



ASSIST 39

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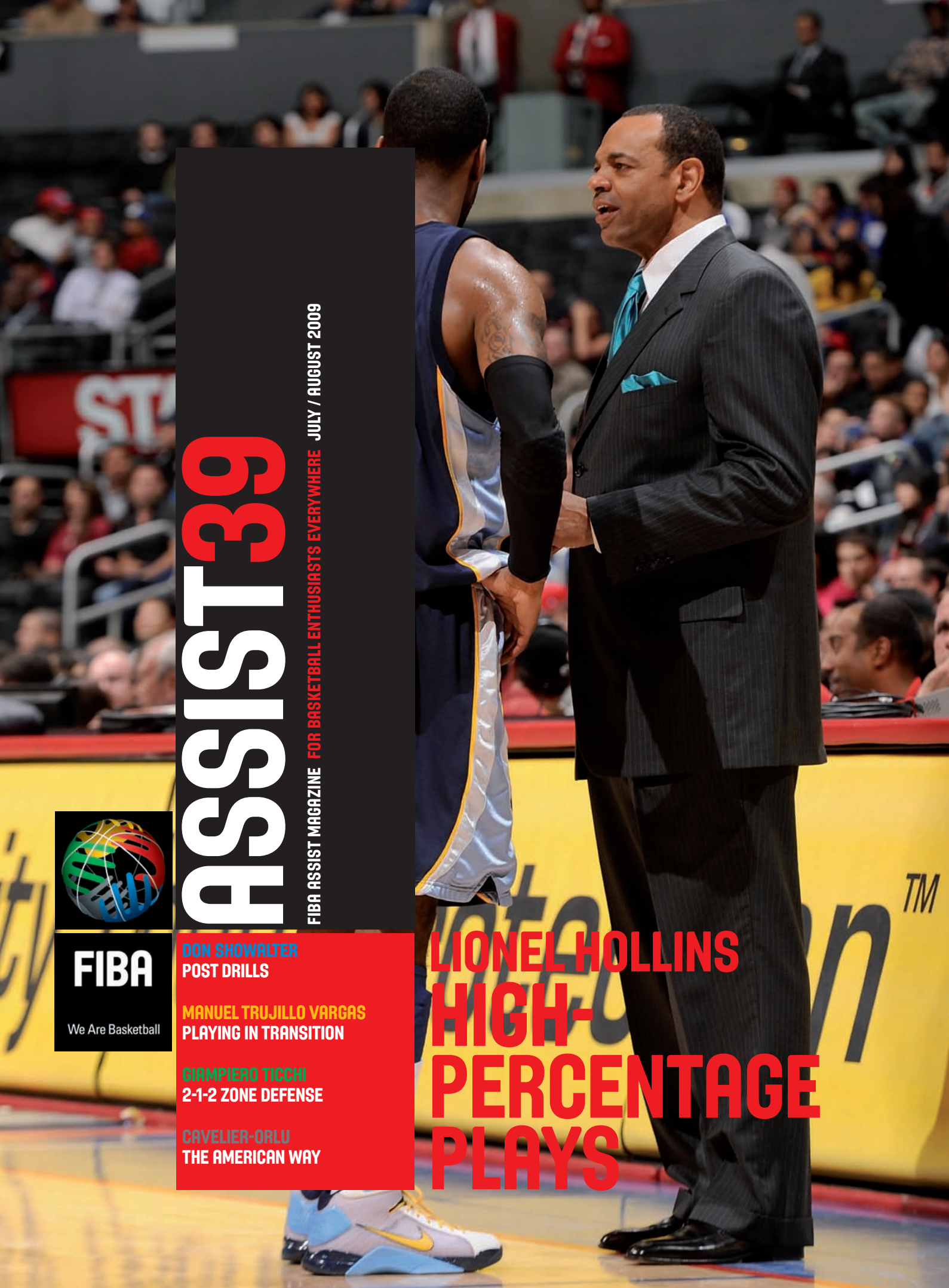
DON SHOWALTER
POST DRILLS

MANUEL TRUJILLO VARGAS
PLAYING IN TRANSITION

GIAMPIERO TICCHI
2-1-2 ZONE DEFENSE

CAVELIER-ORLU
THE AMERICAN WAY

LIONEL HOLLINS HIGH- PERCENTAGE PLAYS







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2009-10 FIBA CALENDAR

2009

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

- 07 - 20.09 EuroBasket Men in Poland
(Gdansk, Poznan, Warsaw,
Wroclaw, Bydgoszcz, Lodz
and Katowice)
17 - 24.09 FIBA Asia Championship
for Women in Chennai,
India
23 - 27.09 FIBA Americas
Championship for Women
in Mato Grosso (BRA)

OCTOBER 2009

- 09 - 18.10 FIBA Africa Championship
for Women in Madagascar

2010

AUGUST 2010

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

SEPTEMBER 2010

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

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by Don Showalter

POST DRILLS

Don Showalter, head coach at Mid Prairie high school, has been a successful American high school coach since 1974. He was selected head coach of the USA Men's Under 16 National Team in 2009, going undefeated and winning the gold



area and must know how to score with their back to the basket.

HAWK DRILLS

This half-court drills use all of your players and has them work on passing, post moves, and relocating to different spots to shoot and pass.

Two-Player Passing Series

Start with two lines of players, with one stationed near the top of the key and the other group lined up at the baseline corner behind the three-point line. "C" is a coach who is playing stationary defense.

Pass And Shoot: 1 penetrates to the free-throw line, while 2 starts out in the corner and makes a quick cut to the wing area behind the three-point line (if the player doesn't have three-point range, have him step in for a medium-range jumper). 1 passes to 2, who shoots a jump shot.

The shooter rebounds and the players switch lanes (diagr. 1).

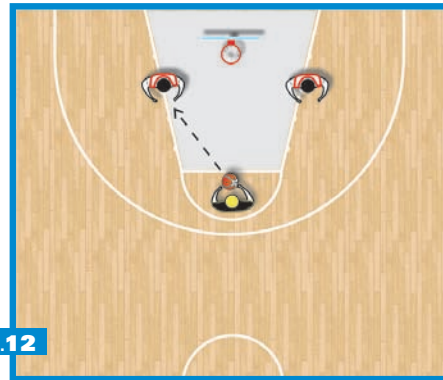
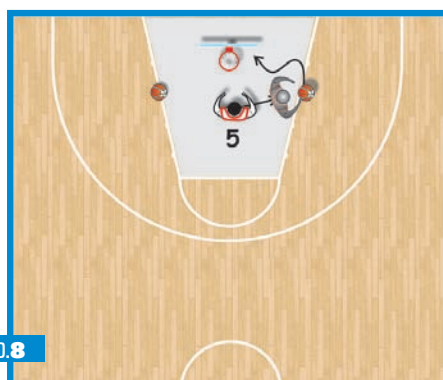
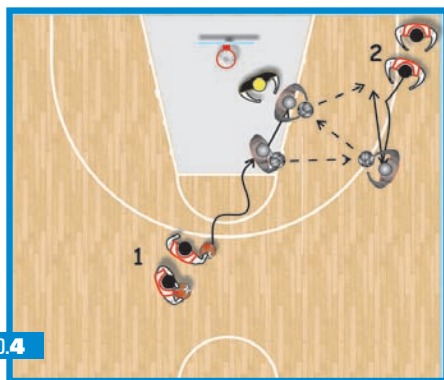
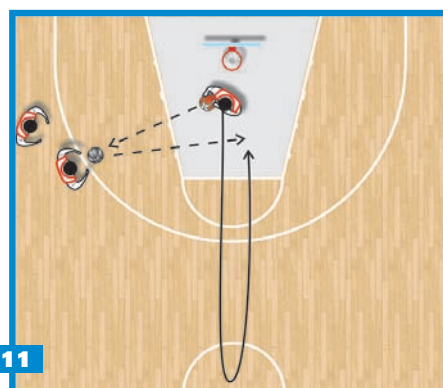
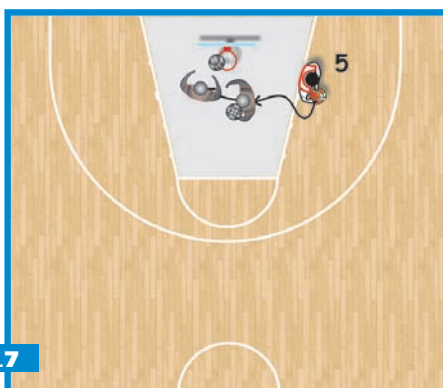
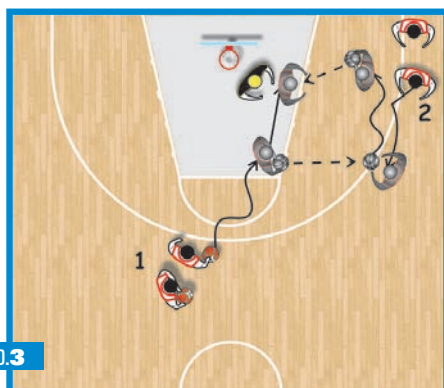
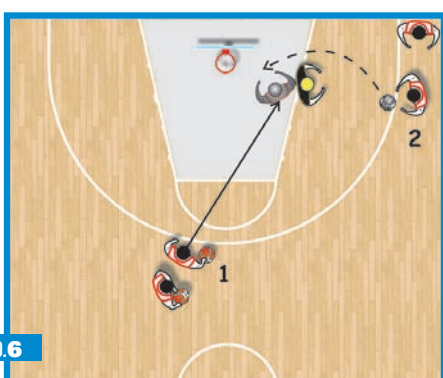
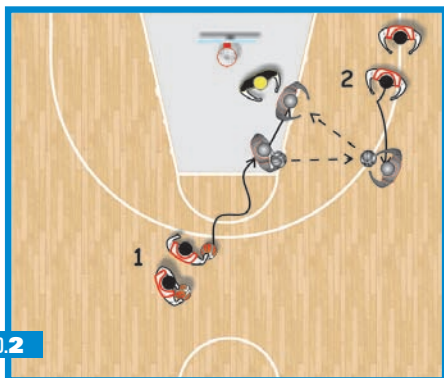
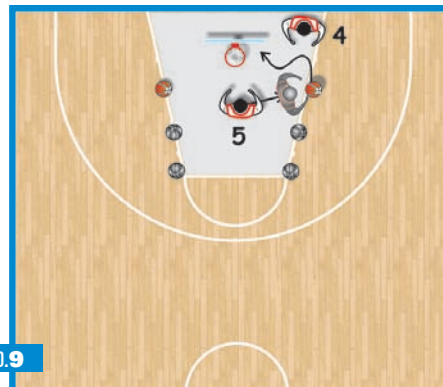
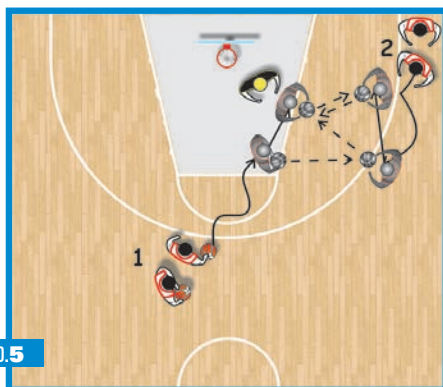
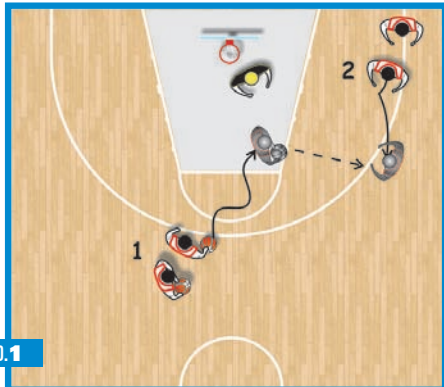
Penetrate and Post: 1 penetrates and passes to 2. After making the pass, 1 cuts to the block and posts up in front of the coach who's playing defense. 2 makes an entry pass back to 1, who executes a post-up shot



medal at the FIBA America's Championship in Argentina, and qualifying for the 2010 FIBA Under 17 World Championship in Hamburg, Germany.

The following is a set of post drills we use at each practice to help develop our post players. We have found that it takes longer and we need to spend more time developing the post players than perimeter players. The post players are often less athletic and seem to have more foot-work problems. Therefore, much more time needs to be spent working on special drills with them. I have found that it is important to have all players work on these post drills because perimeter players will often find themselves in the post





against the defending coach. The shooter rebounds and the players switch lanes (diagr. 2).

Relocate The Passing Angle: This drill is the same as the previous drill, but, after receiving the initial pass, the wing dribbles toward the baseline for a better passing angle into the post. 1 passes to 2 and breaks down low to post up on the low block. 2 takes a few hard, quick dribbles to

the baseline and makes an entry pass to 1. 1 executes a post-up move against the defending coach. The shooter rebounds and the players switch lanes (diagr. 3).

Post-Wing Kickout: 1 passes to 2 and breaks down low to post up on the low block. 2 takes a few hard, quick dribbles to the baseline and makes an entry pass to 1. 1 fakes a post-up shot and passes the ball back out to 2 on the wing, who

takes the pass for a quick catch-and-shoot jump shot. The shooter rebounds and the players switch lanes (diagr. 4).

RE-POST

This drill is executed just like the previous drill except that when the post player passes the ball back out, he continues to fight for better post position against the defending coach. 2 throws an entry pass back to 1, who then makes a post-up

move and takes a shot. The shooter rebounds and the players switch lanes (diagr. 5).

POST SEAL DRILL

This drill is a great way for your post players to work on getting the best inside post positioning. 1 passes to 2 in the corner, cuts toward the basket, and gains positioning behind the defending coach. 2 fakes as if to shoot and then lobs the ball over the defending coach's head to 1, who seals the defender, secures the ball, and puts up a quick shot. The shooter rebounds and the players switch lanes (diagr. 6).

HOOK LAY-IN DRILL

The post player takes a drop step inside and shoots a baby hook lay-in. The player will then rebound his shot, toss the ball out, and run towards the other big block, landing on both feet in a jump stop (diagr. 7). He then immediately drop steps inside, shoots a baby hook lay-in, rebounds his shot, tosses the ball out, and repeats the drill. This drill continues for thirty seconds. Increase the time as the player progresses.

POWER PICK-UP DRILL

Objectives:

1. To drill drop steps.
2. To drill power lay-up
3. To drill the pump fake.

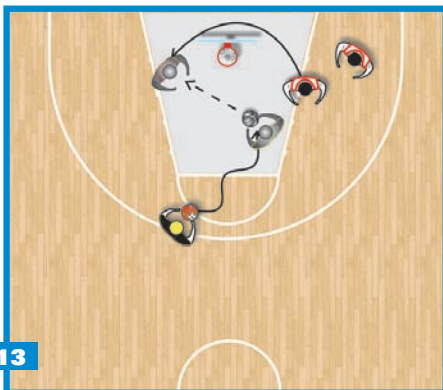
Line up 5 as the shooter, with 4 as a helper. Two balls are used; one starts at each block.

The post player will go from block to block, picking up the ball, and quickly taking a drop-step power lay-up (diagr. 8).

