreens the other post and then opens up to receive a possible pass. In this mo-

ment, we already have four players on the perimeter and one player inside the lane (diagr. 1). I don't like that 4 cuts after the pass to the low post, I prefer that he looks for an advantage that may come from a possible inside help of his defender (diagr. 2). The pass made by 5 to the top of the key is the most natural for a right-hand player. 4 can now drive because he has a lot of space. Only if X4 defends with his back turned to 4, 4 cuts to the basket (diagr. 3). If in the transition there's not the pass to the wing, we look for a solution with dribble for not stopping the play. 4 makes a direct screen for the point-guard and he will then try to receive a pass inside (diagr. 4). Normally, the defense will react with a defensive switch between the defenders of 4 and 5. 5 will then go up to play high-low post. If we can't take advantage of this situation, 5 makes a hand off pass to the wing to take advantage of the probable float of his de-

fender. He immediately goes down low and 4 goes up. Usually, the defense will switch (diagr. 5). In the situation of the pick-and-roll, we have decide not to let 5 automatically go up to the three-point line. We preferred that he receives the ball at the elbow of the free-throw lane, where he can attract a defensive help by using a cross-over, thereby creating an easy three-point shot (diagr. 6). In a situation of side pick-and-roll, where the defense goes to the middle, 4 takes position in the mid-post so that he can take two steps either to the basket and dunk (if his defender helps out on the penetration) or to the free-throw line. If there is a second help, we look for a three-point shot (diagr. 7). If 4 goes high to the free-throw line, we can play high-low, or pass the ball to the other side (diagr. 8). With a set-up of four and one, 4 goes out the three-point line, either high or in the corner, in order to create space. If the de-





fense on the pick-and-roll is very aggressive, this will create a lot of space inside for 5 (diagr. 9). If we play the side pick-and-roll with 4, we put 3 in the corner with the intention to create space. With 4 open, the situation is ideal for taking advantage of defensive help and defensive rotations (diagr. 10). If the defense forces to the baseline, with a set-up of three players outside

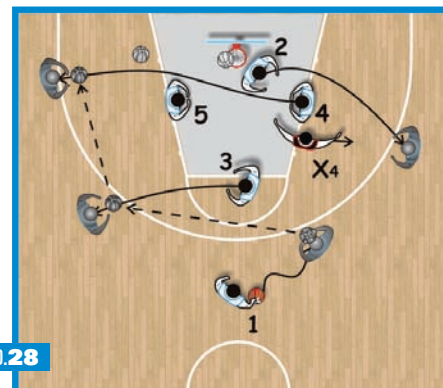
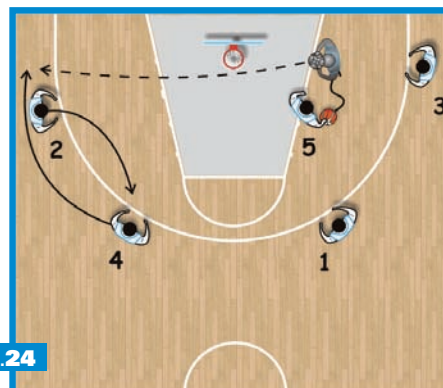
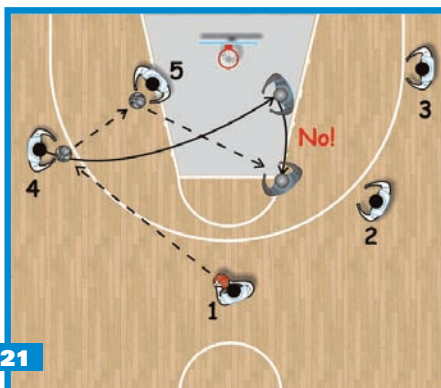
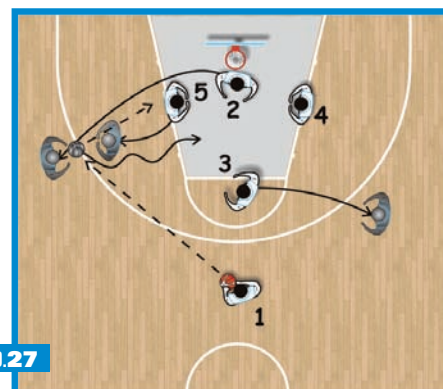
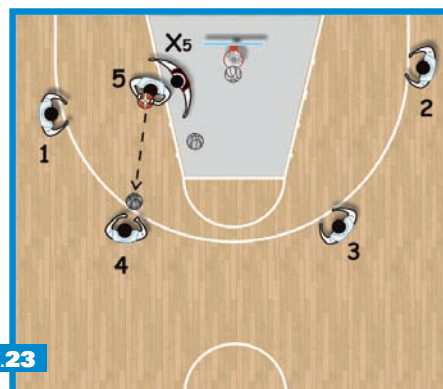
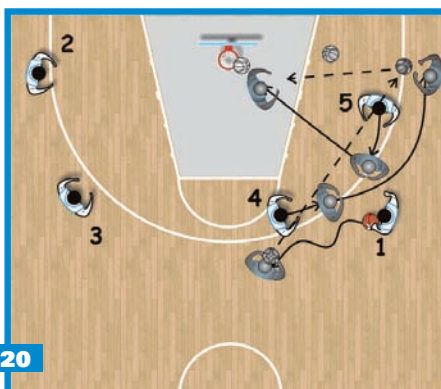
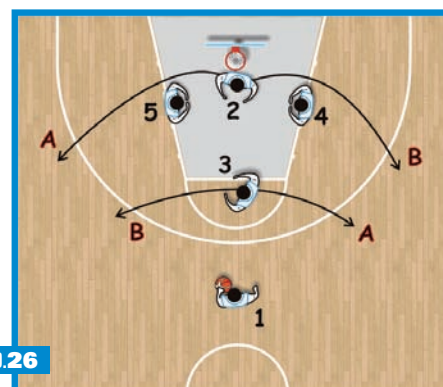
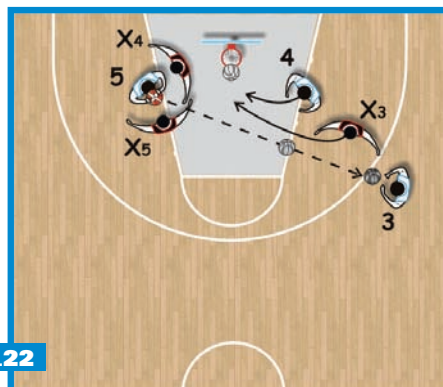
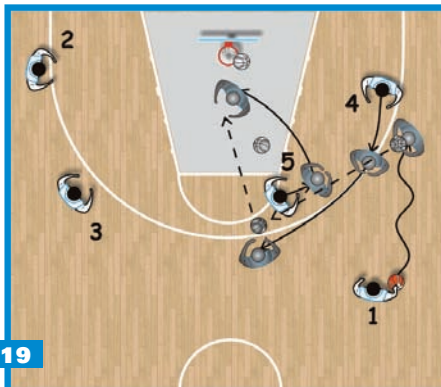
and two inside, we try to make a hand-off pass. If the defense denies it, the point guard cuts backdoor and we play hand-off with 2 (diagr. 11 and 12). With the set four and one, 2 cuts to the other side to create an isolation and the point guard drives to the basket against the post (diagr. 13). If it is 4, who makes the screen, we create an isolation and take advantage of the one-on-

one of the "fake" post. We need to play with open spaces (diagr. 14).

#### SITUATION WITH TWO POST PLAYERS IN THE HIGH POSITION

▼ Three players outside and two players inside: 4 screens and goes inside. 5 quickly makes a direct screen because he is not a shooter (diagr. 15). If we have





not achieved any advantage, 5 screens again for 1, with an advantage given by the deep position of 5's defender.

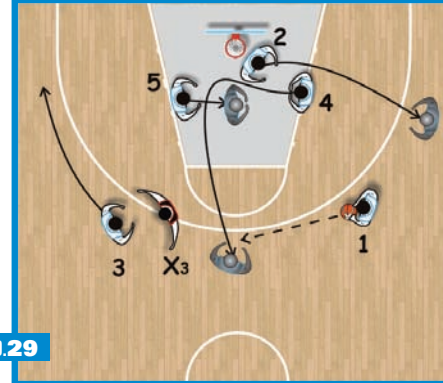
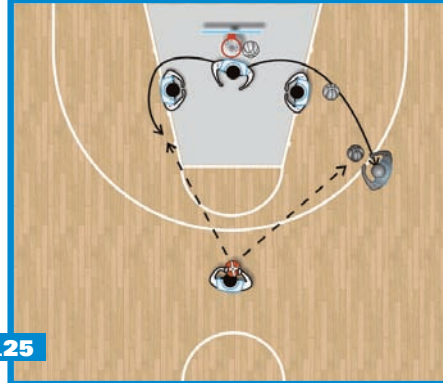
- Four players outside and one player inside: in diagrams 17 and 18, this is a similar situation with a direct screen set by 5 and 4. If the defense switches, we look to pass to 5 inside the lane.

#### MOVEMENT FOR A QUICK SHOT

1 dribbles and uses a screen set by 4, who then goes out the three-point line using the screen of 5. 4, who receives the pass from 1, can shoot or else pass the ball to 5, who cuts after the screen (diagr. 19). In diagram 20 we have a similar situation. In this case, instead of having 1 going to the wing, he goes to the middle and 4 opens in the lower position on the wing.

#### LOW POST

- Three players outside and two inside: with 5 in low post, our 4, who is not a

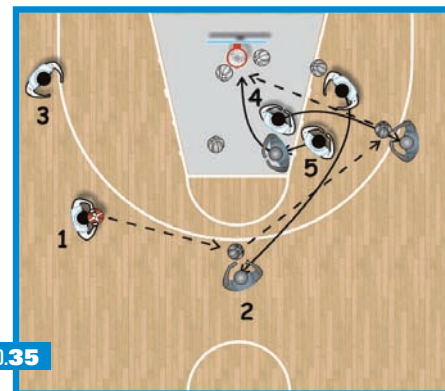
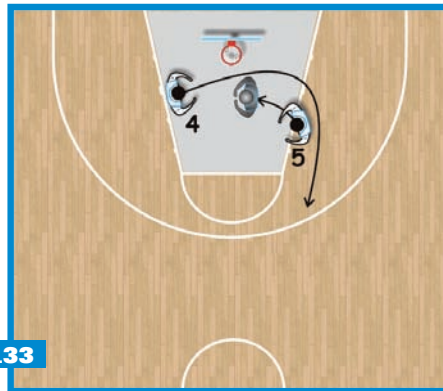
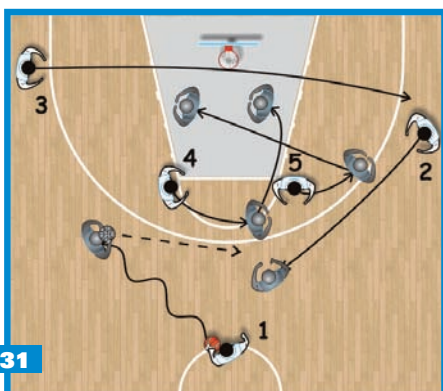
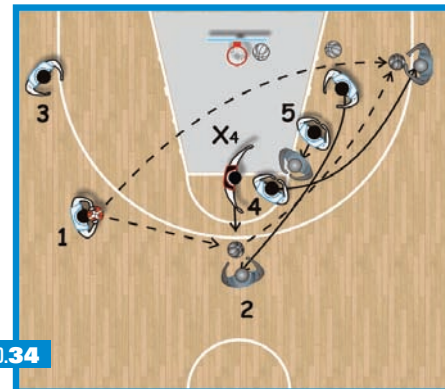
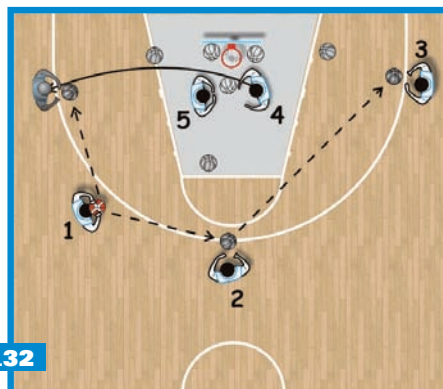
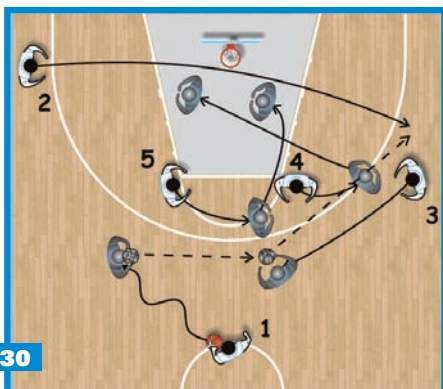


shooter, has to stay as near as possible to the basket (diagr. 21), being very active to punish the helps. If 4 is not a shooter, his defender will not follow him if 4 goes open. Thus, it does not create space. If there is a second defensive help, 4 screens the wing's defender to keep him from contesting the shot.

- Four players outside and one inside: we try to let 4 go as far as possible away

from the basket. I will often put the player guarded by the opponent of 4 in the 4 position and not necessarily my post player. In diagram 23 we can see the most effective pass for a right-hand player in the low post. If 5 receives the ball on the other side, 2 and 4 change their positions, so that 5 can pass the ball with his right hand if he decides to play towards the baseline (diagr. 24)





#### SITUATION WITH A SHOOTER, WHO OPENS ABOVE THE POST SCREENS

Three players outside and two inside: in diagram 25 we can see the particular tendency of the right-hand shooters. If the player usually comes out at the right, he hedges the screen. However, if

he comes out at the left, he will often stop and shoot. The wing, 3, gets open on the opposite side of 2 (diagr. 26). We look for an inside pass for 5 or else we play a direct screen (diagr. 27).

Four players outside and one inside: if 2 goes out on the side where 5 is located,

nothing changes. However, if he goes out to the side where 4 is located, 4 takes advantage of the help made by his defender on the shooter and immediately gets open, ready to shoot on the other side (diagr. 28).

With this particular move, we can provoke a switch among the defenders of our post players (diagr. 29).



#### ONE MORE SITUATION WITH A DOUBLE SCREEN FOR THE WINGS

Diagram 30 shows the move with three players outside and two players inside. On the other hand, if we have four and one and in case of a defensive help, 4 goes out to shoot on the other side (diagr. 31 and 32). If there is no help, 5 screens and 4 opens at the top of the key (diagr. 33). We use the same philosophy for the vertical screen (diagr. 34). We try to involve the wings in these movements; 2 can play the ball on some occasions (diagr. 35).

When we play with four and one, we insist that our "faked" 4 goes for the offensive rebound, because his defender usually will not seal against a long rebound. Sometimes, a simple touch of the ball while moving in for the rebound can be enough to keep the ball on offense, even though our player doesn't catch the ball.

In general, when we play with four players outside and one inside, we make a few movements to begin our play. We then try to take advantage of both the spaces that we create and the spaces that the defense fails to cover.





by Roy Williams

FIBA

We Are Basketball

Roy Williams is one of the best college coaches in the United States. He was the assistant coach of Dean Smith at the University of North Carolina from 1978 to 1988, and then head coach of the University of Kansas, where he reached the NCAA Final Four four times, moving to the NCAA final in 2003. He was named Coach of the Year five times. For the past six seasons he has coached the University of North Carolina, winning the NCAA title this year, after previously having won it in 2005. He was assistant coach of the U.S. National Team at the University Games in Germany, and held the same post at the 2004 Olympic Games.

The University of North Carolina has a long tradition of using multiple defenses. It began with coach Dean Smith in the 1960's and continues with the teams that I coach today. We used multiple defenses in our run to the 2009 National Championship and in the following pages I will describe a couple of those defenses in detail. There are a variety of reasons to use multiple defenses. To begin, using a variety of defenses prepares your team to play against any style or team with certain personnel. Also, the opposing teams must use valuable practice time to prepare for all of your defenses. This takes away from time that could be spent in other ways. Finally, it keeps your players excited and it helps us create the type of tempo we want in a game. Specifically, the trapping defenses that I will describe in this article create turnovers and quick shots. This creates more possessions in the game and it also helps us get out in transition, which is crucial to our success. We have full-court, three-quarters court, and half-court defenses. We also have

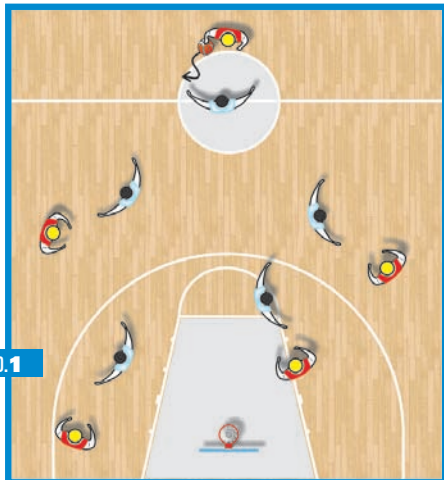


# MULTIPLE DEFENSES

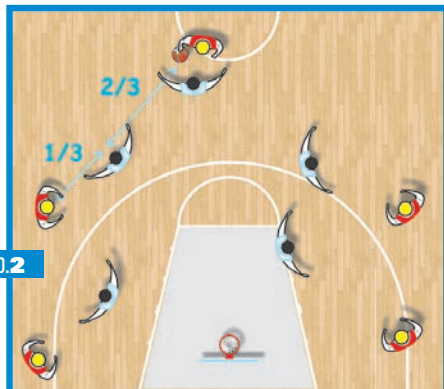




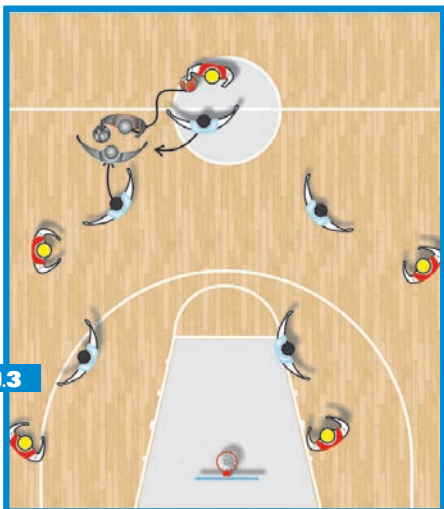




D.1



D.2



D.3

the traps will occur (2 represents half court, 3 is three-quarters court, and 4 is full court).

### 32 DEFENSE

The first defense I will discuss is 32, trapping the dribbler in the half court. Once our point guard makes the call, it is his responsibility to place both feet on the center court line. This makes the offensive point guard go one direction or the other. We do not influence him in any direction. We just want it to be clear which way he is going (diagr. 1).

The other four defenders must get good initial position. We like them to be 1/3 away from their man and 2/3 away from the ball. The farther away their man is away from the ball, the farther away they are from their man (diagr. 2). Having good initial position helps the traps, because it deters the initial pass (the defender is in a deny position) and the point guard must dribble. Good initial positioning also makes the distance to be covered less so the trap occurs quicker and therefore is more effective. If the other defenders are also in good initial position it helps them



different zones, man-to-man, and trapping defenses. I will now focus on our half-court trapping defenses. We typically call the defenses after all made field goals. This allows our point guard to make a call using a hand signal. It is the responsibility of the other players to see the signal and then execute the defense once the ball gets past half court. We have two half-court traps that we use the most. They are called "32" and "42."

In our numbering system, the first number signifies the type of defense (our 30 series is trapping the dribbler, and our 40 series is trapping the first pass), the second number signifies where on the court





get to the interceptor and goal tender spots that I will explain in the following paragraphs. The defense is put into action when the opposing point guard passes half court. It is important that the defensive point guard keeps him going in one direction. If he changes direction, the defense can get into disarray. Once the wing defender sees the point guard coming his way, he runs at him to create a trapping situation (diagr. 3).

#### THE TRAP

Once we have a player in a trap, we encourage our players to get as close as possible without fouling. We really try to prevent the offense from splitting the trap

and getting between the two defenders. A good trap is vital to the success of the defense.

NOTE: At times in the past we have had our point guard trap from the backside. This trap comes as a surprise, but it is more difficult to dictate where the point guard goes (diagr. 4).

#### THE INTERCEPTORS

At the exact same time the double teamers move to go double, the interceptors react as well. One will be the high interceptor and the other will be the low interceptor (diagr. 5). The interceptors' goal is not to play man-to-man. They will get into a temporary zone where they will try to

guard two players. If the man with the ball leans one way, the interceptors will shade in that direction (diagr. 6). Ideally, the interceptors play the pass and get a steal that will lead to a fast break. If there is not a steal and the defense is broken, the interceptor closest to the ball will guard him man-to-man. His job is to contain this ball handler at all costs. The other interceptor and the two double-teamers sprint off to the lane and then build out to a man and get in our basic half-court man-to-man defense (diagr. 7 and 8).

#### THE GOALTENDER

The double teamers and interceptors are trying to be very aggressive. The goal-





tender, on the other hand, is very conservative and he does not gamble. His job is to prevent all layups.

He is not trying for steals. See the previous diagrams to see how he simply protects the goal. In a perfect situation, this would be a big man, but since we cannot make the offense go to certain spots, it could be any player.