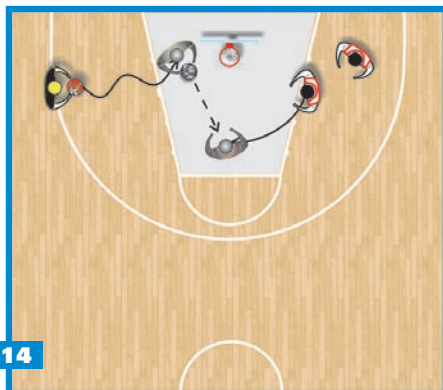
POWER LAY-UP DRILL

Objectives:

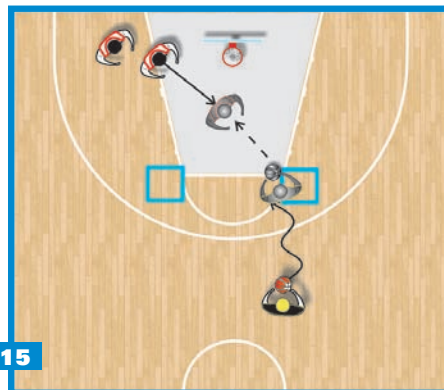
1. To drill drop steps.
2. To drill power lay-up
3. To drill the pump fake.
4. Improve physical conditioning and get to the basket when tired.



D.13



D.14



D.15

Line up 5 as the shooter, with 4 as a helper. Two balls are used; one ball starts at each block (diagr. 9).

The post player will go from block to block picking up the ball, and quickly taking a drop-step power lay-up. Move the location of the ball up the lane.

BAD PASS DRILL

Objectives:

1. Catch, chin, and take a look.
2. Lose position to gain possession.

The coach will make the post player move to catch an entry pass. Make passes difficult for the player to catch (diagr. 10).

HALF COURT CATCH AND FINISH DRILL

Objectives:

1. Conditioning
2. Outlet pass
3. Catch and finish

The post player throws the ball off the backboard, catches it, and outlets the ball. He then runs as fast as he can, touches the half-court line, and then fills the lane as he runs to the basket. He will receive a pass and finish the shot at the basket (diagr. 11).

TOUCHES DRILL

Quick finish with no steps. The coach will make a pass to either post (diagr. 12).



RELOCATION DRILL

Relocation of post player. The post circles opposite of penetration. Emphasize a quick finish and footwork (diagr. 13 and 14).

DEAD BALL FLASH DRILL

The post player will flash to an opening when penetration is stopped (dead zones) (diagr. 15).

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We Are Basketball


 by Manuel Trujillo
Vargas

PLAYING IN TRANSITION

Manuel Trujillo Vargas begins his coaching career in Malaga, in the EBA league coaching the teams of El Palo, Universidad de Malaga and Unicaja. He coached youth teams until the season 2007/2008 when he became assistant coach at Clínicas Rincón, in LEB Oro, the second Spanish division. He won a Spanish University championship in 2002 and a Spanish Junior championship in 2008 with Unicaja, being selected as best coach of the tournament.

Scoring before the defense gets itself together and in place is the first goal of our team, and in order to achieve this we try to punish the defense the instant after we reach half court. If we work correctly at this time, we can score a number of points almost as easily as those made on pure fastbreaks. When I coached the junior team Unicaja Malaga that won the junior Spanish championship, my goal was to create advantages whenever possible. The three-point line became very important to us because this constant threat kept the court open, widened the defense, and made one-on-one situations easier. Players understood that every open shot was a good shot, and that they should be ready to go in for the offensive rebound should the shot be missed.

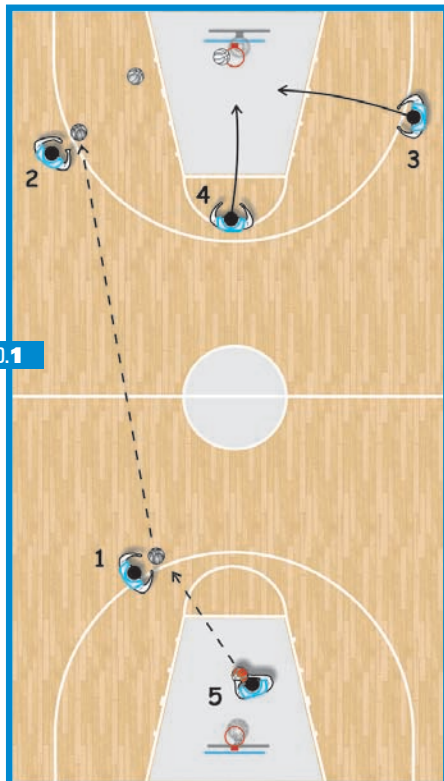
First Option

Fastbreak, lay-up, one-on-zero, or the three-point shot with no opposition after the first pass and the offensive rebound covered (diagr. 1).

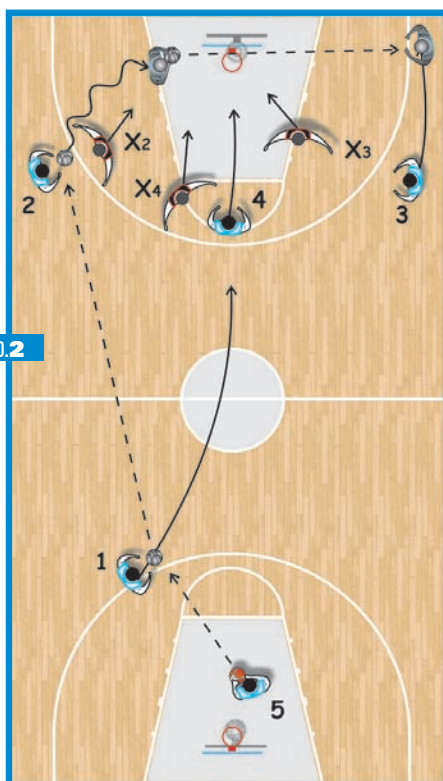
Second Option

Transition driving to the basket. The player on the perimeter attacks the hoop, preferably to the baseline, attracting helps, and punishing them by passing the ball to the opposite corner for an easy three-point shot with a clear option of getting the offensive rebound (diagr. 2). Against good defenses, I realize that it's extremely difficult to pass the ball in the lane after a penetration. Instead, the

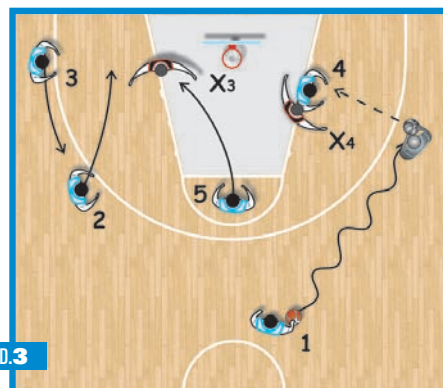




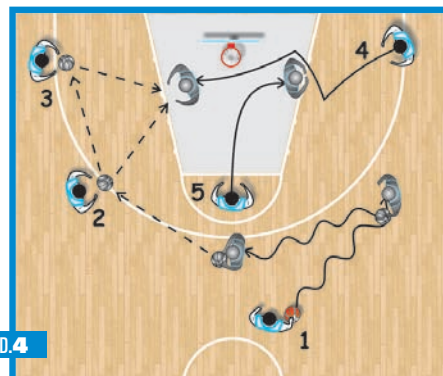
D.1



D.2



D.3



D.4

pass for a three-point shot becomes a real option and allows a shot to be taken with the feet on the ground, which increases shooting percentages. By focusing on the three-point shot, it lessens the possibility of a turnover that could come if a player tries to force a pass inside.

Third Option

Ball in the low post. In this case we will change our play according to the player who goes to the post.

GUARD IN THE LOW POST

We use these options with 1 and 2 only if

they have an advantage with their direct opponent, while 3 is always considered as a real option. 5 occupies the spot at the high post (free-throw line) and 4 the spot on the perimeter.

When the ball enters the low post, there are no cuts, but rotations of spaces on



the weak side, always maintaining the positions at the three-point line. 5 goes to the opposite low post, in diagonal, taking the baseline to punish any possible help for his defender (diagr. 3).

If the ball does not enter the low post, our player on the perimeter opens in the corner and 5 takes his spot with the intention of getting the ball. If there's not a possibility for a pass, we change the ball side and play a flex screen between 5 and the player on the perimeter (diagr. 4).

We were not able to use the flex screen very often, because the ball entered the area earlier or the players used a direct screen in transition.

4 IN LOW POST

5 occupies the high post, while 1, 2 and 3 stay open (only on the side with 4).

If the ball enters the low post, the passer cuts aggressively on the baseline. If 4 is in the mid post with the ball (diagr. 5) or around the high point of the free-throw lane if 4 is under the mid post. After the passer's cut, 5 will cut looking to the opposite low post and spot up near the baseline (diagr. 6). This play between big men is usually very effective.

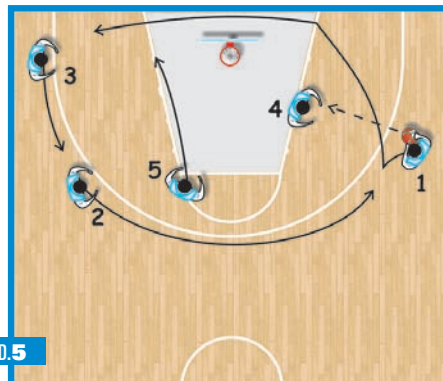
If the ball does not go directly to the low post because of a good defense, we play a direct screen between the man with ball and 5. We continue with 5 rolling to the hoop after the screen, with 4 going from the low post to the three-point line, punishing the defense of inside players, who are not used to defending on the perimeter (diagr. 7). If the defense closes on 5, we will still have a good open three-point shot with the possibility of an offensive rebound.

5 IN LOW POST

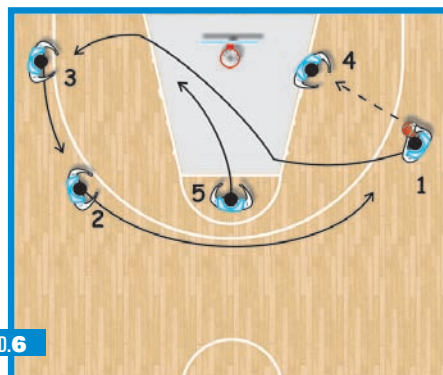
5 gains the spot, 4 in the key-point (in the middle), while 1, 2 and 3 stay open.

If the ball goes to 5, we use the same rules we previously used with 4. That is to say, the passer cuts and 4 goes to the opposite low post, near the three-point line. If there's not a direct pass, because of a three-quarters defense or there is a strong defense against the post, we triangle with 4 who will make a lob pass to 5 (diagr. 8).

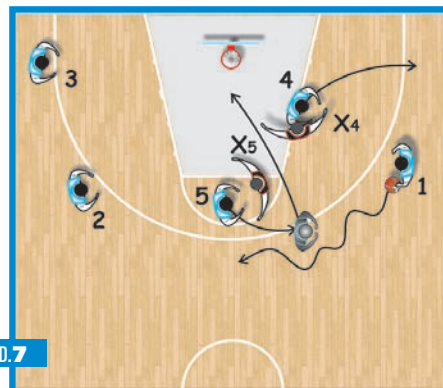
If we can't change the ball side because of good defense, we play a direct screen with 4 at the three-point line, while 5 will take a strong position inside the area (diagr. 9). We try to create a situation where we have a side one-on-one with a lot of space for 4. He will then have the option to make an easy shot from the three-point line or create a definitive advantage (diagr. 10).



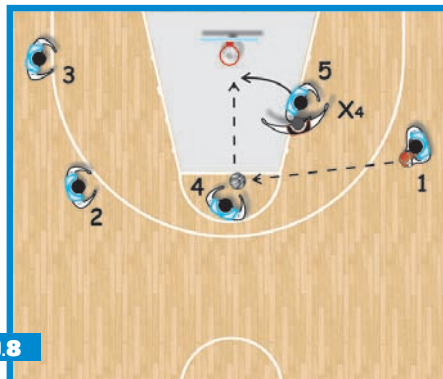
D.5



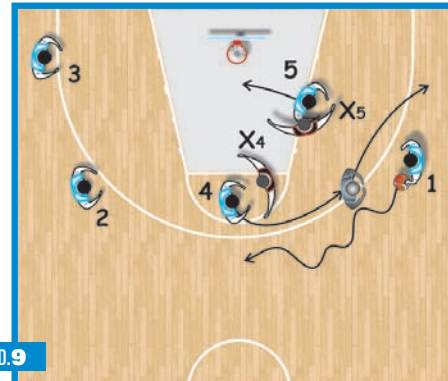
D.6



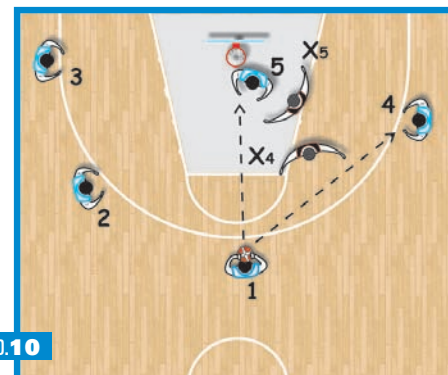
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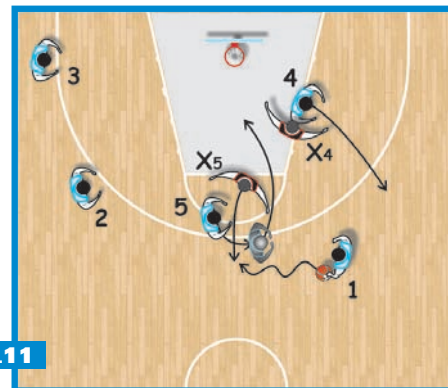
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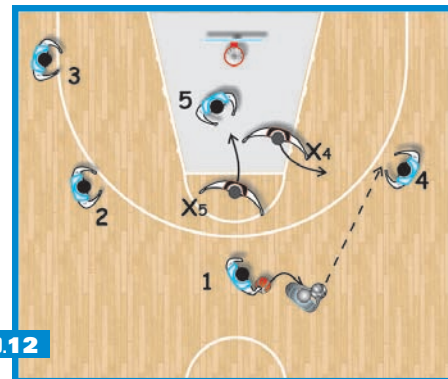
D.9



D.10



D.11



D.12

DETAILS ON PLAYING WITH SCREENS AGAINST VARIOUS DEFENSES

5 makes the direct screen in central position: I consider this one the most difficult situations to defend, because the defensive helps are not well defined and the defense is uncertain.

I will now describe the most common defensive options for these screens and will propose solutions.