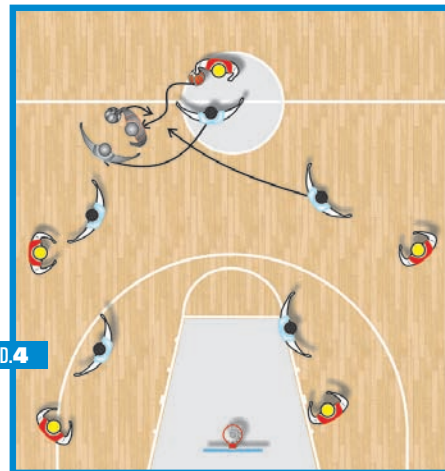
#### THE FLYER

If the trap occurs below the free-throw line, we rename the goaltender. He is now called a flyer and his role changes as well. Since the trap is low and the low interceptor is fronting the post, we free up the goaltender to go for steals on the weak side (diagr. 9).

#### 42 DEFENSE

Our 42 defense has all of the same principles as our 32 defense, but we are trapping the first pass (diagr. 10). We still try to deny every pass so it is just a normal man-to-man until a pass is made. The one thing we do not want is for the first pass to go to the top of the key. Trapping there can create opportunities for the offense, but if it does go there we will still run our defense. Once this trap occurs, we will still have our two interceptors and a goaltender.

We do not trap a second time unless it is a really short pass and a second double team is very easy and convenient. We do like to add a second double team, if it is a short pass to the corner. We feel that is a great time to put the offense on their heels

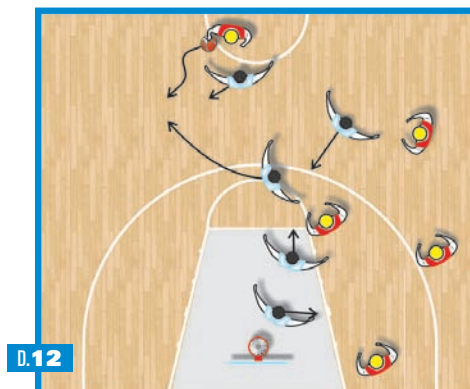
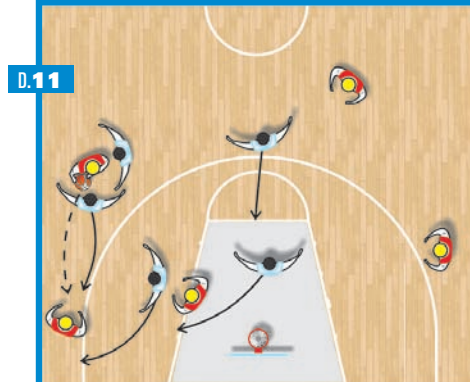
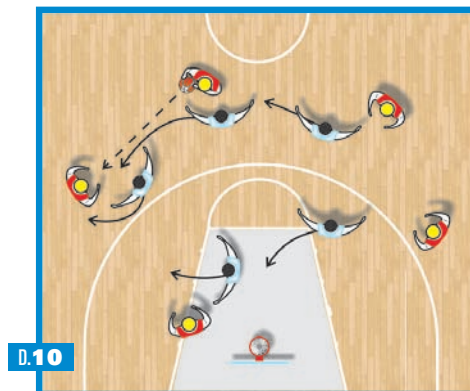
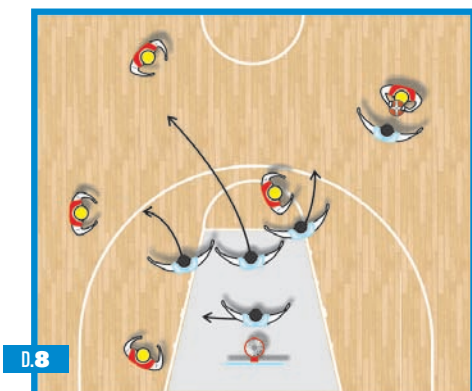
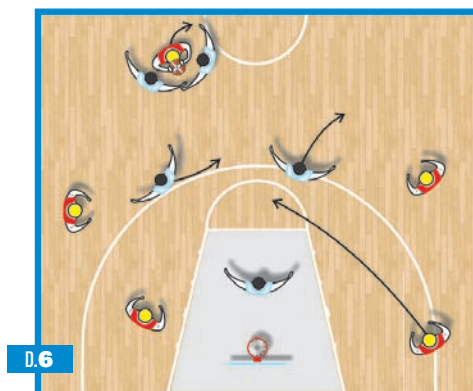
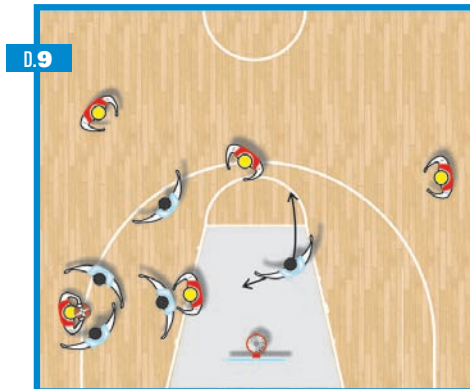
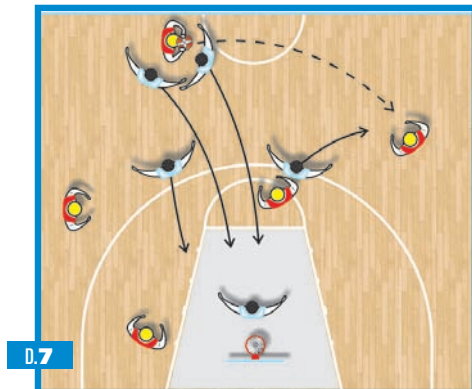
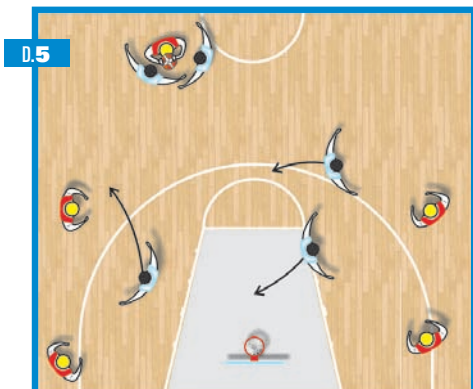


(diagr. 11). Once this happens, we just have a new set of double teamers, two interceptors, and a flyer since the trap occurs below the free-throw line.

Our scramble defenses have been great to us over the years. Often the offensive set-up is not perfect and it can lead to confusion for some of our defenders. Communication is a huge part of having a successful scramble defense. Look at diagram 12 to see a situation where talking







and hustle are needed to make this work. Carolina basketball has had a long history of sustained excellence. Much of that success comes from the defensive system that we have in place. Our scramble defenses are part of that system and they have been an integral part of what we do. We hope it helps us win many more games for North Carolina in the future.





by Raffaele Imbrogno

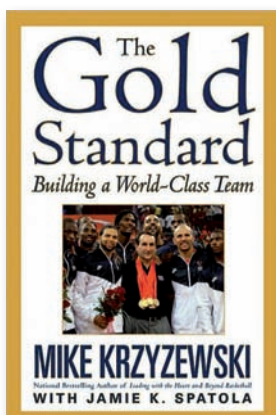
# IT'S ALMOST SUMMERTIME!

Raffaele Imbrogno has been coaching since 1980. He is an Instructor for the Italian National Coaches Committee of the Federation and has been Director of the Italian Basketball Federation Study Center. Imbrogno is also the author of several technical basketball publications.

*"I feel like a field sown in the heart of winter, and I know that spring is coming. My streams will it take to scroll through and the small life sleeping in me will rise in surface to the first call." Kahlil Gibran*

March Madness in the United States ended with decisive victories for both the University of North Carolina Tar Heels (men) and the University of Connecticut Huskies (women). Both were pre-season favorites to win their respective NCAA titles, and they did.

Now, let's take a look at the new technical materials coming from leading American university coaches that you may want to add to your book collection or DVD library. The Duke University Blue Devils didn't reach the Final Four this year and to make matters worse, their arch-enemies located just 10 miles away in Chapel Hill (The University of North Carolina), won the National title. Still, Coach Mike Krzyzewski, the Duke coach has been busy at his computer, writing another interesting work entitled "The Gold Standard - Building a World-Class Team," which was co-authored by his older daughter Jaime K. Spatola. Coach K starts off by noting that "In all types of leadership, if you are a coach, manager, or a parent, there are four words that can make your team, your staff, or your family give their best: I BELIEVE IN YOU!" According to Coach K, who guided the United States to the 2008 Olympic Games gold medal in basketball, these four words can make the difference between the fear of losing and the courage needed when trying to win. In his book, published by Business Plus, Coach K describes the challenge of



*In this section, we introduce the latest books, videos, CDs, and other tools that are primarily aimed at coaches, but certainly useful for all of our readers. Please send your suggestions and comments about our basketball-related media for review in this section.*

adapting his coaching methods that work so well with young college basketball players to his team of NBA superstars. There were many people who felt that he would not be able to adjust and that the NBA players would ignore him and his coaching ideas.

Coach K proved his naysayers wrong. In describing his time with his Olympic athletes, Coach K admits that egos were not the issue. Instead, he had to get his players to stop thinking always about the team and start looking for their own shots. For example, Kobe Bryant, one of NBA's top scorers, was so determined to prove his unselfishness that he didn't take a shot in one practice game.

For those of you who want to read about how the U.S. was able to return to the top of international basketball rankings, Coach K's book is the one to read. For those of you who want to understand the intricacies of the pick-and-roll and how to defend against this basic basketball play, then Dave Odom's DVD, "Defending the Pick and Roll" from Championship Productions should be on your list. Odom, the three-time ACC Coach of the Year at Wake Forest who died of a heart attack last year while jogging, analyzes many pick-and-roll situations and describes six types of defenses. For you defense-minded coaches, Ralph Willard's "Man Defense to Equalize Talent" is another DVD to consider. Willard, a former assistant coach to Jim Boheim, Tubby Smith, and Rick Pitino,



and now the head coach at Holy Cross College, shows how to make your rivals' offense "think" by blocking its aggressiveness. He focuses on defense on the ball, aggressive switches, help from the weakside, double-teams in the post, all packed into 74 minutes.

Jim Calhoun, the coach of the University of Connecticut offers his own DVD, "Rebounding Drills & Basketball Wisdom." In 78 minutes, the Hall of Fame coach (two NCAA titles, 16-time winner of the Big East championship, and over 700 victories in his storied career) shows us the ins and outs of rebounding. He focuses on footwork, strength, positioning, and aggressiveness.

Finally, Ganon Baker has two new DVDs: "Ganon Baker's Ball Skills for Creating Separation" and "Ganon Baker's Ball Skills for Post Players." The first DVD details how to take advantage on defense thanks to footwork and strong movements to go to the basket. He has various one-on-one situations, with or without the ball. In the second DVD, Coach Baker shows the exercises that will improve dribble skills in one-on-one situations in the low post, as well as how to move without the ball. Enjoy the book, the DVDs, and the summer months!





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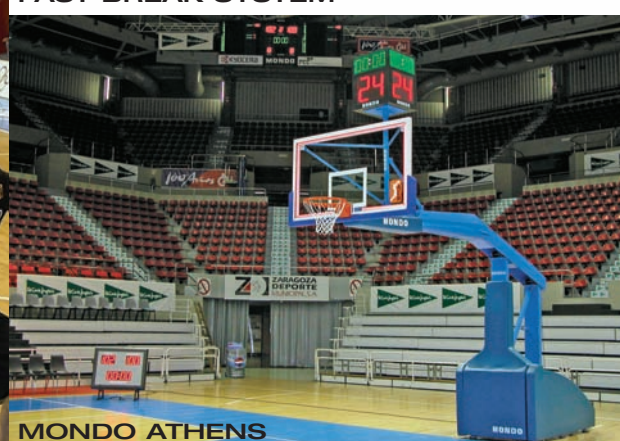
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**FIBA**

We Are Basketball



by Alan Richardson

# VISUALISATION, IMAGERY

**Alan Richardson has been a FIBA referee from 1978 to 1998. He then became Referee Clinic Instructor from 1996 to 2000. Since 2000, he is the Technical Advisor of the Referee Department of the Euroleague.**

The most powerful weapon an official has is his mind. Great officials are those who demonstrate total control of the mind, as well as the body. The power of self-belief as a precursor to success is a well-documented fact.

"As we begin to realize that we are not totally the victim of genetics, conditioning, and accidents, changes begin to happen in our lives. Nature begins to respond to us in a new way and the things we visualize, even though unlikely, begin to happen with increasing frequency, our bodies tend to do what they are told to do, if we know how to tell them."

To be successful in challenging situations, officials need to build strong self-portraits, views of themselves as good officials, who can cope with whatever arises during a game. Visualization, using all the senses to recreate or create an experience in the mind, is a process that can train the inner mind to build that self-portrait. By using vivid imagery, officials can recreate the game and all its demands in their minds and develop a mental plan that prepares both their confidence and their strategies for coping with situations.

## PROCESS OF VISUALIZATION

This mental skill requires an official to imagine himself/herself playing basketball, seeing, hearing, feeling, and "smelling" the action on the court. To avoid too many images and possible distractions, the official should combine visualization with a state of deep relaxation. The official can then focus sharply on the imagined action.

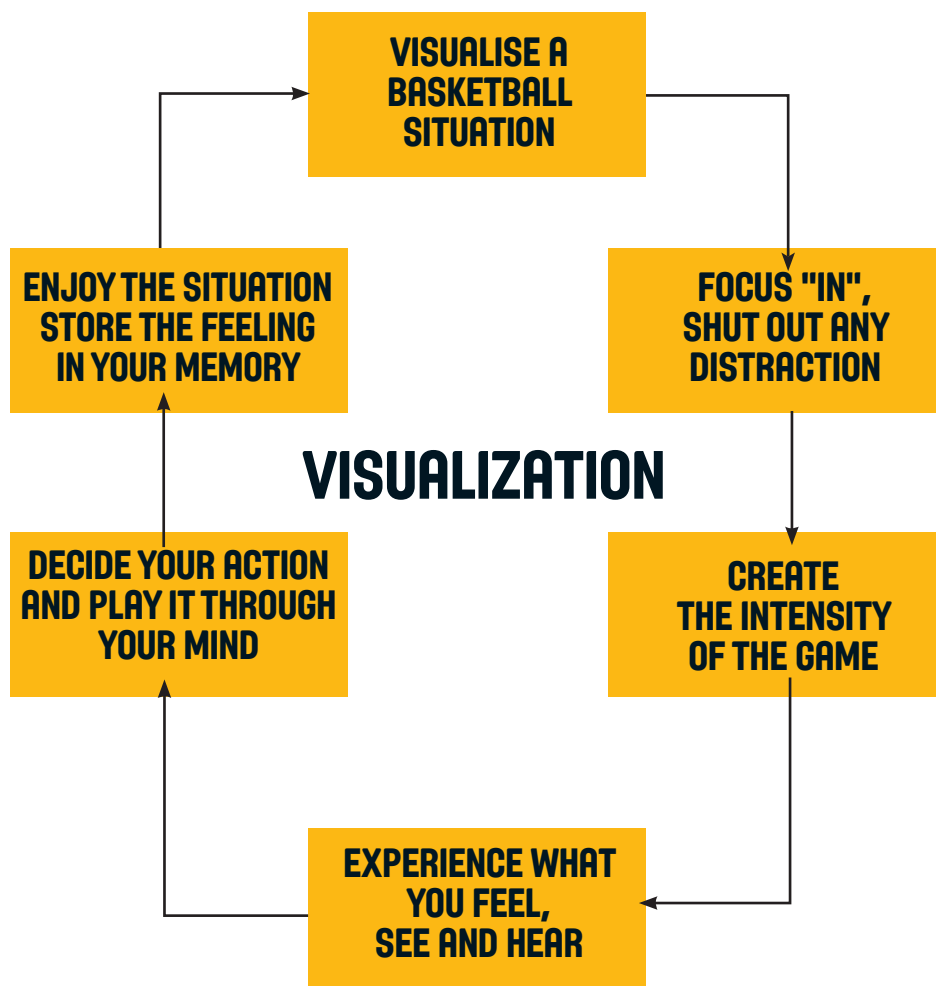
"The images become so alive that your central nervous system fails to distinguish between real or imagined events,

your body responds to each in the same way. Thus, an official who pictures each move of an event correctly in advance, will have a greater chance of repeating these moves, having in a sense practiced them before the actual event happens".

Think of visualization as a dress rehearsal. It is a form of practice that makes you familiar with the situation. The official should try to recreate the sight, physical sensation, sound, and purpose of the basketball scene in order to achieve a more realistic simulation and greater personal benefit. Now the official can

see himself/herself in the situation, choosing the correct course of action, carrying it through with excellent effect, and even hearing, occasionally, the approval of the spectators and a positive comment from the coach at the receiving end of the call. The key to visualization is that a positive image of each situation now exists in the official's mind. The official can recall it when a similar situation presents itself later in the game or even in the next game. Clearly, the more an official practices visualization, the more accurate the images will become. The

## DIAGRAM OF THE PROCESS OF VISUALIZATION







memories will become stronger, the images more accessible, and the emotional support more powerful, boosting confidence and motivation.

#### **BENEFITS OF VISUALIZATION**

Instructors, mentors, and officials, who use visualization believe it helps them to:

- ▼ Reinforce self-belief and see things positively.
- ▼ Learn self-control and develop coping strategies.
- ▼ Practice mentally what they experience in the game.
- ▼ Learn to focus and shut out distractions.
- ▼ Improve relaxation.
- ▼ Link body and mind to produce the appropriate energy state.

To maximise such benefits, officials should observe the following approach:

- ▼ Relax; a calm state of mind is essential.
- ▼ Use all the senses; the stronger the imagery, the greater the chance of success.
- ▼ Visualize in the positive; always seeing and feeling yourself performing well.
- ▼ Focus on the **PROCESS**, not going to the desired outcome immediately, but

imagining the whole process leading up to the performance (like a video).

- ▼ Be specific by seeing all the details (the whole play) leaving nothing out (positioning).
- ▼ Show belief by being committed to visualization and believing that what you see is what actually happens.
- ▼ Be patient, it will take time to see the benefits, but short consistent practice will get you there.

#### **USING VISUALIZATION TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE**

It has often been shown that the best kind of learning is a combination of visualization (mentally rehearsing the situation) and physical practice and experience. Officials develop an "image book" in which they can visualize in detail the stimulus-response trigger when a given situation arises during the game.

#### **UNDERSTANDING TACTICS AND STRATEGIES**

To perform well, an official must understand the tactics employed by the competing teams and his/her role within the game. When a team changes tactics, quickly and significantly, (e.g. zone defence to full court press), as often happens at the highest levels, officials must be mentally prepared to cope with the change.

#### **WARMING UP MENTALLY**

Officials employ different ways of warming up mentally and physically for a game. Most include some form of visualization, rehearsing plays in their mind. Officials often sit quietly and mentally rehearse the concentration they need for their first involvement in the game; the first toss, the first basket, and the first whistle (foul, violation, etc.). The pre-game conference should contribute greatly to this process.

#### **REHEARSING PERFORMANCE ROUTINES**

Although officials often perform in "automatic mode", letting habits dictate in certain specific situations, they do have time to think, albeit in microseconds, and can therefore rehearse their reactions. Although it is impossible to reproduce every situation that may arise, with visualization we can prepare the minds of the officials for any surge of emotion and help them create disciplined performance routines that they can employ.

During the "long walk" to the center circle to commence the game, the officials can begin rehearsing an approved routine in their minds that helps them to avoid distractions and also boost confidence at this key moment.



## MANAGING STRESS

All officials feel stress, but successful officials learn to cope with it very well. Some even learn to thrive on it. With referees, who are susceptible to stress, visualization can be a useful tool in preparing for emotional expectations. When such an official visualizes a challenging game, he/she normally sees moments of potential stress and negatively programs the mind.

An instructor, mentor referee, or sports psychologist can change this picture by reminding the official of his/her ability, experience, past success, strengths, and other positive issues.

An instructor may ask of an official:

▼ What is the worst thing that can happen and can you live with it?

The best visualization involves feelings using the following imagery pattern:

▼ What if this (potential source of stress) happens?

▼ How will I feel?

▼ Then I will . . . ?

▼ Therefore, I will regain control.

So for example, a referee assesses a technical foul for unsportsmanlike behavior by a coach, he must maintain composure, and shut out any emotional distractions, while retaining control of the remainder of the game.

## BUILDING CONFIDENCE

Clearly, the more an official sees himself/herself as being competent and successful, the more that official will perform in that way. Instructors must find ways of reminding officials of how good they can be now and also in the future, not how poor they were! The message must be strong enough for the image to become a lasting reality. Officials with strong self-esteem are far more likely to accept criticism of performance without damage, as their inner mind will show them as competent and successful but with the capacity to accept and learn from constructive criticism.

## RECOVERING FROM INJURY

A sudden injury, and the resultant withdrawal from the excitement and involvement of a nomination, can often damage an official psychologically. As always, the official has to make a professional decision as to how to regard the injury:

▼ The official may take a negative view by thinking "This is awful."

Or

▼ The official may be positive and say "Unfortunately, these things happen,



but I will be back officiating as soon as possible"

The official's support group -family, colleagues, instructor/mentor, medical team- has the job of encouraging the official to visualize the injury and rehabilitation in a strong, positive manner. Although the official may not be able to practice physically during treatment, visualization promotes some maintenance of skills during recovery. Many physiotherapists believe this helps speed the healing process.

## MANAGING ENERGY

The mind and the body are so strongly linked that when an official visualizes an action, the body begins to prepare a response. If the official learns to visualize positively, the body will prepare for the action in a positive manner with increased energy. Officials who visualize negatively will experience the reverse.