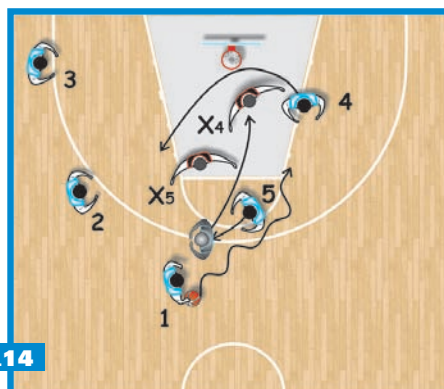
In front of an aggressive defense that

jumps on the ball, the man with the ball will do a step back and then play with 4, who comes out. 4 will have extra room, since his defender will be recovering after the help on 5, or will have space because the two defenders have decided to switch (diagr. 11 and 12).

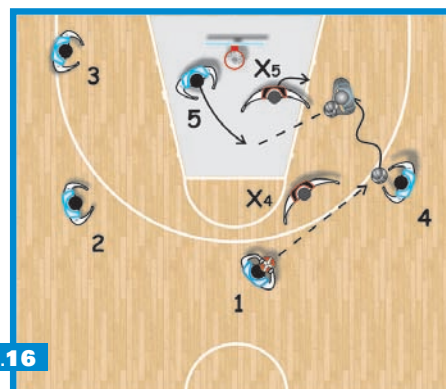
Facing a passive defense, we repeat the screen, while 4 changes his position on the baseline so he can create space for the possible penetration of the man with



D.13



D.14



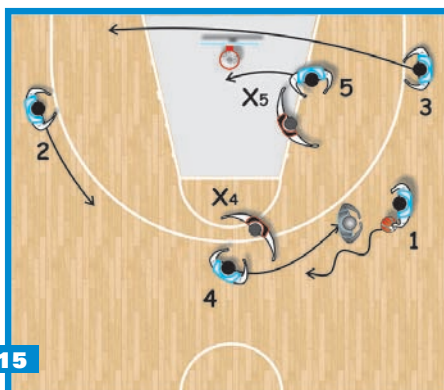
D.16

the ball (diagr. 13 and 14).

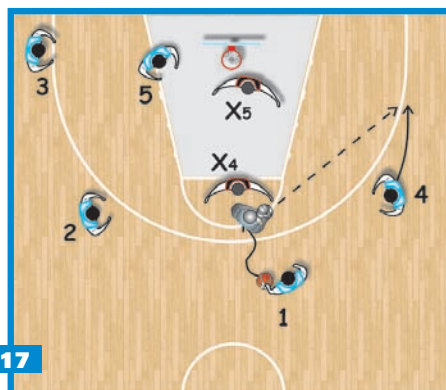
4 makes a direct screen: in this case, we make a side screen, looking for a different solution. We want a three-point shot or else a one-on-one with the ball on the free side.

4 needs space to play in isolation, so if there is a guard on this side, he will have to move to the other side the moment that the screen is set. In the same way, 5 will go to the opposite low post in order to have more space. We can punish the possible first help of his defender. Thus, if 4 creates an advantage at the core of the area, 5 will gain the baseline. On the other hand, if 4 changes sides by running on the baseline, 5 will gain the core of the area. For this situation, diagrams 15 and 16 show the option with an aggressive defense.

In front of a passive defense, in a situation of pick-and-pop, we'll try to attack the big man with the point guard. 4 opens out (pop) and 1 kicks off the ball to him, so his defender is further away and his recovery will take longer (diagr. 17).



D.15



D.17





by Kevin Sutton

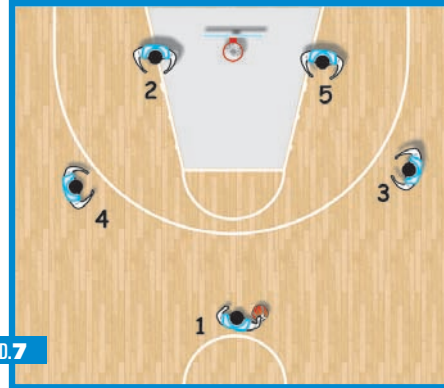
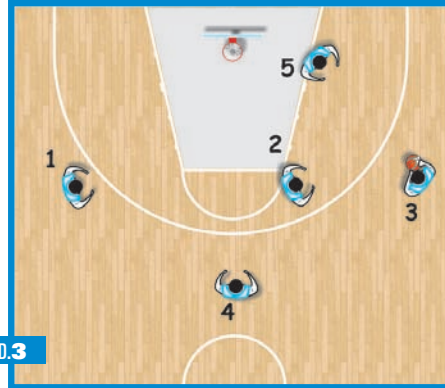
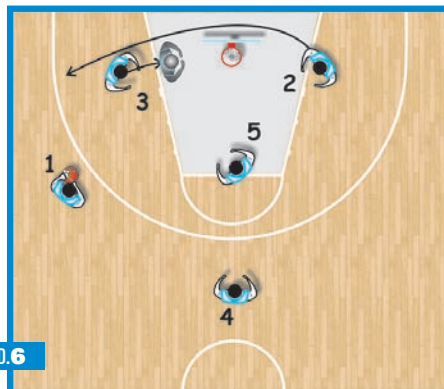
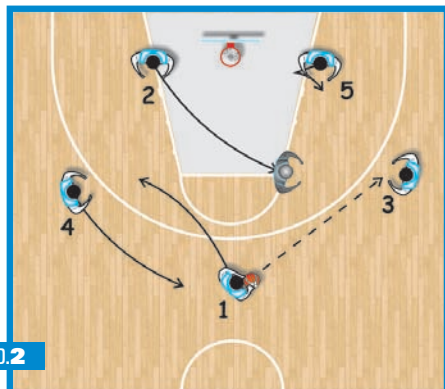
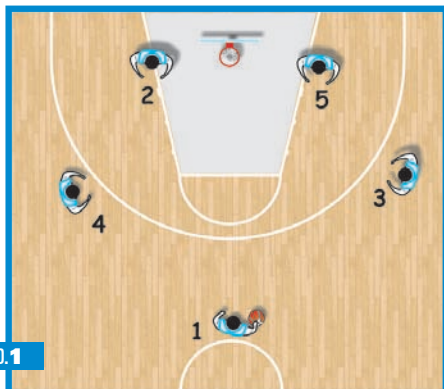
ATTACKING ZONE DEFENSE

Kevin Sutton is the head coach of Montverde Academy in Florida and he is considered one of the best high school coach in the USA. He was selected as assistant coach of the USA Men's Under 16 National Team in 2009, winning the gold medal at FIBA America's Championship in Argentina, and qualifying for the FIBA World Championship in 2010. During the summer he also coaches at some of the best basketball camps, such as the Nike Skillz Academy, the Five Star Camp and the basketball camp of LeBron James, Kobe Bryant and Steve Nash. Moreover, he's also author of several technical publications on DVD.

INTRODUCTION

Zone defenses used to put a lot of fear in me as a young coach. As I have grown as a coach, however, I have literally faced every zone possible: 2-3, 1-3-1, 3-2, 1-1-3, 2-1-2, and 1-2-2. The primary lesson I have learned when facing these different zones is this: when the ball is in the corner, every zone becomes a 1-2-2 zone! It is from this finding/premise that I started to develop my "Attacking Zone Defense Philosophy." In this article I am going to address the following topics:





- ▼ Principals for attacking zone defenses.
- ▼ Offenses that I run against zone defenses.
- ▼ Set plays that I run against zone defenses.

PRINCIPALS FOR ATTACKING ZONE DEFENSES

The principals that I teach my players all stem for the fact that I want to be as aggressive as we possibly can when we face a zone defense. The principals are:

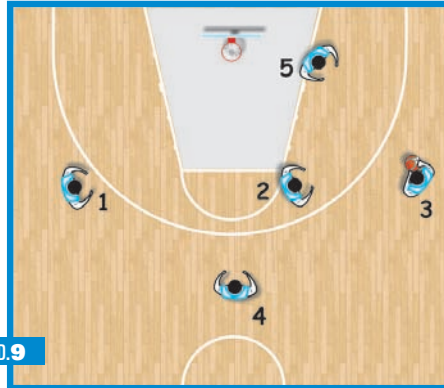
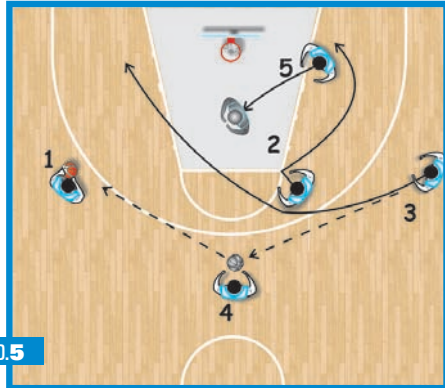
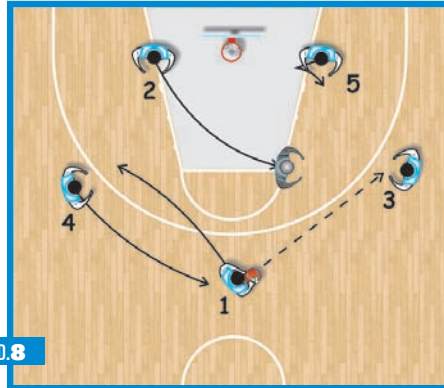
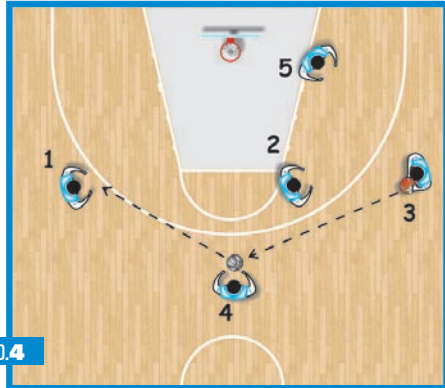
Principal One: Beat the zone down the floor to get easy baskets.

Principal Two: Attack the zone with confidence.

Principal Three: Move the zone from side to side or corner to corner, so that you can determine their slides and where the lazy man of the zone is playing.

Principal Four: Use two types of penetration: dribble and pass. Force the defense to guard both makes it difficult on the defense.

Principal Five: Maintain proper spacing, 12 to 15 feet (3 - 4 mt.) apart. This make for good ball movement, play movement, fluidity, and balance within the offense. Spacing also makes the defense have to work that much harder.



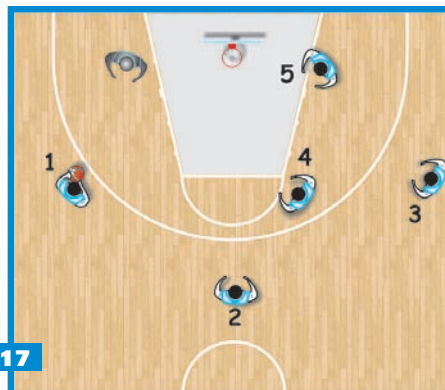
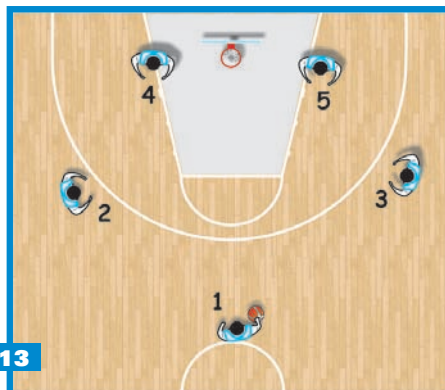
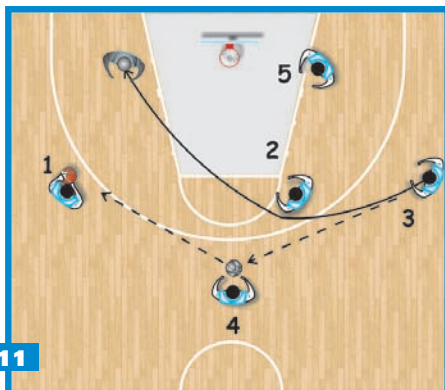
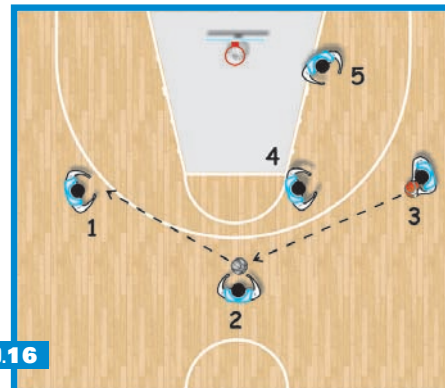
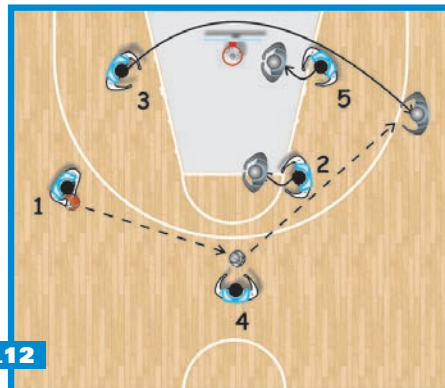
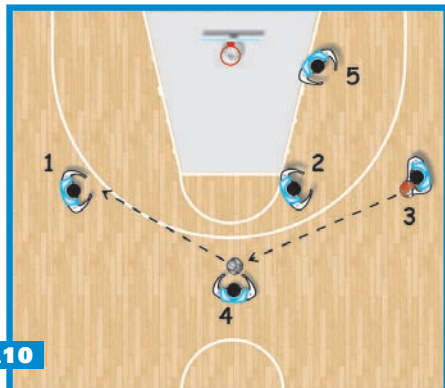
Principal Six: Rebound! What can you say about rebounding that is not positive? Getting points off the offensive glass is a must!

Principal Seven: Screen the zone whenever possible and then shape up. Screening the zone, much like rebounding, is a positive thing. The more open shots you get against a zone the higher percentage you should be able to shoot. Screening

the zone and shaping up after you screen permits open shoots to occur.

Principal Eight : Bigs play with heels on the baseline and behind the zone. This allows for the observation of openings. It also allows for flash cuts and it makes it very difficult on the defense to box and rebound.

Principal Nine: Play inside out and not outside in! Make the defense stop your

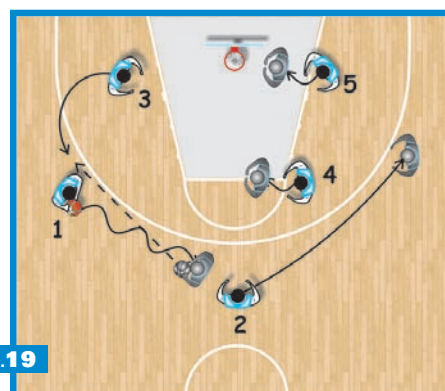
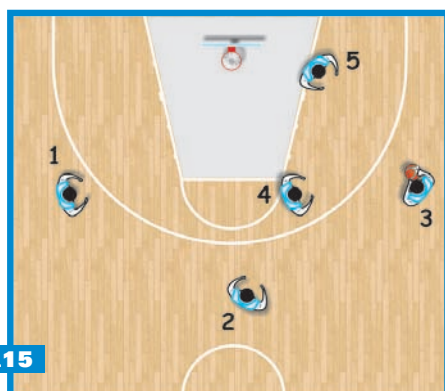
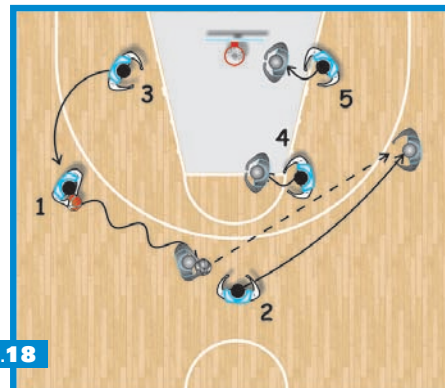
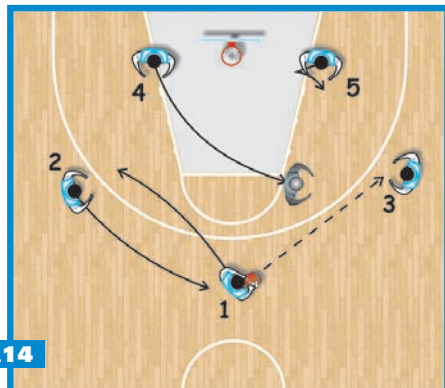


inside game first. A good inside makes for a great outside game.