Instructors and evaluators who are aware of this effect should be careful to present officials with comments and images about their next game that evoke the required visualization and therefore the correct energy state. Officials who visualize positively will be in a state of high positive energy. Officials, who are complacent or not fully aroused, will find themselves in a state of low positive energy, a relaxing place but not where we want to be for success. Without proper mental preparation officials run the risk

of an inconsistent performance. Officials who do not care or feel overwhelmed will produce low negative energy.

Finally, the most dangerous state of mind is high negative energy. Officials find themselves in uncontrolled emotions, negatively burning up energy. When an official or team of officials is not mentally disciplined, an adverse event in a game -or even pre-game- can throw them completely out of control and reduce the chances of a successful performance.

## SUMMARY

Visualization is a mental tool that some instructors and officials find helpful in preparing their minds to meet the challenges of the game. A clear link has been established between positive thinking and the likelihood of positive action, so officials are encouraged to spend time visualizing and analyzing themselves performing with excellence.

## WHAT YOU OFTEN SEE IS WHAT YOU GET

Visualization is recommended for building confidence, developing strategies to cope with stress, understanding tactics and strategy, and assisting recovery from injury. Of great importance is the link between visualization -how we see ourselves- and our emotional state, energy state and therefore our potential for performance. As we exercise, the mind grows stronger. The more the referee pictures success, the more energy he/she creates to achieve it.



# RIGHT OR WRONG?

*The following questions focus on the document, "FIBA Official Basketball Rules: Official Interpretations." A free download is provided on the FIBA website ([www.fiba.com](http://www.fiba.com)). For additional clarifications, explanations or examples, please consult this document.*

1. During the last minute of the game, A2 is in control of the ball in his backcourt when the ball is deflected out-of-bounds by B5. Team A is then awarded a time-out. When play resumes with a team A throw-in at the centre line extended opposite the scorer's table, thrower-in A3 passes the ball to A4, who is in the team A backcourt. Shall team A now have 8 seconds to ad-

vance the ball to the team A frontcourt?

2. Dribbler A3 loses control of the ball which then touches B8, who is waiting at the scorer's table to enter the game as a substitute. Shall play resume with a team B throw-in?
3. Team A is awarded a throw-in. Shall the resulting time-out opportunity end when the ball is at the disposal of the thrower-in?
4. On a throw-in by A3 at a sideline in team A's frontcourt, B3 touches the ball while it is in the air. The ball then goes out-of-bounds at the opposite sideline without touching another player. Shall play resume with a team A throw-in at the place of the original throw-in?

5. Team A has been in control of the ball in the team A backcourt for 4 seconds when A3 and B3 commit a double foul. On the resulting team A throw-in, shall team A have only 4 seconds remaining in which to advance the ball to the frontcourt?
6. While the ball is at the disposal of A2 for an alternating possession throw-in, a technical foul is committed by coach A. Shall team B be entitled to the next alternating possession throw-in?
7. When Team A and team B arrive on the playing court for the pre-game warm-up, both coaches agree that team A sit at the team bench to the right of the scorer's table as well as shoot at the basket to the right of the scorer's table for the 1st half. Shall the request be granted?
8. With team A entitled to the next alternating possession throw-in, A3 commits a dribble violation after which technical fouls are committed by A5 and B5. Shall play resume with an alternating possession throw-in for team A?
9. While the ball is in the air on a field goal attempt by A5, a foul is called. The ball subsequently touches the ring and is bouncing above it when it is touched by A2. Has A2 committed interference?
10. A8 enters the game as a substitute for A5. Before the clock has again started following the substitution, A8 commits a technical foul. This is A8's fifth foul in the game. The only team A substitute available is A5. May A5 now re-enter the game to substitute for A8?



## ANSWERS

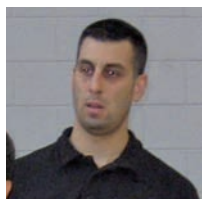
1. Yes (Art. 28.2.1)
2. Yes (Art. 23.2.1; since B8 is not yet a player, the ball was caused to go out-of-bounds by A3)
3. Yes (Art. 18.2.4)
4. No (Article 17.2.2)
5. Yes (Art. 28.2.2)
6. No (Art. 12.4.8)
7. Yes (Art. 9.4)
8. No (Art. 42.2.7, 2nd bullet)
9. Yes (Art. 31.2.6)
10. Yes (Art. 19.2.4)




**FIBA**

We Are Basketball

# THE ART OF SCOUTING: EVALUATING TALENT



by Adam Filippi

**Adam Filippi is the International Scouting Director of Los Angeles Lakers. His scouting career begins in 1997, working for Fortitudo Bologna. In 1999 becomes international scout of New Jersey Nets. He collaborates with several NBA teams and he has been working for Los Angeles Lakers since 2001, and in 2002 he wins the NBA Championship. Instructor in many clinics, Filippi is also a certificated Personal Trainer (CPT) after having studied at the National Academy Sports Medicine (USA).**

Friends often tell me, "You watch basketball games for a living! That's not a job!". It's not quite that simple, but for sure, working in basketball is a privilege. I prefer to call my job a "lifestyle" out of respect for the guy, who has to go to the office from 9 to 5 everyday. But, seeing countless games and players, traveling around the world, watching video, writing reports, gathering information, constantly being updated with all leagues, and being away from your family isn't always easy. When I speak at basketball camps and clinics, I always tell the audience that anybody with passion for basketball can become a scout, and that not everybody can become a player.

At the same time, if a young kid decides that when he grows up he wants to become an NBA scout, his chances would be far less than becoming an NBA player, or even a multi-million dollar making plastic surgeon for that matter. That's because there are 450 openings for players in the NBA, but less than 30 positions like mine. Yes, I know that I have been blessed to be able to work for my favorite childhood team, the LA Lakers.





### WHAT MAKES A GOOD SCOUT?

To become good at any job, you have to either have talent or a strong work ethic. Those that have both talent and work ethic, and love what they do (passion), are usually very successful. I believe this is the key in any line of work.

Having played the game of basketball at an organized level is definitely a plus in scouting, as it is with coaching, but it's certainly not a mandatory qualification. We all know there are many successful coaches, scouts, and general managers, who have

not played competitive basketball, but have studied the game thoroughly. And there have been countless former star players who have been either unsuccessful coaches or shown a poor eye for talent.

### THE JOB

Scouting is the cornerstone of building a good basketball team. Good scouting leads to knowing the players well, and "knowing the players" is crucial in a team's decision making during the draft, free agency, and trading procedures. It is often more a pro-

cess of "elimination" of players rather than actually choosing the perfect one.

I quit playing in 1997 at age 25, and dove into scouting (for Italian teams) instead of coaching because at the time there were countless (unemployed) coaches, but no scouts working for European teams. Also, very few NBA teams had international scouts. So I felt I had more of an opportunity to establish myself and bring value to an organization in a scouting capacity. I had passion, knowledge, but no real "school," so I had to learn while doing the job, developing my own "style". Thanks to Nowitzki, Stojakovic, and other Europeans blossoming into NBA stars, and as more international players started declaring early for the NBA draft, my opportunity came when I was hired by the New Jersey Nets in 1999. Working as a Scouting Director for an NBA team is different than working for a European team. In the NBA, I deal almost exclusively with the General Manager and Assistant General Manager, while working in Europe I would report to the GM but talk more often to the head coach, and sometimes be a "liaison" between them. In both cases, it is a "behind the scenes" job.

An NBA organization's scouting staff must cover the following players:

- ▼ College.
- ▼ International:
  - Prospects for Draft (age 19-22).
  - Over 22 (free agents, foreign and US).
- ▼ Very Young Prospects (16-19).
- ▼ NBA (free agency and trade possibilities).
- ▼ Minor Leagues (D-League).

College basketball will always be the largest area to cover. International basketball scouting has become crucial as it's usually the foreign players that "change" the draft. Because of contracts, league talent levels around the world, and countless cultural differences, international player evaluation is the most complex and deceiving in scouting. NBA scouting is the most overlooked, as sometimes teams "think" they know a player or just remember how he played against them. In addition stats sometimes lie (great stats on a bad team!). This is where I feel teams make the biggest mistakes. The NBA Development league has been great to monitor, especially in case of a sudden injury, so you can find a "temporary solution."

### Scouting Reports

Today some teams have sophisticated computer software tools for scouting. However, I prefer traditional player evaluation reports. At the beginning of my career I would write three-page reports on a player, with background, offense, defense,







coaching opinions, graphs, stats, interviews, and grades. Yes, it was a lot of information. It was hard work and required a lot of research, but I felt that my head coach or GM deserved as much information as possible. But, General Managers and coaches don't have the time to read a three-page player report that ends with: "I don't think he can play for us." I soon realized that my job is to simplify their jobs. I can talk to my boss for 30 seconds about a player and suddenly he will interrupt me to ask, "Can he play or not?" or "Would you take him or not?"

A well-done player report should provide the following information:

- ▼ Body, size, athleticism.
- ▼ Offensive and defensive strengths and weaknesses.
- ▼ Can he create his own shot?
- ▼ Can he play in the NBA? Star? Starter? Rotation? Journeyman?
- ▼ Can he play for our team? Do we have a need at that position? Can he play the triangle offense?
- ▼ Margin for improvement - upside? Can he improve the flaws he has?
- ▼ Special NBA skill - What's going to

make him successful?

- ▼ Similar NBA player - My boss needs to visualize who he plays like.
  - ▼ Why he is CNP - if you say he Can Not Play, give reason
- Don't be afraid to say you like a player and why. Don't be afraid to say you don't like a player and why.
- Major "Turn Offs" You Notice In Scouting:
- ▼ Bad body language.
  - ▼ Laziness.
  - ▼ Out of shape.
  - ▼ Selfish play.
  - ▼ Lack of focus/concentration.
  - ▼ Trash talking.
  - ▼ Disrespectful: towards coaches, teammates, referees, opponents.

### SHOT CHART

I've grown to love the shot chart: it shows and reminds you where a player likes to shoot from, and how much he drives to the basket. The chart isn't going to tell you everything about a player's game, but I do consider it very useful.

### Under Pressure Factor

I love to talk about GAME PRESSURE. Some players just disappear or don't perform well in the last minutes of games or in big games. I want to know if a player wants the ball, if he'll carry his team, if he'll have the guts to take and make the last shot. Figuring out if a guy is mentally tough is another key factor in evaluating a player.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

I add a little background and/or personal information in each report, then right before the NBA draft I'll gather all the information possible for my "Draft Book" that covers all the players in the draft. Having a good network (coaches, trainers, reporters, players around the world) is important, but don't let people's opinion influence you too much. I try to find out and gather the following information: family, attitude, work ethic, teamwork, off-the-court interests, and performance in the classroom. Basketball intangibles are a major concern.. For international players, the most difficult issue is the player's contract situation: Is he free? Buyout? How many years are left on his contract? What kind of leverage does he have? Will he re-sign in Europe? These issues can impact a final decision in drafting a player, not withstanding his playing abilities.