Principal Ten: Patience. Exhibit patience vs. a zone. Always look to get the “best shot” and not just a shot. Rush or quick shots help the defense and hurts the offense.

OFFENSES THAT I RUN AGAINST ZONE DEFENSES

I run two different types of zone offenses: gaps and gaps motion. Gaps offense is a stationary offense where every offensive player lines up the “gap” between two defenders. The purpose of this offense is to engage two defenders and create open shots by using dribble penetration. Ball movement and fakes are important elements to the success of this offense. The second offense I run against a zone defense is what I call gaps motion, which is similar to regular gaps with its principles of maintaining proper spacing and occupying two defenders. In gaps motion, I allow for random movements against the zone. It is more difficult to scout because there are no set patterns to the offense. The players are allowed more freedom to cut with a purpose and screen with a purpose. Penetration becomes an even more important element to the success of this offense. The post players play with their heels on the baseline and start in the “Short Corners.” This position of playing behind the zone defense give the offense two advantages:



1. The ability to locate openings to exploit.
2. The ability to improve screening angles and opportunities to score.

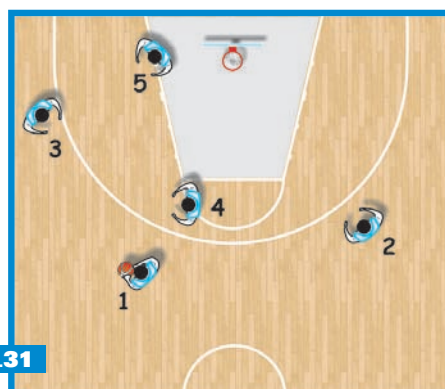
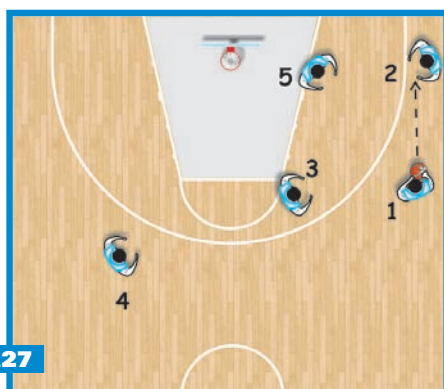
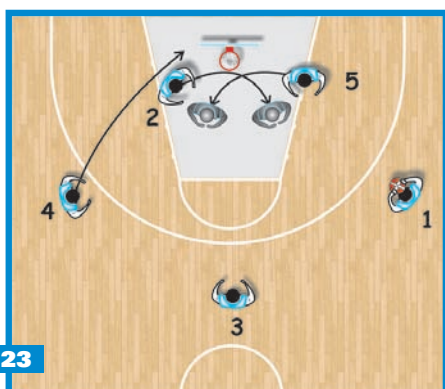
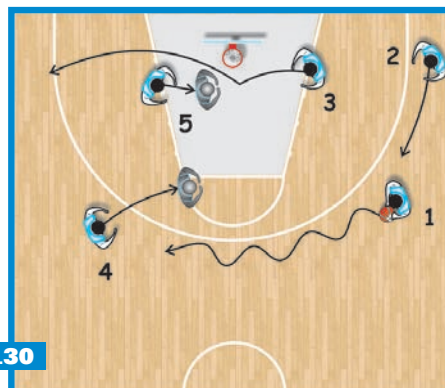
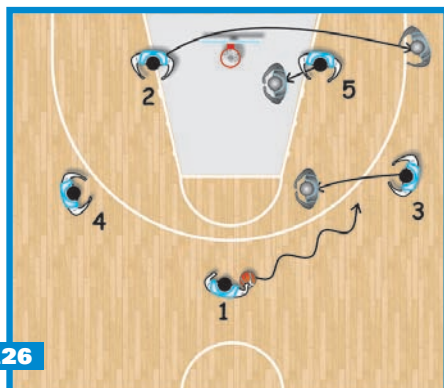
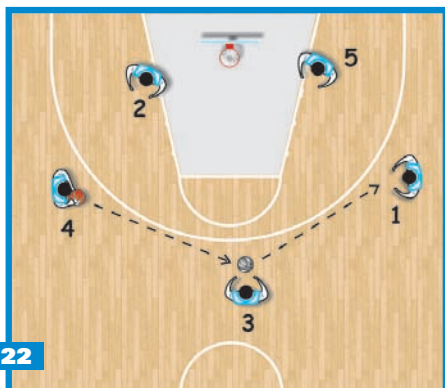
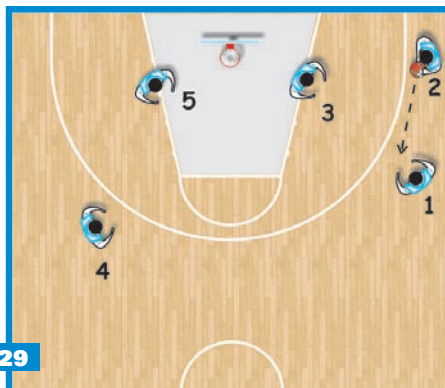
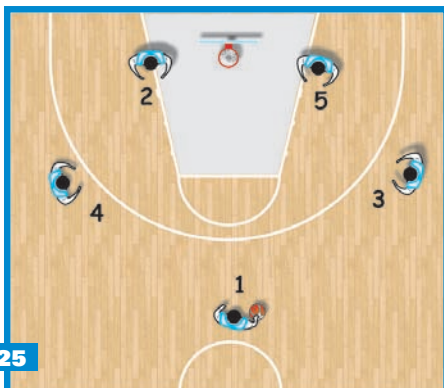
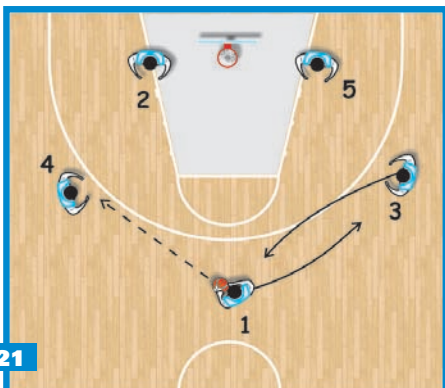
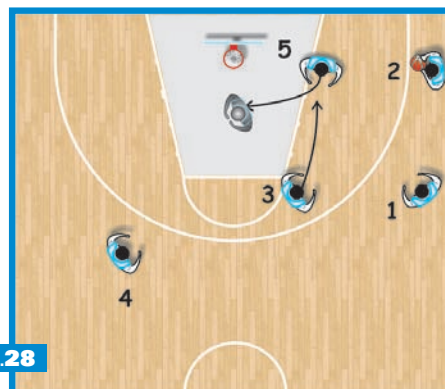
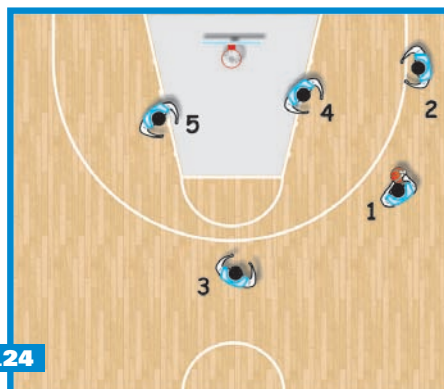
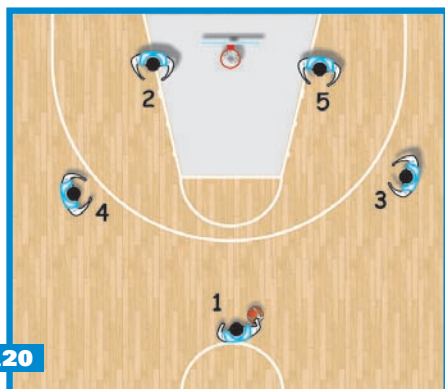
SET PLAYS AGAINST ZONE DEFENSES

I feel that set plays are good against a zone because they provide the offense several advantages:

- ▼ The coach and the players know who

is going to shoot.

- ▼ The coach and the players know where the shoot is going to be taken, from which gives the offensive team a better opportunity to rebound the miss shot.
- ▼ All of the players are in the proper positions when the play starts. Which allows for maximum opportunity for success.



These set plays have been very good to me over the course of my coaching career. When they are run correctly they are difficult to defend.

Timing, spacing and coordinated movement are all important to the effectiveness of the play. The names of the players are Z1-5:

▼ Z1 is from diagram 1 to diagram 6.

▼ Z2 is from diagram 7 to diagram 12.

▼ Z3 is from diagram 13 to diagram 19.

▼ Z4 is from diagram 20 to diagram 24.

▼ Z5 is from diagram 25 to diagram 31.

CONCLUSION

More teams are choosing to play zone defenses. Therefore, I challenge you to develop your principles/philosophy/beliefs of how you want to attack zone defenses. Design shooting drills that simulate the

movements of your offense.

By doing this, it will give your players the confidence they will need to take -and make- those same shots during a game. Lastly, I challenge you to continue to study the game.

When you become a student of the game as a coach, you are making yourself a better coach and teacher, thereby making your team a better team!



by Lionel Hollins

HIGH-PERCENTAGE PLAYS



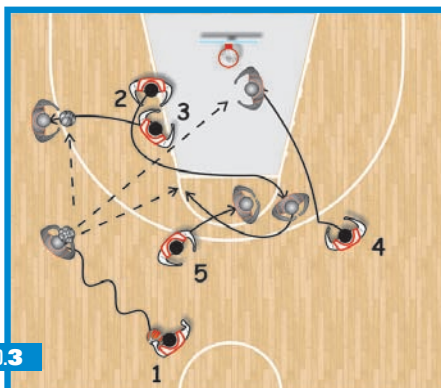
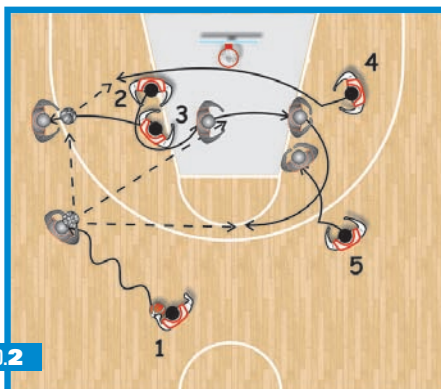
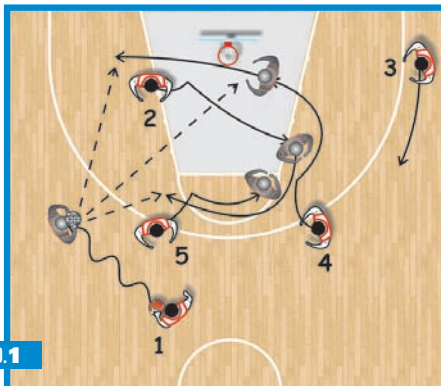


Lionel Hollins has been coaching the Memphis Grizzlies since last February. He started his coaching career at his alma mater, Arizona State University, where he served as assistant coach for two seasons. After Arizona State, Hollins was an assistant coach for the Phoenix Suns, Vancouver Grizzlies, Memphis Grizzlies, for whom he also served as interim head coach during the 2004/2005 season, and the Milwaukee Bucks.

Coaches must adapt their offense to the rules of their team's level of play—particularly to the rules of the clock because there's a big difference between playing with the 24-second clock of the NBA and the WNBA, the 35-second clock of NCAA men's basketball (30-second for women's), and no shot clock in high school. In the NBA the time factor is crucial; the 24-second clock forces every team to create offensive options as quickly as possible. We don't have the chances to create a continuity of offense as high school and college teams do; we must create plays that offer two or more options within a few seconds. In professional basketball we base play more on individual match-ups and one on one. We use plays to isolate our best offensive players, with fewer passes and players' movements compared to high school and college basketball. No matter what level of play you're coaching, you're always looking to create the most and best opportunities to score. In this chapter we'll look at high-percentage scoring plays that have worked with teams I've been associated with. You can adapt these plays as necessary for the rules of your team's level of play and to best use the skills of your players.

OFFENSIVE PRINCIPLES

I would like to describe some high-percentage offensive plays that our team has used effectively in the NBA—our offensive philosophy centers around a few simple principles. Conscious of the 24-second clock, we get the ball as quickly as possible to the man we want to run the play; this allows him time to survey the situation and make a play for himself or a teammate. In keeping with our quick-striking emphasis, we strive to get to the shot with one or two passes to decrease the chance of a steal by our opponents. We frequently use screen-the-screener plays, where the player who makes the screen then receives a screen himself right away (which forces defenders into difficult recoveries). We also use the staggered screen, a series of two or three screens in a row, which are very difficult for a defender to



get through. With these screens, the defender must go through a maze of screens to cover his man. If he's a poor defender or doesn't like physical contact, he'll never get through all the screens, and the shooter will get an open shot. Or, in some cases, another defender must help, which leaves another offensive player open. Like all NBA teams, we use pick-and-roll in many situations. We set high and middle screens, side screens, "elbow" screens (at the corners of the free-throw lane), and step-up screens. When you have a big defender who doesn't like to leave the basket area or who isn't mobile, the pick-and-roll is very effective. If you have a point guard who is a three-point shooter and a penetrator, it's tough for the defense to decide how to play the screens. We also use any of our big men in the screens, and different ball handlers to take best advantage of whomever we wanted to exploit, such as a weak or slow defender. We call most of



our plays in from the bench, but our point guard also has opportunities to call plays. We want to have control of the game on offense, but we give our point freedom to alter the play when the defensive situation changes. We want to attack match-up advantages involving our two or three best offensive players. We also want to fast break after an opponent's missed shot when we have the numeric advantage. If we lack that advantage, we flow into our early offensive set, a transitional set with different options read by our point guard. As common sense dictates, if we have a player with a hot hand we want to milk or a matchup we want to exploit, we set up those plays after our opponent's made field goal or free throws.