### HOW MANY TIMES SHOULD YOU SEE AN NBA PROSPECT?

Five is a good number for a "new" prospect, but most times I will have seen a player many times during the previous two to three seasons. You can supplement your



research watching videos, but it is not the same thing as seeing a player in person at close range. Seeing a player just once can really trick you, but seeing a player too much can mislead you also: overscouting. This was the case with Tiago Splitter of Tau, a player I had seen for five consecutive seasons. I saw him play so much that I only ended up watching for his flaws, while not appreciating his strengths.

#### **IT'S OK TO CHANGE YOUR OPINION AND EVALUATION ON A PLAYER**

I may change my opinion on a player from good to bad over a year or two. Very rarely, however, I will change my opinion from bad to good. Still, there are those few players, who do improve their game and attitude or grow into their bodies. There have been incredible cases of players whose game was never in question, but whose bodies and athleticism surprisingly developed, making them much improved players over a short period of time (like over the summer!). Best examples I've witnessed have been Deron Williams, a player who I never thought could change his "funny body;" Carlos Boozer was taken in the 2nd round because of his apparent lack of athleticism; and Marc Gasol, who could not run the floor at 19, now starts for Memphis as an NBA rookie.

#### **ARE WE DRAFTING AN "NBA PLAYER" OR "A POTENTIAL NBA PLAYER"?**

When you draft a 20-year-old player you can't expect him to know the game thoroughly. And you must know that he may not be ready to contribute for one to two seasons. I am obsessed with the fundamentals of the game and I feel that my scouting, previous playing, and skills training experiences allow me to do a good job at identifying player weaknesses and how to improve in those areas. When you draft a player you have to know what you're getting: What are his strengths and weaknesses and what is the margin for improvement. Can he overcome his flaws? Can he improve his ball handling or shooting in order to become the player we need? Intangibles and work ethic are important as now these questions become "Does he have the DESIRE to become a better ball handler or shooter?" Saying that a player can pass when he averages 10 assists per game or that he can shoot after he makes 8-10 3-pointers isn't hard, but figuring out his mental strengths, dedication, and will to become a player is difficult.

#### **"DOES HE LIKE TO PLAY?"**

It may sound like a silly question, but it's not. Believe me there are some very good

professional players that are not in love with the game. When a guy loves to play, he is more committed to getting better and winning, and usually is more competitive than a player who "just" plays basketball for a living. This is what makes evaluating players complex. It's very hard to get into a young player's head!

When we drafted a 17-year-old Andrew Bynum at #10 in 2005, he had played basically only one year of organized basketball, so there were huge risks involved. The physical abilities and upside were there, but the truth is, it was too early to know if he really loved the game of bas-

ketball. He was a smart kid, and immediately we realized he was a worker and wanted to develop his skills.

His subsequent improvements led to enhanced confidence, and as he became part of the rotation, he started loving the game more each day. Now, at 21, he has become fundamentally sound, confident, in love with the game, and more competitive every day.

The entire process has been exciting to watch. A good team environment and the player's dedication will lead to the improvements you hoped for on his draft night.







**FIBA**

We Are Basketball



by Mike Brungardt

# THE HILL: STRENGTH, POWER AND CONDITIONING





**Mike Brungardt joined the Spurs in 1994 and he is the first and only strength and conditioning coach in Spurs history. He has built the team's strength and conditioning program from the ground up. He has co-authored five books in the conditioning field, and his latest books are "The Complete Book of Core Training" and the "Complete Conditioning for Basketball".**

Over the past 10 years we have utilized and incorporated into our program a form of training that helps develop

strength, power, and conditioning in a functional way. The tool used is a man made hill that ascends at between a 45 to 50 degree angle. Running stadium steps has been a popular form of training for decades. Running the hill is even more effective, for a variety of reasons which this article will address, as well as the type of programming we employ. You too can utilize this concept and you don't have to build your own hill. Just find one. The guidelines that you want to come close to in your selection is a hill that has at least a 30 meter sprint path,

and ascends at a 45 to 50 degree angle.

#### **WHY THE HILL?**

We feel that the hill is a valuable tool for a variety of reasons:

1. The hill allows the runner to have a loaded foot plant which works the lower leg much more effectively than stadium steps, which have a flat foot plant on every strike.
2. The hill allows the runner to exercise with a greater variety of dynamic movements in every direction.
3. The hill is a great tool to transfer the strength gained in the weight room into motion.
4. The hill is versatile allowing you to work both lower and upper body strength, power, and conditioning.
5. The hill can be used as a rehab tool, especially for knee and ankle rehab. Walking down the hill, as well as up, in a variety of directions forces the ankles to mobilize, and stabilize, as well as forcing the knees and hips to stabilize.
6. The hill is easy and effective to integrate in your overall strength and conditioning program.

#### **WHAT TYPES OF MOVEMENTS ARE PERFORMED ON THE HILL?**

There are a variety of movements we use on the hill. When exercising the lower body we employ:

1. Forward Sprints.
2. Backward Sprints.
3. Lateral Slides.
4. Power Skips.
5. Long Jumps.
6. Triple Jumps.
7. 45-Degree Cuts.
8. Speed Skates.
9. Monster Runs.
10. Machine Gun Runs.

When exercising the upper body we employ bear crawls and crab walks in a variety of directions.

#### **HOW DO WE INCORPORATE THE HILL IN OUR PROGRAMMING?**

We use the hill every day we lift in the off-season. On leg days we utilize our running and other lower body dynamic movements. One day will be a heavy lifting day in which we will perform multiple sets of squats, lunges, leg curls, and RDL's. On the heavy lifting day we perform a light hill workout, usually 1 set of 8 to 10 different dynamic movements. On the other leg day for that week we will perform one set of lifts in the weight room and multiple sets of 8







to 10 dynamic movements on the hill. We cycle the hill just like our weights. This is done by emphasizing different movements in different phases or cycles.

On upper body days we incorporate the same principles as lower body days. On a day where we perform multiple sets

on our lifts in the weight room, we will have a light, one set day on the hill. When we perform a light, one set day in the weight room, we will perform multiple sets on the hill.

#### WHAT ABOUT CONDITIONING?

The hill is great because it also conditions the athlete's anaerobic system extensively during a workout. It is a great interval type of workout. All movements up the hill, except in a rehab setting, are performed at maximum effort. We want to get up the hill as quickly and explosively as possible on every movement. We always walk down the hill, under control. This gives a great

recovery interval between each ascent back up the hill.

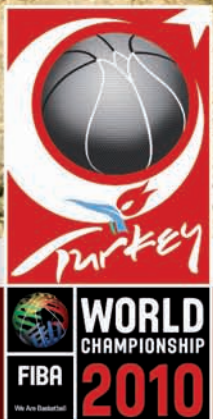
Upper body workouts require tremendous stabilization going down and great strength and power going up. Therefore we simply use a prescribed timed rest interval in the upper body scenario.

As stated earlier we have utilized the hill as a form of training over the past 10 years. It is an integral part of our off-season program.

Basketball players especially relate to it because they are in motion all of the time, which is what basketball entails. You are only limited by your imagination as to the types of workouts you can devise.



# THEY MISSED THE EXCITEMENT...



The Commagene sanctuary built 2000 years ago with its colossal toppled heads of Apollo, Fortuna, Zeus, Herakles, Antiochus two lions and two eagles are constructed of huge tufa stones and is 50 meters wide and 150 meters in diameter. The heads of gods which we see on the ground once stood on 8-10 meter tall statues. A spectacular sight to see!




**FIBA**

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**ONE-ON-ONE**

# DJORDJEVIC: "WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, THE BEST THING THAT CAN HAPPEN TO AN ATHLETE"

Aleksandar 'Sasha' Djordjevic was in Geneva on May 23 and took part in the Assignment Ceremony for the 2014 FIBA World Championship.

Everyone watched highlights of the point guard who shone bright for the former Yugoslavia. In the big tournaments for the Blues or the numerous clubs he played for, Djordjevic always stood as a game-winner. In the European title game of 1995, Djordjevic scored 41 points for Yugoslavia in a gold-medal win over Lithuania.

The playmaker three years later enjoyed one of his finest moments by helping Yugoslavia beat Russia in the FIBA World Championship title game in Athens.

It was evident early on that he would be special.

He celebrated a gold-medal triumph at the 1987 FIBA Junior World Championship in

Bormio alongside Toni Kukoc, Vlade Divac and Dino Radja. Djordjevic went on stage with another legend, Lithuania's Arvydas Sabonis, at the assignment ceremony and opened the envelope that revealed Spain would host the 2014 FIBA World Championship following voting by the FIBA Central Board.

He spoke to FIBA.com's Jeff Taylor after the ceremony.

**FIBA:** Did you know you would have such a prominent role at the ceremony, Sasha?

**DJORDJEVIC:** I wasn't expecting it. I was really happy about it. I was surprised to have so many emotions coming back and having my heart beat really strong. It was a nice moment and I have to say thank you to FIBA.

**FIBA:** When we saw those highlights of you as a player in Athens at the 1998 FIBA World Championship and the other tournaments, it brought back a lot of memories for everyone in the room. It doesn't seem that long again that you were out there on the court.

**DJORDJEVIC:** Yes, and I'm missing those days on the court, the locker room especially. I will always feel like a player. No matter what else I do in basketball, I will always try to present myself as a player and as an ex-player, whether that is coaching or doing whatever for the team because I think that the emotions players express are the best thing in the sports - in our sport especially.

**FIBA:** FIBA World Championships are ex-





tremely special, and that was evident just taking part in the assignment ceremony for the 2014 FIBA World Championship in Geneva with Spain selected to host the event.

**DJORDEVIC:** One doesn't realize until he finishes his career how many opportunities there are to play in the World Championship. I played just one, but I was supposed to play in five. So for one reason or another, the embargo in 1994 for my country, the ex-Yugoslavia, we were supposed to host the World Championship, but they were designated to Toronto. It felt like something was stolen from you and you don't know why. If you go out into the parking lot and find your car spot empty and you don't find your car...it's not exactly the same feeling. It's something like that because I had the feeling with the car. You feel like, "Oh my God, why? Why?" You never find the answer. Those World Championships are definitely the best thing that can happen to an athlete, playing for his own country, winning a medal - a gold medal. Getting a Cup, being a captain - those are things I'll never forget, and I'll always be proud of for the rest of my life. I'll tell my children about it, all the other children.

**FIBA:** Spain won the 2006 FIBA World Championship and they seem to fully embrace what you are talking about. They love playing for the national team. Do you believe it's like this for all countries, for all international players?

**DJORDEVIC:** Once you have a generation and the players are really friends on and off the court, and they live all their experiences good and bad together, then they find that thing that my generation had and a couple of generations before mine in Yugoslavia had - winning. So Spain has that "thing" after winning the Junior World Championship with the same generation of (Pau) Gasol, Raul Lopez, Jose Calderon - and they're continuing to do it. They can't wait for the first day of the training camp to get together to try and reach another gold medal. That's the best thing that can happen to an athlete. You forget about sacrifice, you forget about tough times. You think about how good you are going to feel playing with your best friend, your friends on the court and playing for your country. That's something special.