PERSONNEL SKILLS

These are the skills we looked for from our starting five:

- ▼ 1 is the point guard, with good court vision and passing and dribbling skills. He also needs to be a good penetrator.
- ▼ 2 is a big guard, a good outside shooter, a good passer, and able to put the ball on the floor and post up smaller players.
- ▼ 3 is the small forward, our best shooter from the three-point range, a good post player, and our second best scorer.
- ▼ 4 is the power forward, who can score inside and is quick and agile enough to move outside for the shot or drive to the basket.
- ▼ 5 is our center, tall, aggressive on the boards and able to run to the floor.

SCORING PLAYS

We start the game with our "special 1" play for our top scorer. We want him to score the first basket of the game to build his confidence. We then run plays for our other scorers, mainly our 2 (off guard) and 3 (small forward), while trying to include solutions for every player on the court. We want to get everyone involved offensively as early as we could. We use a lot of isolation plays for our top scorer, as well as for the other four players on the court.

SPECIAL 1

This is an excellent play to use at the start of a game, usually for your top scorer. Put 5 and 4 outside the three-second lane, 2 at the low post, and 3 at the wing below the free-throw line extended. 1 drives the ball on offense, dribbling to the left side of the court, where the top scorer is set. When 1 reaches the free-throw line extended, 2 makes a diagonal screen for 4, who cuts to the basket to receive the ball from 1. Usually once or twice a game 1 can make a



lob pass to 4 when 4's defender (X4) moves to the top of the screen and no defender can help on 4. If 4 can't receive the ball off the screen, he sets up at the low post, where 1 hits him with a pass (diagr. 1). If there's no pass open to 4, 5 screens for 2 (screen-the-screener action), who comes off the screen to receive from 1. Or 5 can roll and receive from 1.

UTAH

We took it from the Utah Jazz, who ran it for Karl Malone. Here 2 and 3 form a stack on the left side of the court, 5 is out at the top of the three-second lane extended, opposite to the stack, and 4 is just outside of the three-second lane, on the right side of the court. 1 drives the ball on the left

side of the court, staying high, 2 curls around 3, and, as soon as 2 rubs around the shoulder of 3, 3 pops out of the lane to receive the ball from 1. 1 can also pass to 2 on the curl. If 2 doesn't receive the ball on the curl, he continues the cut and screens for 4, who crosses near the baseline and receives the ball from 3. After screening for 4, if the defenders are cheating too much, 2 is vertically screened by 5 (screen the screener), and 1 holds the ball for a moment before passing to 2 (diagr. 2). Another solution for 3 is the pass to 5, who has rolled to the basket after setting the screen for 2.

You can run this play as described if your point guard draws a lot of defensive pressure and has a difficult time passing the

ball to the low post. If we could get our 3 man free, you relieve the pressure on the point guard and get a bigger passer to the post.

UTAH SPECIAL

We also run a variation to the Utah in which we try to get the ball to 4. Here 4 sets up on the right corner of the free-throw area, 5 is at the top of the key, 2 and 3 form a stack on the left side of the court, and 1 dribbles on the left side. 2 rubs off the shoulder of 3, and 3 moves into the deep corner. 2 continues his cut and screens for 4, who receives a lob pass from 1. After setting the screen for 4, 2 is screened by 5 (screen the screener) (diagr. 3). 1 also has the option to pass to 2 or to 3 in the corner.

55

This is an excellent play, and we used it a lot. 2 sets up on the low post on the left side of the court, with 4 at the opposite side outside the three-second lane; 5 is at the corner of the free-throw area on the same side as 4; 3 is outside the top of the key. 1 dribbles to the left side of the free-throw line extended, which signals 2 to make a baseline screen for 4. 1 feeds 4 in the low post, and then 1 and 3 make a fake split -1 screens at the free-throw area for 3, who first fakes to cut to the screen before cutting backdoor to the basket. 1 pops back outside of the lane as a spot-up player in case the defense double-teams 4 (diagr. 4). If 3 doesn't receive the ball, he comes out of the lane and moves to the corner. After setting the screen for 4, 2 receives a verti-

cal screen from 5 (screen the screener) and pops out. 4 plays one on one or passes to 3, 2, or 5, who has rolled to the basket after setting the screen (diagr. 5). You form a triangle on the weak side of the court, with 1 as the spot player on the strong side of the court. If 4 is double-teamed, he passes out of the double team to his teammates around the perimeter (1, 3, or 2) or to 5, near the basket. Note the good rebounding positions maintained by the offense.

43 POST

Our defenders tend to bump and switch a lot on our best scorer to keep him away from the post, so we want to get him the ball while he is moving. We run this play out of our flex set.

4 is at the low post, 2 is in the corner, 5 is at



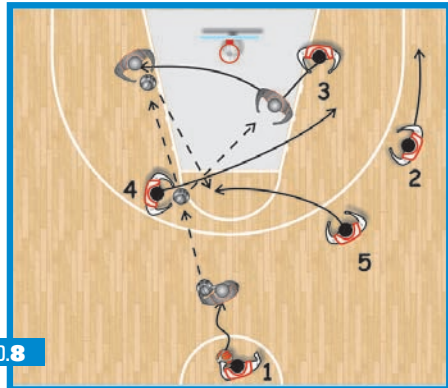
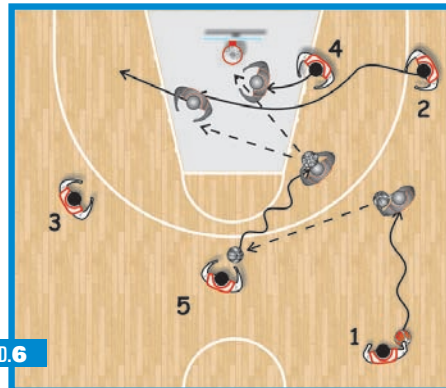
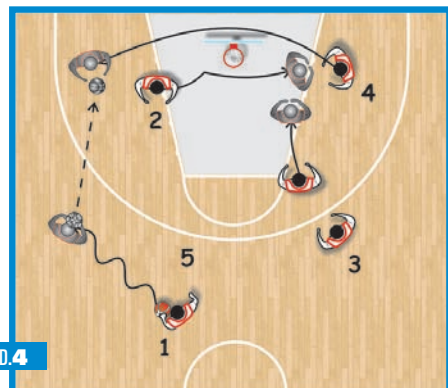
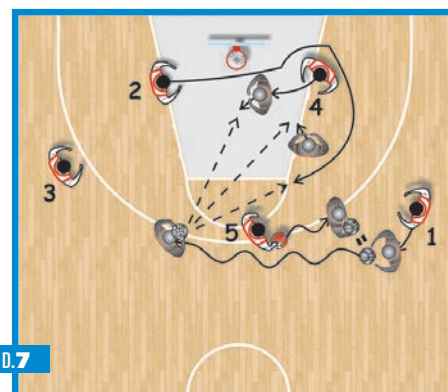
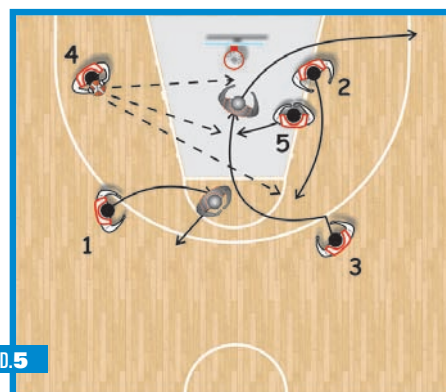
the top of the key, and 3 is at the free-throw line extended. 1 dribbles on the right side and passes to 5, while 2 make a flex cut out of 4 (diagr. 6).

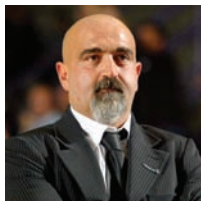
If 2 is open out of the flex cut, 5 gives him the ball; 5 can also hit 4, who has ducked into the three-second lane. If there's no option, 5 dribbles back toward 1. 1 receives a handoff pass from 5 and dribbles to the center of the floor. In the meantime, 4 screens on 2, and, after the screen, opens up to the ball and receives from 1. Meanwhile, 2 continues his cut and receives a screen from 5. 1 can also hit 2 off the screen of 5, or 5, who has rolled to the ball (diagr. 7). We like to use this play for two purposes: to get our shooting guard's jump shot or to get the ball to our power forward inside the lane while he is on the move.

3 QUICK

This play is run for the 3 player in the post. He posts up in the low-post position on the right of the court. 4 is on the left corner of the free-throw lane; 5 is on the opposite side, outside the three-second lane; 2 is on the right side of the free-throw line extended; and 1, with the ball, is in the middle of the court. 1 passes to 4 and then goes in the opposite direction, spotting up outside the three-point line; 2 runs to the corner. As soon as 4 receives the ball from 1, 3 makes a flash cut to the lane. If he doesn't receive the ball right away, he moves to the opposite low-post position, and 4 tries to get him the ball. After the pass, 4 dives opposite diagonally and replaces 3 at the right low post. 5 holds his position for a moment and then flashes to the left corner of the free-throw lane and, if his defender goes to double team 3, receives the ball to take a jump shot (diagr. 8). 3 has three options for where to start the play: on the right low post, on the left box, or on the left wing.

This is an excerpt from the book "NBA Coaches Playbook", 2008, edited by Giorgio Gandolfi and published by Human Kinetics (<http://Basketball.HumanKinetics.com>).





by Giampiero Ticchi

2-1-2 ZONE DEFENSE



Giampiero Ticchi began his professional head coaching career in 2000/2001 with Rimini in A2 (the Italian second league). He followed this with two years as the head coach of Castelmaggiore, also in A2. For the 2005/2006 season, he coached Faenza, a top team in the Italian women's first division. He returned to Rimini in 2006 and stayed at the helm until the end of the 2007/2008 season. In 2007, he

won the A2 Coach of the Year award. In 2008, Ticchi was named head coach of the Italian National women's team and the squad won the gold medal at the 2009 Mediterranean Games.

At the beginning of the season, when you prepare your defensive system, you have to always think about the construction of one (or more) zone defenses.

You must find a zone defense to teach, based on your players' technical and physical skills.

Obviously, the zone defense can't be your principal defensive set, but it can be a fundamental weapon to utilize during the game.

Sometimes, during a game, you can use the zone defense in tactical situations, like throw-ins or after a free-throw, but other times you can use the zone defense when the man-to-man defense doesn't work effectively.

WHEN MUST THE ZONE DEFENSE BE USED?

We can use the zone defense when:

▼ We want to change the game rhythm.

Or:

- ▼ When there's a big physical gap between our players and the rivals and when we are in trouble with the mismatches.
- ▼ When the offense has only perimeter players, also shooters, but doesn't have players able to attack the basket with the dribble.
- ▼ When we are in trouble with high-and-low-post plays.
- ▼ When we are in trouble defending pick-and-roll situations.

It's very important to choose the right moment to use the zone defense; the first three or four defensive plays are fundamental to infuse confidence into our players and to take confidence away from our rivals as they go through their offensive sets.

If you think that your zone defense can succeed in troubling your rivals, you must not change your zone defense after the first shot made by your rival. Be sure to give your team the time necessary to understand how the opponent moves so your team can make the right defensive countermoves.

WHEN TO CHANGE THE ZONE DEFENSE

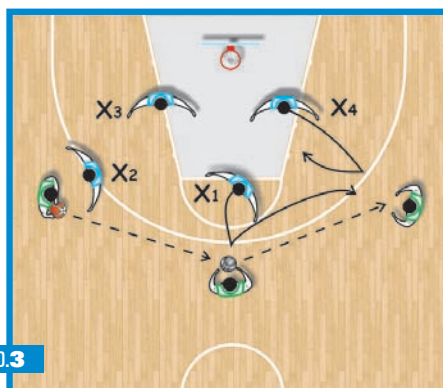
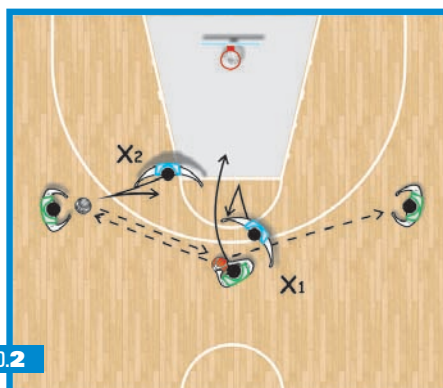
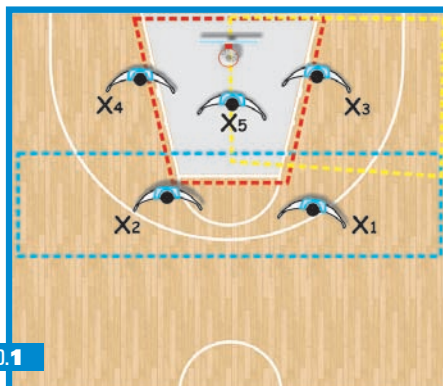
We change our defensive setup when certain things happen during the course of the game: When we allow too many offensive rebounds or too many penetrations; when the offense attacks and effectively uses the "inside/outside" play; and when there is not enough communication or confidence on defense.

2-1-2 ZONE DEFENSE

To follow are the features of our defense. Our defense is divided in three sections:

- ▼ First line: generally occupied by the playmaker and the shooting guard; they are responsible for the external frontcourt and the high post.





- ▼ Second line: occupied by the wings; they are responsible for the side areas near the baseline. They also have to help in the painted area and defend in the low post.
- ▼ Middle: Our center is responsible for the painted area (diagr. 1).

I will now review all of the positions and the players' movements when they are defending on the ball, and far from the ball. I will also describe some drills to make the defensive movements more automatic.

We generally use drills to improve the collaboration between the defensive lines, simulating possible game situations whenever possible.

In all of these drills, it's critical to emphasize the use of the voice to call out ball position and movement, and to make sure that the players' make good use of their arms to hold their position and make it





difficult for the offense to pass from one part of the court to another.

DRILLS

1. First Line Communication

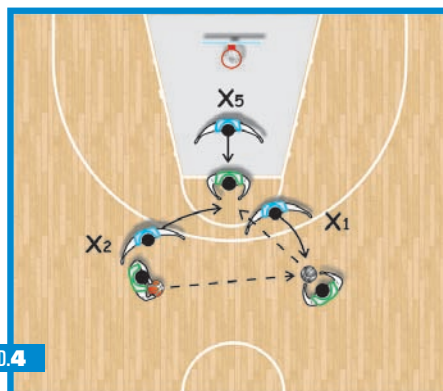
The two players of the first line defend against the offense overloaded with three players set on the perimeter. With the ball on the side, the players of the first line have to “push” the offense near the baseline (diagr. 2).

2. Collaboration Between the First and the Second line

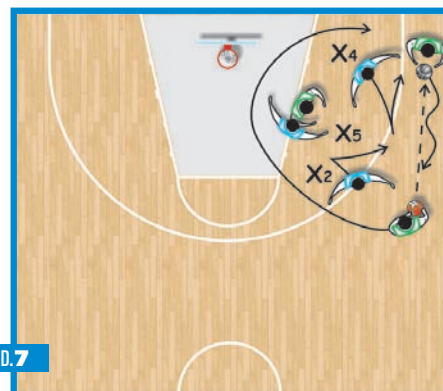
The ball goes from an external player to another and the defenders have to move themselves together. This automatic “help and recover” system with the second line defender is very important. The second line defender on the strong side must help when the wing receives the ball, and continue to help until his teammate has recovered.

The help must succeed in preventing an easy shot, in maintaining the position against the one-on-one play of the wing, pushing him near the central lane (where the defense helps better).

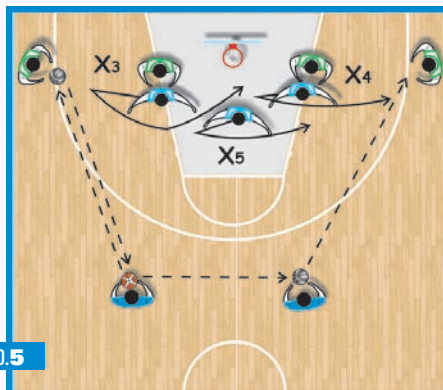
When the defender notes that his teammate on the first line has successfully



D.4



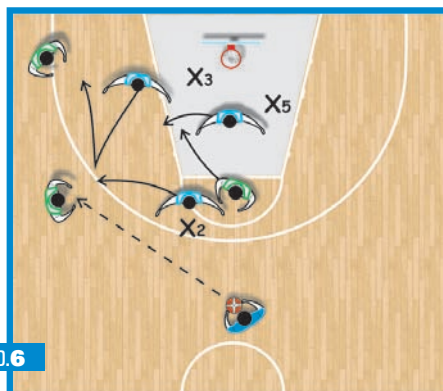
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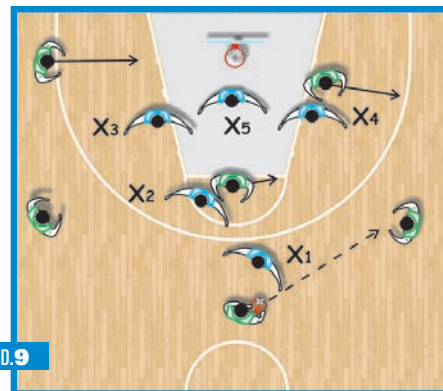
D.5



D.8



D.6



D.9

recovered, he can move back to defend his original spot.

I don't recommend making a direct move to the starting position, but I suggest that the player makes a “banana cut,” which will help prevent penetration into the middle.

The fundamental thing, as always, is for players to communicate and let each other know when they are back in their starting position (diagr. 3).

3. Collaboration Between the First Line and the Middle

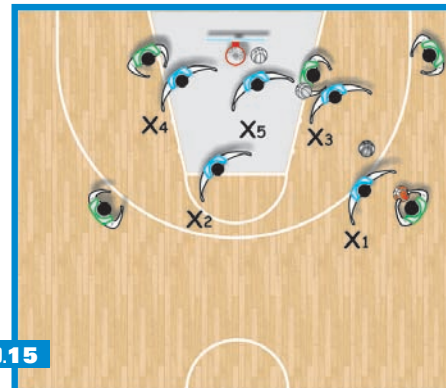
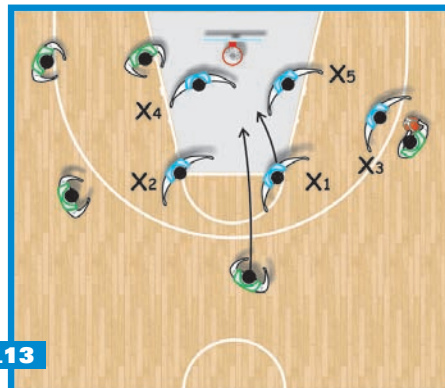
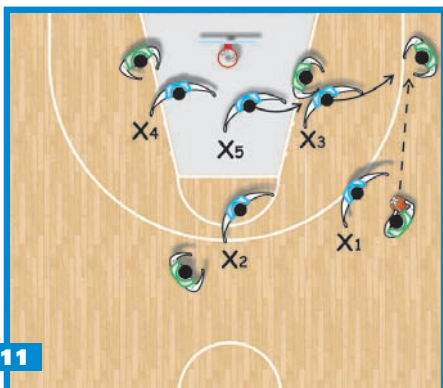
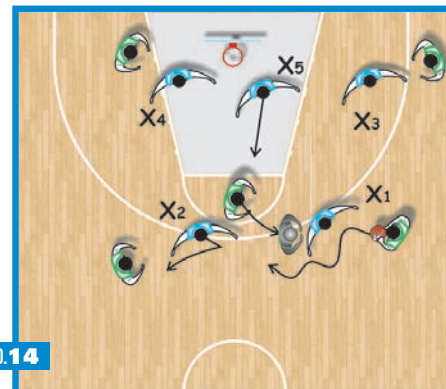
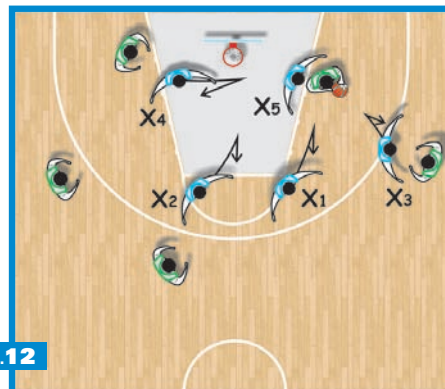
The first line defenders have to keep the ball from getting to the high post. I prefer (but I don't demand that the players do this) that the defender stays open, up towards the ball so he can occupy more space and recover more quickly. He has to try to keep from being boxed out by screens for the shooter that are set by the post on the weak side.

When the high post receives the ball, the first line defenders don't have to defend him anymore. The defender in the middle will defend against him.

The first defenders will not guard the ball, but they will guard the shooters on the perimeter and take care of all cuts near the basket that are made by external players (diagr. 4).

4. Collaboration Between the Second Line and the Middle

We must not allow passes to offensive low post, trying always to anticipate them. It's also important the mechanism to defend in the corner with the man in the middle, who anticipates the low post at three-quarter, giving his back to the midcourt line. If the low post sets himself in a middle-post position, I recommend that the defender anticipates the offensive player at three-quarter, giving his back to the baseline (diagr. 5).



5. "Help-and-Recover" Drill

I try to practice against some of the situations that we often find ourselves in when we use the zone defense. For example, when the offense is overloaded, the second line defender must help by leaving an offensive player open in the corner. In this case, it's important to recover to avoid a three-point shot from the player on the wing; we must occupy the proper space to succeed in defending against a one-on-two situation in the best possible way.

As we have already seen, we allow the possible penetration near the central lane and, at the same time, we go to defend on the passing line toward the corner. Doing this, we try to avoid an easy pass to the offensive player, who is now open in the corner (diagr. 6).

Another common situation occurs when the ball is passed in the corner, after the pass is made, the player then cuts in the middle. Who receives the ball then replace, dribbling, the teammate who have passed him the ball. In this situation, the communication between the defenders is essential; the defender who guards the man with the ball set in the corner remains with him until the first line defender tells him to go back to defend in his proper area. At this point, the first line defender will guard the player with the ball (diagr. 7).

After having practiced against some of the most common game situations, let the defense play against an overloaded

offense. This is a very useful exercise because it will prepare the team for situations that they will see during the game, when the offense is overloaded.

Playing against an overloaded offensive is funny and competitive; I make great use of it during training camp workouts. In the 6-on-5 drill, keep the offense set in precise positions (without trying to score). The defense has one less player and the offense can move itself using several cuts (diagr. 8 and 9).

During 5-on-5 drills, we closely examine defensive situations that help us keep the ball from getting to the high or low post (very dangerous positions because they create advantages for the offense), and try to learn how to behave if the offense receives the ball in these positions.

If the ball goes in the high or low post, I ask the defenders far from the ball to match themselves with their nearest rival; every time the ball goes in the high or low post, our defense becomes a man-to-man defense.

It's not possible to introduce this idea when you build your defense, but you can do it afterwards (diagr. 10, 11 and 12).

6. Avoid the Catch on the Cuts

We spend a lot of time working against cuts. Our aim is to avoid easy catches on the cuts in the painted area (diagr. 13).

Many teams use ball-screens to attack the zone defenses and when you have high screens on the ball, here is what your players must do:

- ▼ The defender on the ball must avoid the penetration from the central lane (rule for the first line defenders).
- ▼ If the player with the ball uses the screen successfully, the defender on the ball follows him to avoid an easy basket.
- ▼ The defender in the middle must defend against penetrations, while his first line teammate must never defend on the ball. He has to worry about what might happen on the weak side (diagr. 14).

We use many drills that emphasize boxing out. Rebounding is one of the potential weak points with a zone defense and players have to become conditioned to get in position right away after a shot is taken so they can get the rebound. In addition to this, we work a lot in running into the fastbreak after the rebound. Using the zone defense, we succeed in creating many easy fastbreak opportunities, because our rivals (after having attacked a zone defense) are not able to quickly match themselves with us during their defensive transition (diagr. 15).

SUMMARY

Every zone defense can be shaped to fit the particular talents of your team; find the one that you think is best. If you are not sure about teaching a specific type of zone defense, because you think that zone defense doesn't fit with your teams' technical skills, then surely that zone defense won't be effective.

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by Aito Garcia Reneses

Aito Garcia Reneses was head coach (and general manager) of Barcelona (Spain) for many years, where his teams won three Division I championships, three Spanish Cups, one King's Cup, two FIBA Europe, and two Korac Cups. Since 2003, Coach Reneses was head coach of Badalona (Spain), where his teams won one FIBA Europe (2006), one King's Cup (2008), and the ULEB Cup (2008). He was awarded Coach of the Year of the ULEB Cup 2007/2008. In 2008, he coached the Spanish National team at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, winning the silver medal. He has been the head coach of Unicaja Malaga since 2008.

At the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, the Spanish team played poorly and lost the gold medal to the team from the United States. The American players were all university students and 21 years old, on average. In 1992, in Barcelona, the USA was represented for the first time by a team comprised of NBA players. This team, made up of Larry Bird, Magic Johnson, Michael Jordan, and other champions, crushed all of their opponents and easily won the gold medal. To this day, the team is known as the "Dream Team."

Since that time, other American teams, which also included NBA players, were called the Dream Team, but when they played for international titles, they did not win. So much for the Dream Team name. Basketball around the world had greatly improved since 1992, and the Americans slowly began to realize that they needed to spend more time in preparation, working together as a team, in order to win in global competition. No longer could they depend on power,



DIFFICULTIES FOR AN AMERICAN PLAYER



strength, quickness, and a week or two of team preparation. They had to play tough defense. They had to work as a team. This decided lack of preparation was evident when the Americans again lost, this time in the semifinals of the 2004 FIBA World Championships to Argentina. Still not understanding that more time had to be spent over the

course of a year working together, the Americans and their NBA stars lost again, this time to Spain in a game for fifth place at the 2006 FIBA World Championships. The tournament was played in Indianapolis, Indiana and home-town fans got to see that Team USA and their NBA players were no longer the best in the world.

At the 2008 Olympic games in Beijing, the U.S. national team recovered part of their lost supremacy, succeeding in beating Spain in the gold medal final. We have to admit that, playing with the FIBA rules, the NBA players were somewhat at a disadvantage -but not completely- because some referees were liberal in their interpretation of some rules, like

the travelling violation, for example. In the future, the complete unification of the rules will bring many advantages. The NBA has introduced new rules, like the zone defense, and many teams are trying to adapt it and make it part of their standard repertoire. The adoption of the zone indicates that the NBA has admitted and recognized that its game was becoming too individualistic (too many one-on-ones) and was losing the fundamental characteristic of our sport, which is team work.

In the last article I wrote with Sito Alonso (head coach of Joventut Badalona and former assistant coach of Aito, n.d.r.) for FIBA Assist (volume 32), we analyzed the moments of relaxation that players often take for themselves during the game, instead of giving their best on the court and resting when they are on the bench. When it comes to former NBA players now playing in Europe, this attitude is a consequence of the importance that they give to one-on-one play. Unfortunately, their other four teammates typically stand around and wait for something to happen, instead of being actively involved in the offense. We know in the game that is typically played in Europe and the rest of the world, for that matter, team work is fundamental, with players concentrating on movement without the ball on offense and helping each other out on defense.

Many former NBA players, who come to Europe without a good long-range shot



are surprised to find that zone defenses effectively clog up the paint area and they cannot drive to the basket like they used to in the United States. In order to succeed in Europe, they have to change their style of play, become more integrated into the team offense concept, and reshape themselves to best help their team. Unfortunately, some players do not have sufficient humility to do this, or perhaps, to even understand why it is necessary that they make changes in their game.

Surely, the American players will eventually come to recognize the mistake in this type of thinking and they will eventually take their place as the best players in the world. In Europe, we have to learn from the many problems encountered by American players and American national teams over the past 16 years and do our best to avoid them. By doing so, we can be assured that we will continue to improve -and grow- our own unique style of basketball.



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by Raffaele Imbrogno

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE GAME

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.

If you don't practice the basketball basics and gain complete control over them, it's going to be very difficult for you to bring your game to the highest level possible. With that important message in mind, I want to review some recent DVDs that provide sound fundamental instruction in various aspects of the game.

The Hoops King (www.hoopsking.com) has always produced excellent DVDs aimed at teaching fundamentals rather than game tactics. Their latest offering, "Pivotology: Ultimate Footwork Drills", by Michael Kennedy is a case in point. This interesting DVD puts a well-deserved spotlight on footwork, a basketball fundamental that is too often ignored. All of the drills focus on the correct use of the feet for the internal, external and middle (mid range and mid-post) positions.

Every section is rich of drills and you can also print, from the DVD, a short and very useful technical book.

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.



Court Dribbling Workout," and "Triple Threat Attack" are three new DVDs from Jason Otter, a basketball player who played professionally in Europe, but now works with elite college and NBA

players. The first DVD, "The Perfect

Jump Shot," shows how to develop the best shot, not only on the catch, but also off the dribble. This DVD is for someone who is just learning to shoot or wants to perfect their existing shot. With "Extreme Full-Court Dribbling Workout" Otter will help you develop both hands equally well in full-court dribbling situations and help you become a player that can handle the basketball under extreme pressure and still make the split-second decisions that will win games. In "Triple Threat Attack," Otter details the proper triple threat position and then moves into shooting from the triple threat.