**FIBA:** Something you said at the assignment ceremony that really shook up the room is when you pointed out that only one federation was going to win the right to host the 2014 FIBA World Championship and that the reaction of the federations to

each other was important. You said it was just like a game, and that the teams that lose need to go and congratulate the team that wins, and the team that wins needs to go and praise the others for having played a good game, and then you need to move on.

**DJORDEVIC:** Absolutely. The game is over, and you need to start to think about another one. Since I live in Italy, a lot of my friends played with (Italy Basketball Federation president) Dino Meneghin in his last game with the same team and they adore him and appreciate him a lot as both a friend and a basketball legend. He is leading the basketball movement in Italy. What he should do is just move on, right now, to achieve a new goal. It might be (to host) a European Championship in 2013, something that hasn't been designated yet. So, that might be the goal for Italy. The same goes for China. They had a little bad luck. They just had the Olympics and it was kind of difficult for them to get it. Nevertheless, they are the strongest competitor ever when it comes to organizing any event and not just sports. So China should just look for another goal and I'm sure they will. They have the organization that maybe the Italian Basketball Federation didn't have until now because of a lot of changes. Congratulations to Spain. They're the best and I'm not surprised they won it. I played there. I even have a Spanish passport (smiling). When it came to Italy and Spain, I used to say, "I'm winning for sure." So I'll be the winner today. I'm happy for them because I know how much (Spanish Basketball Federation) president Saez did for them, what the organization is like to really take care of their teams, the events, the competitions. They are really an example to look at to be as them, or better than them although that's going to be tough because they are at a very high level.

**FIBA:** Okay Sasha, we have to look back at that 41-point explosion you had in the gold-medal game of the 1995 EuroBasket against Lithuania. What got into you that day? What did you have for breakfast?

**DJORDEVIC:** (Smiling) I can't remember, but I'd have the same thing for breakfast every day of my life if I could. That was a special day in my life, and a special day for my country because we had come out of years of the embargo and we didn't play as a national team during that time. We won that European gold and all of the people were out in the street celebrating and it was really special. I think it's (41 points) still a record in the gold medal game, which wasn't

bad. I left something behind.

**FIBA:** You can still play now, right?

**DJORDEVIC:** I'm still thinking like a player. I miss those times.

**FIBA:** If you were a boxer, you could come out of retirement.

**DJORDEVIC:** (Smiling) Yes, like (Evander) Holyfield or (Mike) Tyson. No really, I'm a skier now. I spend all my time on the slopes. But basketball hasn't lost me.

**FIBA:** Your name often comes up when there are coaching vacancies. What's going to happen with respect to that?

**DJORDEVIC:** Well, I have two kids - 10 and six-year-old girls. My wife and I have lived in a lot of different countries and places. We want to give them the continuation of a normal life, having a place to go on a Saturday or a Sunday and not just a game - but for them to go and meet their friends and to grow up with their friends, and for us to meet their families in order to enrich our lives. That is sometimes even more important, to know how to be a friend. To make a friend is easy, but to keep it is very difficult. It's one of the things that makes your life richer. We want that to happen for them (the daughters) and we're going to think about ourselves. We live in Milan and plan to live there for years to come. From there, we're close to Geneva, to Belgrade, to Spain. It's a good place for our two daughters to start their own lives in school.

**FIBA:** We're thrilled to have spoken to you, Sasha. It's great to interview people who see the bigger picture in life. One more thing - did you get emotional on stage at the assignment ceremony and shed a tear? It looked like you maybe you did.

**DJORDEVIC:** (Laughing) No, but Sabas (Arvydas Sabonis) was because they kept showing a picture of him with a Lithuania shirt after they lost to us in 1995. He was like, "Man, I won so many things and they put that up?" We're actually going to have dinner now.

**FIBA:** You won't bring up 1995 again will you?

**DJORDEVIC:** Yes, I probably will. Seriously, he's a great sportsman and knows how to shake hands.

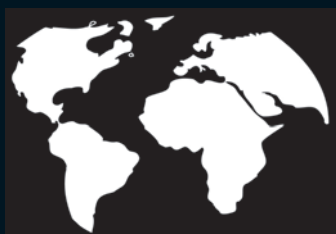
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## OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE 2010 FIBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP LAUNCHED

FIBA, in cooperation with the Turkish Basketball Federation, announced the launching of [turkey2010.fiba.com](http://turkey2010.fiba.com), the official website for the FIBA 2010 World Championship for Men that will take place in Turkey from 28th August to 12th September 2010. The official website of the world's most important basketball event in 2010 is available in both English ([turkey2010.fiba.com/eng](http://turkey2010.fiba.com/eng)) and Turkish language ([turkey2010.fiba.com/tur](http://turkey2010.fiba.com/tur)).

[turkey2010.fiba.com](http://turkey2010.fiba.com) includes all-event related information on FIBA's premier championship and will offer, during the competition itself, in-depth coverage of the 2010 FIBA World Championship, including game previews, live results and stats of all games, game reports, hundreds of action photos, exclusive interviews and blogs.

In addition, during the 2009 Continental Championships qualifying to Turkey 2010 and during the FIBA World Championship itself, thanks to FIBA's recent agreement with Perform, basketball enthusiasts logging on [turkey2010.fiba.com](http://turkey2010.fiba.com) will be able to access live and on demand streaming of the games, as well as 90-second highlight clips, video interviews and features.

## FIBA Also Launches U19 Site

FIBA also announced the launching of [newzealand2009.fiba.com](http://newzealand2009.fiba.com), the official website for the FIBA U19 World Championship for Men that will take place in Auckland (New Zealand) from 2nd to 12th July 2009. [newzealand2009.fiba.com](http://newzealand2009.fiba.com) includes all-event related information on the world's most prestigious basketball youth championship.

The 9th edition of the FIBA U19 World Championship, a tournament featuring 16 teams comprised of players born in 1990 or after, will be played in the 5.000-seat North Shore Event Centre and in the 2.500-seat ASB Stadium located in Auckland, New Zealand.





#### SPAIN SELECTED TO HOST 2014 FIBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Spain won the right to stage the 2014 FIBA World Championship during a ceremony that was held in Geneva on 23rd May. In a hotly contested race with Italy and China, Spain prevailed after a vote by the FIBA Central Board in Geneva. The Chinese were eliminated in the first round of voting and in the second round, Spain received 11 votes to Italy's eight. Spanish Basketball Federation president Jose Luis Saez paid tribute to the federations of China and Italy. "They put forward fantastic projects that were viable in amazing countries," Saez said. "Of course, there could only be one winner. It was us this time. But, any of the

countries, could have done a fantastic job. I want to thank them for their competition, but above all, we became friends. We shouldn't forget what they have done. Let us continue to work together. This teamwork is worth a lot."

FIBA revealed in a statement that upon the suggestion of the FIBA Central Board, Board members Saez (Spain) and Mr Yu Zaiqing (China) renounced their rights to vote when their respective countries were involved.

When the tournament is staged in 2014, games will be played in Madrid, Bilbao, Granada, Las Palmas and Seville.

FIBA Secretary General and IOC member Patrick Baumann said: "Your bid is a promise to further develop basketball in your country and the world. This is a great moment for FIBA and the entire membership of our organization. Our vision is clear. We want to move on, to have a unique experience for everyone."

Nine countries initially wanted to stage the 2014 FIBA World Championship but only China, Italy and Spain stayed in the race.

#### Lakers Star Pau Gasol Happy

Celebrations following the announcement that Spain are to host the 2014 FIBA World Championship have spread to Los Angeles where the country's basketball icon Pau Gasol is competing in the NBA play-offs with the NBA's Lakers.

The MVP of the 2006 FIBA World Championship in Japan, Gasol was elated to hear that his homeland would stage the sport's most prestigious international event.

"Obviously I'm happy for our country and our federation," Gasol said. "It's a reflection of how things are getting done in our country, and how well we are doing as far as sports and what a great moment we are going through overall. I'm glad FIBA recognized that and put that responsibly on our shoulders."

Gasol hails from Barcelona and would like to see the city added as one of the venues for games at the 2014 FIBA World Championship. Spain's bid was successful by putting forward Madrid, Bilbao, Granada, Las Palmas and Seville as host cities.

"I would like to, but apparently it's not one of the cities that is going to be hosting," he said. "I already saw all the cities, and it's unfortunate that Barcelona is not one of them. It's my home town, and the city that I was born in and I think it would be great if one day the city of Barcelona would embrace or was also given the opportunity to host and be a part of the tournament."

#### PUERTO RICO SELECTED AS HOST OF 2009 FIBA AMERICAS CHAMPIONSHIP

After the FIBA Americas Executive Committee decided to withdraw Mexico as host of the 2009 FIBA Americas Championship, which is a qualifier for the 2010 FIBA World Championship in Turkey, a process started to find another country interested in being the organizers of the most important continental competition.

After a meeting with Puerto Rican Basketball Federation President, Ruben Nigaglioni, an agreement was reached





with Puerto Rico to be the organizer of the tournament.

The event will be held at Roberto Clemente Coliseum who was the host of the 1999 and 2003 FIBA Americas Championships. The Puerto Rican Federation has a lot of experience having this type of event and the 2009 event will be played from August 26 to September 6 in San Juan and the top 4 teams enter the 2010 FIBA World Championship.

FIBA Americas Secretary General, Alberto Garcia, was very grateful to the Uruguayan Federation, who was also interested in the hosting of the event.

After an evaluation of the technical, commercial, television, and other important aspects that will guarantee a competitive and economical success, it was decided to assign the tournament to the Puerto Rican Federation.

This event has Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Venezuela for the South American Sub-Zone (ABASU), Canada for North America and for the Central American and Caribbean Zone (CONCENABA), Cuba, US Virgin Islands, Mexico, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The United States qualified for the 2010 FIBA World Championship after winning the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

Puerto Rico has been host of a World Championship qualifier in 1993 where they won Silver. They were also host to three Olympic qualifiers starting in 1980 and also in 1999 and 2003 where they won a medal in two competitions (Gold in 1980 and Bronze in 2003).

The last FIBA Americas Championship (World Qualifier) was played in 2005 in the Dominican Republic where Brazil won Gold, Argentina Silver and Bronze for Venezuela. The last FIBA Americas Championship was the Olympic qualifier in 2007 held in Las Vegas as the United States dominated the whole tournament to capture the gold medal.

#### AFROBASKET DRAW ON JUNE 26 IN TRIPOLI

The draw for the Fiba Africa Championship for Men (Afrobasket) will take place on 26th June 2009 in Tripoli.

So far the following teams have qualified:

- Libya (host).
- Angola (reigning champion).
- Cameroon.
- Cape Verde.
- Mali.
- Nigeria.
- Ivory Coast.
- Egypt.
- Rwanda.
- Mozambique.