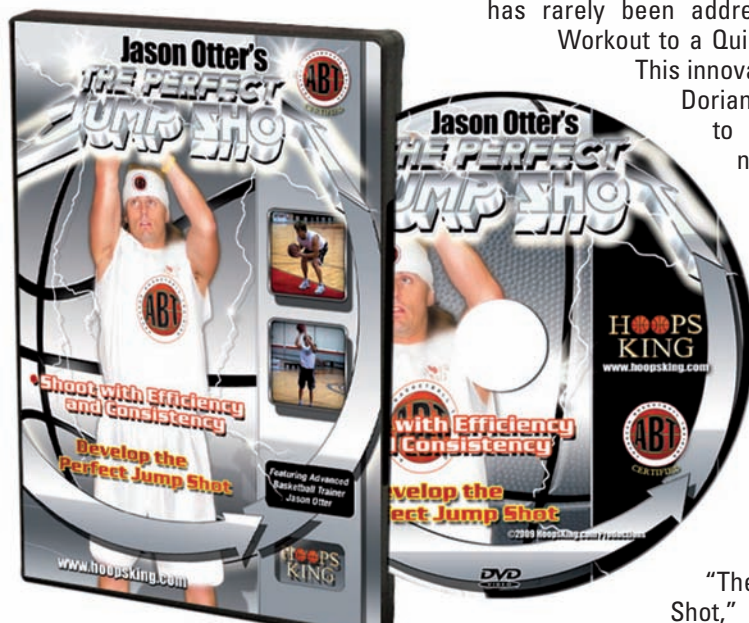
Finally, coach Jay Hernandez has produced an excellent DVD aimed at teaching point guard skills. His "Advanced Point Guard Skills and Drills" focuses on dribbling drills, how to be both a slasher to the basket and a jump shooter, and how to get by a defender who is on you from one end of the court to the other. Coach Hernandez's easy-to-follow teaching methods will help bring your game to the next level.

For those who think that the first step is most important part of every one-on-one situation, here is a great DVD that covers an important aspect of basketball that has rarely been addressed: "Drills & Workout to a Quicker First Step."

This innovative program by Dorian Lee is designed to increase quickness, help you read the defense, and act accordingly so you can easily get by your defender.

Also from this DVD you can print a little book of various drills.

"The perfect Jump Shot," "Extreme Full-





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by Alan Richardson

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

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.

MENTAL TOUGHNESS

Mental toughness is many things and rather difficult to explain. Its qualities are sacrifice and self-denial. Also most importantly, it is combined with a perfectly disciplined will that refuses to give in. It's a state of mind - you could call it character in action. Top basketball officials maintain confidence, self-control and concentration during difficult and intense games. These abilities are survival skills. All human activities are challenging, but being successful at the top levels requires great mental and emotional strength, alongside physical and technical excellence.

FAILURE IS PART OF THE DANCE

The mentally tough official must be able to cope with insecurity, treat setbacks and mistakes as part of the price to be paid and withstand what may seem like constant criticism of performance. Setbacks and mistakes have to be analysed, placed in the perspective of the whole season, forgotten and then refocused on a positive approach that underlines the benefits of staying strong in the face of adversity. The feelings of failure are in reality the doorway to ultimate success; of all the physical and mental qualities a performer must possess, mental toughness is the most important.

MENTAL TOUGHNESS IS A WINNING ATTITUDE

Mental toughness is the ability to impose physically through performance, what an official is committed to mentally. If that commitment wavers because of a setback or mistake, then clearly the performance will lean towards failure. Officials, mentors and Instructors must create a training and competition culture

that constantly shapes the state of mind in a positive and confident way. Mental toughness is a state of mind that officials can develop by applying these principles:

- ▼ Think like a winner. Show high self-belief and expect to be successful.
- ▼ Positive vision leads to positive realities; they always have and always will.
- ▼ Turn negatives into positives. Treat setbacks as inevitable and learn from them to become a more complete official.
- ▼ Deal with the unexpected. Regard demanding, changing situations as the ultimate challenge, enjoy being tested and believe that tough times do not last but tough people do.

It is a well-established fact that a positive state of mind leads to positive emotions and high positive energy needed for successful performance. The table below illustrates the same process, albeit very simply, using an example of how two officials, one mentally tough and the

other mentally weak, might react to missing a foul on the play. The ideal performance state and mental toughness we seek are characterised by a clear sense of purpose and direction, a high degree of resilience, emotional calmness and the fuel of high positive energy. The following steps should become essential elements of officials' training and performance routines.

STEP ONE - DEVELOP STRONG SELF-IDENTITY

Our performance is often the result of our expectations, so unless we think and feel like "winners" we will not perform like "winners". Officials should check themselves for the following practices, which can develop a successful state of mind:

- ▼ Remember you are successful - recall all your previous successes.
- ▼ Always look good - reflect the image of a successful official.
- ▼ Control your thoughts and only use positive self-talk.
- ▼ Be your own cheerleader - reward yourself on every good decision.

FOUR STEPS TO MENTAL TOUGHNESS: MENTALLY TOUGH VERSUS MENTALLY WEAK

Attitude Change	Thinks, "I'll get the next One," remains positive and does not lose self-belief.	Thinks "I made a mess of that," becomes negative and loses self-belief.
Emotional Response	Remains enthusiastic, stimulated and lively.	Becomes irritated and discouraged, loses hope and blames others.
Resultant Energy State	Remains positive in direction and high in intensity.	Becomes negative in direction and low in intensity.
Effect on Performance	Recovers well and makes good decisions later in the game.	Becomes nervous and hides in the game, being more concerned with the past than the future.



- ▼ Become more assertive in dealing with difficult situations.
- ▼ Accept responsibility for your actions: excuses are signs of weakness.
- ▼ Be persistent - do not accept failure too easily.
- ▼ Be onisistent to make success a habit.
- ▼ Keep learning. Nobody knows everything.
- ▼ Copy role models to help develop

- positive and successful behaviours.
- ▼ Positive self-talk and confident body language will transform the anxious official into a successful, assertive official - fix the body language and the mind stands tall.

STEP TWO - BECOME AND STAY MOTIVATED

The most important question an official must answer is why he/she commits to the challenge, accepts the criticism and deals with the setbacks and mistakes. It

takes courage to step onto the court at the start of the game. An official can only reach that level of arousal by being totally motivated.

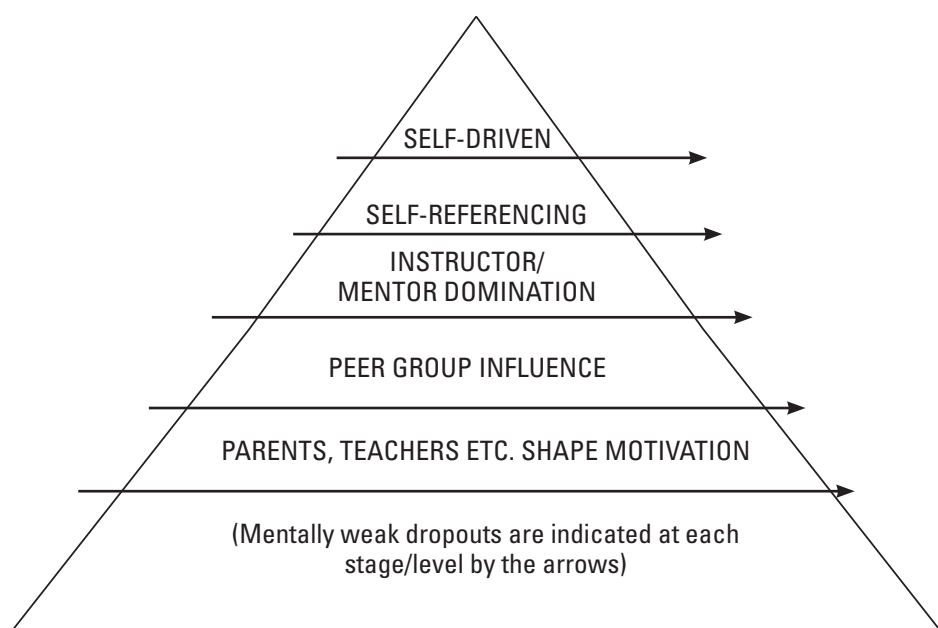
Commitment to officiate is a choice and nothing can affect performance as dramatically as a sudden loss of motivation. Without motivation, without the drive to achieve, the official cannot develop the mental toughness to survive the challenge of basketball. Problems become barriers not challenges. Sources of motivation are both intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external). A mentally tough official will be self-motivated and self-directed.

The official is involved because he/she wants to be.

The chart on the left identifies how the official's motivation must move through certain stages, levels or challenges before becoming an intrinsic element of mental toughness.

CHART: THE ROUTE TO SELF-MOTIVATION AND MENTAL TOUGHNESS

In the early stages, family and friends tend to motivate officials. Aspiring officials then move on to the more critical influence of Instructors and mentors. Many officials do not survive these stages and drop out because they lack either physical ability and/or mental strength. The final stage, when motivation switch-



es from extrinsic to intrinsic, is when mental toughness becomes critical. The official is now driven by comparisons with officials he/she admires and a desire to perform to potential.

Rather than relying on the views of others, the official now checks his/her performance against personal standards. Although not isolated from external influences, the official now controls his/her state of mind and is much tougher mentally.

It helps of course if the official's social support group is positive and supportive during the journey to excellence. Although male officials benefit from intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation, female officials may not receive complete social support at certain stages in their development.

They must rely upon their intrinsic drive to officiate, which maybe why the most successful ones are so mentally tough.

STEP THREE - ESTABLISH A WORK ETHIC

For an official to feel positive and confident about the challenge of a tough game, he/she must feel physically capable of meeting the expected demands. Any question about fitness, strength and energy potential will begin to sow the seeds of doubt and anxiety, undermining performance before the official steps out on the court.

This may be a significant issue for:

- ▼ The young official in his/her debut game.
- ▼ The older official near the end of a career.
- ▼ The official returning from injury.
- ▼ Officials faced with too many games and insufficient recovery time.
- ▼ The official with poor diet and nutrition.
- ▼ The official with a "damaging" lifestyle.
- ▼ The official working out of their level of experience.
- ▼ The official who has been trying to combine too many games with too much travelling and pressure from home and work.

Motivation and confidence are inextricably linked with the willingness and capacity to work hard to ensure the best chance of success.

When instructors and officials work hard to prepare for performance, they build a belief that they have paid the price for success.

By committing to effort, they not only become physically tougher, but mentally tougher.



THE HARDER WE PREPARE, THE HARDER IT IS TO SURRENDER

Officials, especially younger ones, should read the autobiographies of great players, coaches and officials in basketball and other sports. They will find time and time again the message of the importance of having a work ethic in order to succeed. Julius Erving, the legendary Dr.J, said it took him a whole career to become an overnight success. Michael Jordan said it took him the whole of the 1980's to become the accomplished player of the 1990's. Mentally tough officials are the product of not only hard work but also smart work. They know when to work hard and when to recover. Within their training and lifestyle they will incorporate good diet and nutrition, sufficient sleep, relaxation and massage. Their self discipline should always triumph over the temptations (alcohol, sex and tobacco) will not disrupt or harm their development. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

STEP FOUR - DEVELOP SELF-CONTROL

Being mentally tough means being positive in the face of adversity, especially

when a situation in a game produces an emotional surge that the official attempts to control. Mentally tough officials see problems and mistakes as part of the environment if they wish to perform in basketball. When situations arise they have the self-belief to view them as challenges to overcome. Officials cannot choose what happens, but they can choose how to respond.

Dealing with criticism, mistakes and emotions is essential to an official's development. Therefore, much of the work of instructors and mentors should be in preparing officials for likely situations through discussion and video analysis. Self-control is always the best way to meet challenges.

Motivation is especially important when an official, for whatever reason (injury, stress, personal tragedy etc.) goes into a period of decline. Some thoughts on dealing with this are:

- ▼ Courage: the greatest bravery in officiating is wanting to make the tough calls when the "team of officials" is not performing well.
- ▼ Love: the best motivation is the love of officiating, so do not allow situa-

tions to overcome your enjoyment of the game.

- ▼ Excellence: is a habit; great performance is based upon good habits and habits are created by repetition.
- ▼ Staying in the game: we can control only what we do, we cannot control the thoughts or behaviours of others.
- ▼ Who you are: how you face the good and bad times. Staying strong and energetic generates respect.
- ▼ Keep learning: every day, every training session, every game and every clinic is an opportunity to learn something new or revisit good practice. These officials are always a level above others – the greatest quality of the great officials is humility.
- ▼ Achieving goals: set positive and realistic goals at the beginning of every season. Achieving them will be a source of great satisfaction and renewed motivation.

TEACHING MENTAL TOUGHNESS

The attitude and behaviour of the Instructor/mentor strongly influences the performance of officials. They cannot expect to have a mentally tough group of officials unless they plan a program that emphasizes and reinforces positive attitudes to success.

THE INSTRUCTOR/MENTOR AS A ROLE MODEL

The instructor/mentor is an important and influential authority figure in officials' lives. The body language, attitude and expressions of the Instructor/Mentor can shape, reinforce or damage the officials' self-esteem and confidence.

This is especially true for younger officials in a society of increasing one-parent families. If mental toughness is about meeting challenges with positive self-control, then the starting point, both in training and in performance, must be the instructor/mentor. Never are they more tested than after a poor performance by one or more of their officials. The aftermath of a poor performance is a tough moment for the instructor/mentor. They can choose to yell or sell, but those that want a mentally tough group of officials must demonstrate a controlled way to deal with emotional setbacks despite personal feelings. The Instructor/Mentor will find that a disciplined post-game routine is helpful in ensuring that they do not get either too high or too low.

CREATING THE MIND-SET

The impact of an instructor/mentor on an official's mind-set and performance is described as:



“Achievement needs energy, energy comes from emotions, emotions are released by ideas and ideas come from instructors/mentors.”

Successful instructors/mentors will use ideas, stories, metaphors, and videos etc. to shape the mind-set of officials and prepare them to be mentally tough in performance. If the instructor/mentor shows an unwavering belief in the ability of the officials to achieve despite the challenges, then they have a framework for building the mind-set and will become increasingly motivated.

LEARNING THROUGH FAILURE

Handling mistakes and situations is another important area of responsibility for the Instructor/Mentor. The Instructor/Mentor's reaction to mistakes is the key to the officials' motivation and desire to

work hard to correct mistakes. They have two choices:

- ▼ Use failure as an opportunity to give officials feedback on how to improve. Persuade them to recommit themselves to the effort with renewed motivation.
- ▼ Use failure as evidence of the officials' inadequacy and proof that they cannot meet expectations. This emotional overreaction will demotivate officials.

Your emotional reactions to failure can often blind your perspective and interfere with your ability to bounce back.

PREPARING OFFICIALS EMOTIONALLY

If mental toughness is a state of mind, then Instructors/Mentors must integrate its development into every aspect of pre-

paring officials. Therefore preparation must:

- ▼ Be seen as relevant and purposeful.
- ▼ Engage the officials' attention so they work hard.
- ▼ Simulate game situations so opportunities are created to build situations that require mental toughness.
- ▼ Create balance and harmony – including work, recovery and an element of fun to relieve pressure – so officials begin to understand energy management.

By controlling the mood of the officials during training and preparation, often under exacting conditions, the Instructor/Mentor is preparing the officials emotionally for the game environment. When the pressure arises, the officials then have a solution bank of responses and are not surprised or caught unawares by the situation.

SELF-REFERENCING

One way officials can become mentally tough is by accepting responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, actions and rejecting all possible excuses. Instructors/Mentors can help by questioning and listening – not always telling officials what

they did wrong but encouraging them to talk about what they could have done better.

Michael Jordan, probably the most complete basketball player to date, was very strong on this aspect of mental toughness:

"People always want to blame someone else or some circumstance out of their control for their problems. You find a way not to accept the blame. The better performers learn to say: 'I performed badly, but tomorrow I will be better.' A lot of young performers are afraid to admit they have bad nights, but everybody has bad nights and it's how you rebound from these bad nights that dictate what kind of performer you are going to be."