The remaining four teams to qualify will



be known by the end of May.

FIBA Africa will then assign two more wild cards to complete the field of 16.

The draw on 26 June will determine the composition of the 4 groups of four teams that will play in the Preliminary Round of the event in Benghazi and Tripoli from 5 – 7 August 2009. The final round will be played in Tripoli from 9 – 15 August.

Afrobasket will qualify 3 teams for the 2010 FIBA World Championship that will be played in Turkey from 28 August to 12 September 2010.

#### FIBA AND TISSOT SA ANNOUNCE FOUR-YEAR PARTNERSHIP

The International Basketball Federation and Tissot SA signed a historic agreement making the internationally renowned

Swiss company a FIBA Global Partner for the next four years (2009-2012).

The signature and the subsequent announcement were made on 27th May in front of the media at the 'Cité du Temps' of Geneva. The event was attended by Mr. G. N. Hayek Jr. (CEO of The Swatch Group SA), Mr. François Thiébaud (President of Tissot SA), Mr. Christophe Berthaud (General Manager of Swiss Timing), Mr. Bob Elphinston (President of FIBA) and Mr. Patrick Baumann (Secretary General of FIBA and IOC member).

The event was highlighted with the presence of Mr. Zoran Savic, current General Manager of Fortitudo Bologna and an internationally renowned all-time basketball star. Savic's impressive track record with the former Yugoslavian National Team includes a gold medal at the 1990 FIBA World Championship in Argentina, a silver medal at the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games and three gold medals at the EuroBaskets of Rome 1991, Athens 1995 and Barcelona 1997.

François Thiébaud, Tissot President, said: "Partnering with FIBA is a major step in the timekeeping history of Tissot. Being associated to such an international sport as basketball underlines the brand's dynamic nature and our values of precision and performance. Offering exclusive timekeeping services and unique designed watches will also give our passionate customers an additional reason to be proud of their commitment to Tissot."

Patrick Baumann, FIBA Secretary General and IOC member, stated: "In addition to becoming a FIBA Global Partner, this is a long-term strategic partnership which is of particular importance for three rea-





sons. Firstly, Tissot will provide the major FIBA Championships with the highest possible level of timing and data management services. Secondly, Tissot will activate the FIBA partnership across the world through its impressive network of outlets. Finally, Tissot and FIBA will produce exclusive watches for all basketball fans. FIBA welcomes Tissot, a prestigious Swiss brand, to our basketball family!"

#### **SAMAD, JACKSON POWER MAHRAM TO TITLE**

Olympian Samad Nikkah showed the way and American Jackson Vroman delivered. That in a nutshell should describe the story of Iranian league winners Mahram's 78-68 triumph over Jordanian champions Zain in the final of the 20th FIBA Asia Champions Cup on Wednesday.

"This is the happiest moment of my life," beamed Mahram coach Mostafa Hashemi after completing an Iranian three-peat in the Champions Cup. Saba Battery had won the title in 2007 and 2008. "It's a tribute to our teamwork," he said.

"I'm happier for the win than the MVP," said Vroman. "All those points would have gone waste if not for the win," said the American.

"I think the team that defended better won. You can see that from how low scor-



ing the game was," Vroman added. FIBA Asia president Sheikh Saud bin Ali Al-Thani gave away the prizes.

#### **Final Placings:**

1. Mahram (IRI).
2. Zain (JOR).
3. Al Riyadi Beirut (LIB).
4. Al Arabi (QAT).
5. Smart Gilas (PHI).
6. Satria Muda (INA).
7. Sangmoo (KOR).
8. Young Cagers (IND).
- 9-10 Al Qadsia (KUW), Al Wasl (UAE).

#### **DREAM TEAM COACH CHUCK DALY PASSES AWAY**

Long-time Detroit Pistons boss Chuck Daly, the coach of the United States Dream Team at the 1992 Olympics, died on Saturday at his home in Jupiter, Florida. He was 78 years old.

Daly, who was diagnosed with pancreatic



cancer in February, had been undergoing treatment for the disease.

"The Daly family and the entire Detroit Pistons and Palace Sports & Entertainment family is mourning the loss of Chuck Daly," family spokesman and Pistons vice president Matt Dobek said. "Chuck left a lasting impression with everyone he met both personally and professionally and his spirit will live with all of us forever." Among his most notable achievements were the back-to-back titles in 1989 and '90 as the coach of Detroit, and the gold medal win as the USA coach at the Barcelona Games.

Daly was enshrined in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1994.

#### **BRITS SEND OUT LOUD MESSAGE WITH APPOINTMENT OF MAHER AS WOMEN'S COACH**

Anyone thinking that women's basketball in Great Britain received a knockout punch by being relegated to Division B in January in the EuroBasket Women had better think again.

FIBA Europe announced that Great Britain can stay in Division A and thus will have a chance to stay in the race to qualify for the 2011 EuroBasket Women and British Basketball announced they have appointed Tom Maher as their new coach.

Maher, an Australian who coached the Opals at Olympics and FIBA World Championships for Women and also guided New Zealand and most recently China, is hoping to coach Britain at the London Games in 2012.

"Taking the GB job was a no-brainer," he said. "Who wouldn't want the opportunity to coach a home nation at the Olympics, in a city I've spent almost no time in; it was an easy decision. Certainly the British team will be better. GB has made

a lot of effort to improve, that much is clear and now I'm going to try as hard as I can. When it comes down to it you can only do your best and be proud of that."

FIBA, the world governing body of basketball, declared when London was awarded the Games that they wanted to be certain of the competitiveness of British teams before allowing them to take up their spots in London.

And they also saw a huge opportunity to create a legacy in Great Britain for basketball beyond 2012 that would include an improvement of the national league, a successful participation of British teams in international basketball both on national team level and club level as well as a general strengthening in the structure of British basketball.

Maher, who is currently at the helm of the Bulleen Boomers in Australia's WNBL, said: "GB has got to take gigantic steps. There's a difference between bas-



ketball and world basketball and that's key. It's little things like emotional advances which they have to make, but this is all part of the learning curve. The important thing to remember is that you don't make something happen overnight. I'm not expecting it to be all wonderful to begin with."

Maher led Australia to a bronze medal at the Atlanta Games in 1996 and to silver four years later in Sydney. At the 2004 Athens Games, Maher pulled off an incredible feat by leading huge underdogs New Zealand into the Quarter-Finals and last summer he guided the Chinese to a fourth-place finish in Beijing.

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## SUPERSTAR FOWLES RETURNS TO LSU TO GRADUATE

Sylvia Fowles spends most of her time running sprints, lifting weights and working on low-post moves as one of the best centers in the world.

She's probably been in the library even more over the past several years, though.

A gold-medal winner with Team USA in Beijing and a EuroLeague Women champion with Spartak Moscow Region in her very first season abroad, Fowles is returning to Baton Rouge this weekend to graduate from Louisiana State University.

"This is at the top of the list," the shot-blocking extraordinaire says when asked to rank all of her achievements.

"That's the main thing we all strive for when we go to college."

Fowles, 23, was just two credits shy of graduation when she left LSU after the NCAA Women's Final Four in 2008.

While at Spartak, where she averaged almost 16 points and 10 rebounds in the EuroLeague Women this season, Fowles spent time each day studying and completing her degree.

"My mom constantly stressed academics and she wasn't really into sports," Fowles said.

"I can remember a lot of times during my high school and college career where she didn't care about the glamour and the fame of being an All-American and playing basketball. She wanted me to work hard."

Graduation day will be a happy occasion because Fowles knows how much it means to her family.

"This is No. 1 at the top of my list because I am the youngest of my mother's kids and

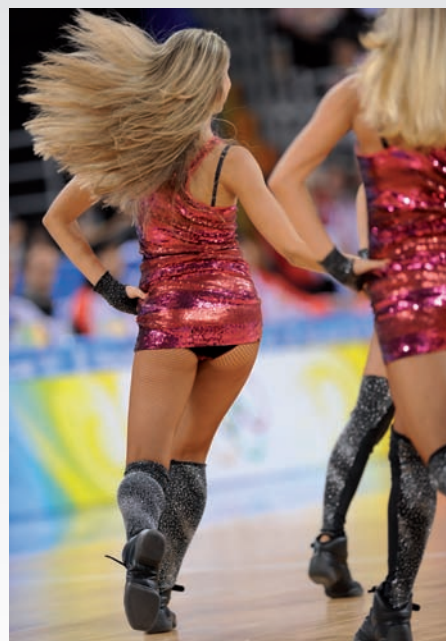
I am the first to graduate," she said on the LSU website.

"It says a lot about how much my mother means to me and how she prepared me for this. I have a lot of nieces and nephews and they can look up to me and see if I can do it, they can too."

## CHEERLEADER CONTROVERSY SIMMERS IN ISRAEL

An exceptional dispute regarding some of the action on Israel's basketball courts has been taking place of late. On the debate is not about basketball players, but cheerleaders. Disagreements have erupted over the principle of having cheerleaders in the Basketball Super League - the top league in the country. A controversy arose with a new regulation that had actually been accepted by the league's board the previous summer that obliged each and every club among the 12 members of the league to have a respectful cheerleading team.

Until this season, though, very few clubs had a cheerleading group at their games. Some used junior high, or even younger, dance class students to fill that spot. Most, however, had none.



The league aimed to put some sense and order into the regulation. The BSL told each club to run dance classes for the dancers and to enforce an age limit of 16. The league also hired a special tutor to guide the groups. It didn't take long for opposition to cheerleaders to emerge, and it happened in the capital city of Jerusalem. Local club Hapoel objected to the concept of cheerleaders for several reasons. Fans claimed their own cheers would be interrupted and identified cheerleaders with high-class sit-and-clap fans - a stark contrast to their own style. The club claimed that among the fans is a big population of religious people who feel uncomfortable with scantily-clad dancers. Eventually, however, Hapoel were forced to use its own dancing group and it seemed as if life would go on and the debate would die down. Soon the story took a new turn.

A group of more than a dozen women's rights activists and feminist organizations picked up the fight and in a joint appeal challenged the league. "The cheerleading regulation that obliges the BSL clubs to host a performance of a cheerleading group deepens the sexist approach towards girls and women and could increase the level of sexual violence towards us and the social relation to girls and women as sexual objects," they claimed. The league didn't accept this argument, and both sides traded barbs in the media. Eventually, it seemed as if the battle was beginning to fade but the objectors last week rose again. Mrs. Limor Livnat's arrival to the Ministry of Sports office in the new Israeli government triggered new protests. No less than 19 organizations signed a letter that was delivered to the newly appointed minister on her first day in her new job, demanding that Mrs. Livnat do anything in her power to force the BSL to change their regulations regarding cheerleaders. No answer has come from Mrs. Livnat yet, but so far this unusual debate in Israel basketball has yet to die down.

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