The Instructor/Mentor can play a part in this by always encouraging the official to self-reference. Instead of giving the official a definition of the situation, the Instructor/Mentor can ask the official to explain his/her actions, "How did you feel you performed?" or "Why do you feel you reacted that way?"

In this way the official must think through and account for his/her actions – a vital part of the learning process. The Instructor/Mentor might care to borrow a thought from Rudyard Kipling:

"We have 40 million reasons, but not a single excuse."

SUMMARY

To excel at a challenging activity like basketball officiating and have the ability to recover from the inevitable setbacks along the way, officials and Instructor/Mentors must possess a high degree of mental toughness, defined as the ability to impose physically what is committed to mentally.

It is clearly the result of developing a positive attitude to success. This state of mind consists of a strong self-identity, high intrinsic motivation, a good work ethic and excellent self-control in pressure situations.

As a role model for officials, the Instructor/Mentor must demonstrate mental toughness in preparing for games, coping with the emotional nature of the environment and dealing with mistakes and failure.

Mental toughness starts with the personality and attitudes of the individual official, but it is enhanced by a "team" culture that consistently reinforces the value of being POSITIVE in the face of adversity.



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). For additional clarifications, explanations or examples, please consult this document.

1. During a single unsuccessful free throw awarded to A2, free throw violations are committed first by B5 and then by A5. Shall play resume with a substitute free throw for A2?
2. During an interval of play with team B entitled to the next alternating pos-

session throw-in, A3 commits a technical foul. Following the throw-in that begins the next period, shall team A be entitled to the next alternating possession?

3. A5 ends a dribble while airborne and comes to a stop by returning to the floor with both feet simultaneously. A5 now pivots. Has A5 committed a travelling violation?
4. After the ball is placed at the disposal of A4 for an endline throw-in, A4 holds the ball for two seconds before passing the ball to A5 who is also out-of-bounds at that endline. Shall A5 have

five seconds to release the ball on the throw-in?

5. A shot for a goal is in the air when the signal sounds to end the 3rd period. After the signal but before the shot for a goal has ended, A2 commits an unsportsmanlike foul by striking B2 with an elbow. Shall the A2 foul be considered to have happened during interval of play?
6. During an alternating possession throw-in that begins a period, but before the throw-in has ended, a foul is committed. Shall this foul be considered to have happened during playing time?
7. B3 commits an interference violation during a shot for a goal by A4. Shall the resulting throw-in take place at the free throw line extended?
8. The 4th period ends with the score team A 80, team B 79. Before the referee has signed the scoresheet, it is realized that a field goal scored by team B with 20 seconds remaining in the 4th period has been erroneously credited to team A. Shall the referee have the authority to correct the error and change the final score?
9. A disqualifying personal foul is committed by A5 against B5. B5 is able to remain in the game. May a player other than B5 attempt the resulting free throws?
10. A4 has the ball at his disposal out-of-bounds for a throw-in, when a fighting situation occurs with members of both teams being disqualified. Shall play resume with an alternating possession throw-in?



ANSWERS

1. No (12.3, 3rd bullet)
2. No (38.4.2)
3. No (25.2.1)
4. No (17.3.1)
5. Yes (8.5)
6. Yes (12.4.8)
7. No (31.3.2)
8. Yes (48.4, 2nd bullet)
9. No (37.2.3)
10. No (39.3.2)



by Vincent Cavalier



by Marc Orlu

THE AMERICAN WAY

Vincent Cavalier is Chief Medical Officer of the French Basketball Federation (FFBB) and Head doctor of France's basketball teams.

Marc Orlu is physiotherapist of the french basketball teams, member of the Medical Commission of the FFBB

Professional sport in France is suffering from a general player drain, with players moving abroad often for purely financial reasons.

This presents national team doctors with two problems:

- ▼ How to approach medical monitoring during the season.
- ▼ The scrutiny of club doctors when their players sustain injuries on international duty.

In the majority of sports, those players who have moved abroad are based in Europe. Basketball is unique in that the very best players are under contract in the United States. As a result, approximately ten French players with international potential are currently active in the professional ranks of the NBA. During the 2007 international season, two incidents demonstrated the importance of exposure to NBA medical practices:

1. The NBA club of one international French player insisted that the player take a return flight from France to the United States to have his sprained ankle examined by the club doctor.

2. Players, who are based in the United States find it difficult to adapt to the strapping applied by our physiotherapists. This is a functional problem; however, players may also suffer actual lesions if their skin reacts badly to these products.

During the same season, one of the players was accompanied by an American athletic trainer nominated by his club due to an insurance issue.

This allowed us to find out a little more about the role of this profession that is unknown in France, and most certainly in Europe.

The players themselves are also strongly in favour of improved relations between the medical staff on both sides of the Atlantic. All of this encouraged us to take a

closer look "on site", and so Marc Orlu, federal physiotherapist, and I were sent by the federation to experience NBA medical practices first-hand in San Antonio, where Tony Parker is based and Phoenix where Boris Diaw was based before he was traded to Charlotte Bobcats. We also scheduled our visit so that we could benefit from attending a conference in San Antonio, organised by the American College of Sports Medicine and aimed specifically at "team doctors". What better way to get acquainted with American sports medicine and to learn a little more about the methods used by sports physicians in the United States!

1. ACSM CONFERENCE

As is the case at all medical conferences worldwide, our colleagues came to present their work over a period of three days. There was nothing really new in terms of the subjects that were discussed; however, the way in which injuries are treated differs considerably from standard practice in France. American physicians work exclusively with decision algorithms.

Depending on whether a particular clinical symptom is apparent, this may result in a paraclinical examination that, depending on the result, will trigger further tests, and so on. Injuries are also classified systematically, based on stages of development.

Deductions of this kind offer several advantages:

- ▼ A doctor is not initially required as a preliminary diagnosis can be made on the basis of paraclinical results, in particular using scans, as is the case in traumatology.
- ▼ Injuries can be discussed on the basis of a recognised level of severity. This makes it easier for us to understand the problem that our American colleagues are facing when we inform them that Tony Parker has suffered a sprain of moderate severity.

Effectively, we felt like we were discovering medical practices that were essentially the same.

The injuries sustained and the diagnoses made do not appear to be any different; however, the manner in which they are approached differs enormously.



2. MEETING THE MEDICAL STAFF AT THE SPURS AND THE SUNS

We noticed two characteristics particular to team medical care in North America:

- ▼ The presence of a head athletic trainer.
- ▼ The abundance of resources available for training and rehabilitation.

We also wanted to focus on the issue of ankle taping.

A. THE HEAD ATHLETIC TRAINER

Our meetings with Will Sevensing in San Antonio and Aaron Nelson in Phoenix helped to improve our understanding of

this role. This is a profession for which there is no equivalent in Europe. The head athletic trainer is responsible for injury prevention, emergency care, first aid, and for injury evaluation and rehabilitation. In this role, the head athletic trainer liaises with the club doctor, the athlete, friends and family, and coaching staff. He acts as a consultant to the technical staff with regard to training, nutrition, and protective equipment. The head athletic trainer must complete a third-level training program of 1,500 hours followed by 800 hours of training with an experienced head athletic trainer. In the event of injury, players are treated by the athletic trainer, who makes

a preliminary diagnosis, and then directly requests paraclinical examinations (primarily scans) in accordance with decision trees validated by various expert groups. Depending on the results, the athletic trainer initiates a medical examination in consultation with the club doctor in charge. A diagnosis is then made and a treatment plan elaborated that includes a rest period. This highly rational process is based on precise decision algorithms, determined essentially by the results of the scans or the paraclinical examination. It then concludes with clinical examinations. We know that our American colleagues, and traumatology specialists in particular,



prefer to rely on scan data rather than on clinical examinations. This is also explained by the wide availability of MRI, CT, scintigraphy and conventional x-ray imaging equipment. The head athletic trainer is thus pivotal to a professional club's health care system. He is the person whom we should contact if we need information on our players. We have often made the mistake of contacting the club doctor, who in actual fact does not have access to complete medical records.

This approach has often led to frustration in our communication and in our relationship with the NBA medical staff. However, rehabilitation itself remains the domain of the physiotherapist.

The physiotherapist also has a recognised role and status, but works outside of the club and provides post-operative care. Once the rehabilitation period has come to an end, monitoring of the injured athlete is resumed by the athletic trainer while the athlete returns to full fitness.

B. ABUNDANCE OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR PHYSICAL TRAINING AND REHABILITATION

We suspected that the facilities available at NBA clubs would be as impressive as those available at the major European football clubs, and we were not disappointed! The virtually unlimited financial resources of NBA clubs are able to pro-

vide for rehabilitation pools with inclinable and height-adjustable floors, and complete with underwater treadmill! Altitude chambers allow players to train under high-altitude conditions for two hours a week, as if they were in the mountains! (and it goes without saying that a control is provided so that the altitude can be adjusted!). Another machine with a ventilation system allows players to run in a low-gravity environment which is useful for relieving joint pain during rehabilitation.

However, human resources are equally important. In addition to these machines, a massage to aid recovery is also very important to the players, and this is one of the regular tasks of the head athletic trainer's assistants. It is also an activity that we have neglected a little at our own clubs due to the lack of resources.

C. THE ISSUE OF STRAPPING

The issue of strapping is a recurring complaint from our players when playing for their national team. Is there really such a difference between the two approaches? We met the trainers who explained their approach to us and, more importantly, showed us the materials used. The taping is applied in much the same way, using the three-stirrup technique.

However, there is a significant difference

in the way in which the taping is secured.

- ▼ In the United States, while the peroneal and Achilles tendons remain protected, the trainers do not use adhesive. Their foam is also thicker and provides more support than its French counterpart.
- ▼ The other materials are different as well, and the strapping is secured at the end using a fabric taping similar in texture to Coheban®, but with a light adhesive coating.

This approach results in strapping that is initially less rigid, but that remains constant throughout the entire game or training session. This is what makes all the difference. The players feel that the result is effective throughout, unlike our approach, which feels less and less effective over time. Do the players also feel a difference in terms of the level of protection? It is quite difficult to say. Anyone can see that there is a difference.

We found two products from a French manufacturer that have been validated and tested by American trainers: Leuko-tapeClassic® that is used instead of Strappal®, and LightplastPro® that is used instead of Tensoplast®.

Our trip to meet the medical staff of the NBA has therefore allowed us to confirm the feedback that our players have given us:

- ▼ The dominant and central role of the athletic trainer, who should also be our point of contact for medical issues concerning our players.
- ▼ The significant role of modern facilities in rehabilitation and training, which obviously reflects a level of financial support that is well beyond what we are used to in France.
- ▼ The difference in strapping that is due more to the materials used rather than the way in which the taping is applied.

It also allowed us, through the role of the athletic trainer, to gain a better understanding of the idea of doctors, physiotherapists, and physical trainers sharing responsibility between them.

Bearing in mind the lack of funds available to health care professionals in France, we will certainly have to address the reorganisation of health care in general and in sport clubs in particular.

The route of providing qualified training and of sharing responsibility is a solution that we will have to consider in the very near future.

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AURIEMMA: "USA NEEDS TO WIN GOLD AT FIBA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FOR WOMEN"



The United States were not competing at the EuroBasket Women in Latvia, but the Americans were in the Baltics. New USA coach Geno Auriemma and women's national team director Carol Callan have been in the Arena Riga watching games and getting a feel for some of the players the Americans will go up against at the 2010 FIBA World Championship for Women. Auriemma earlier this year won his sixth NCAA title with the University of Connecticut women's team. It's a job he has held since 1985. Six times Auriemma has been named as the Naismith Coach of the Year.

He knows that coaching international basketball in the summers through the 2012 Olympics will present a whole new set of challenges. Auriemma gave this interview to Jeff Taylor in Riga for FIBA.com.

FIBA: Geno, we watched your press conference in April after USA Basketball named you as the coach of their women's basketball team. Tell us again what this appointment means to you?

AURIEMMA: It's hard to put into words. I thought this opportunity would never come once it went to the WNBA format (USA Basketball changed its rules which previously stipulated the coach needed

WNBA coaching experience). It's something that I always wanted to do. I've done a lot of things for USA Basketball over the years. Obviously to have the chance to coach the national team and to hopefully coach the Olympic team, those are the kind of things that every coach would want to do, especially for me since I've got some of my former players, who are so prominent, to get an opportunity to get back with them. It's just something that you never think is going to happen.

FIBA: For someone who has been coaching at UConn since 1985, you look to be in good shape. Are you drinking from the fountain of youth?

AURIEMMA: (Smiles) It has been a lot of fun for me. Maybe when you are doing something that's a lot of fun, you tend not to age. I've got a feeling that in the next three years, I'm going to age a lot.

FIBA: How is it that you have yet to become the Governor of Connecticut, considering all your success at UConn?

AURIEMMA: (Smiles) I've got a better job than the Governor of Connecticut so I don't know that I want to take a step down.

FIBA: Is it fair to say there's only one result that is acceptable for the USA women - winning gold medals at every tournament.

AURIEMMA: Yes, just like at Connecticut. That's how we approach things. That's the bar we've set. You get to the Final Four

and you say, "Ok. Now the season starts. Let's see how we're going to do." At USA Basketball, it's not about, 'Are we going to qualify for the Olympics?' It's about, "Okay, when we get to the gold-medal round, who are we going to play?" Is that fair or unfair? It's like Brazil in soccer in the World Cup. There are just certain countries where you win the gold or it's a bad season. We know that going in.

FIBA: That appears to be the attitude that Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi, two of your former players at UConn, have no matter what team they play for. They expect to win championships.

AURIEMMA: No question, and that's one of the reasons they have. You look at Diana and she won three (NCAA titles) at Connecticut, Sue two. They have each been on two gold-medal winning teams in Athens, and in Beijing. It follows them around because that's who they are. But there are other players on the team that are used to winning as well. I think Tamika Catchings is one of the all-time great winners, and certainly Candace Parker has had tremendous success. When you see



kids like that, all of a sudden you understand why they play the way they do. It's because they're winners.

FIBA: This week in Latvia at the EuroBasket Women, you have spent a few days watching some teams you may face at the 2010 FIBA World Championship for Women.

en. What do you think about them?

AURIEMMA: It's much different to what we see in the States. That's why it's good to come out here and see it. The main difference is that they (Europeans) are players that are much older, not 18-, 19-, 20-year-old players. They're older, more experi-

enced. They understand the subtleties of the game. And that makes for a very interesting game. It's not always about who has the most talent because you've got a lot of clever players out there who can compensate for whatever they don't have. So I'm looking forward to it. My three days here have been great.

LEBANON COACH WANTS TICKET TO TURKEY

Dragan Raca is back at the helm of the Lebanese National Team. Having lost to Iran in the final of the FIBA Asia Championship two years ago in Tokushima - thus according to many experts "blowing away Lebanon's best possible chance to qualify for the Olympics" - one would have expected Dragan Raca to come up with words like "revenge, vengeance etc." But the 38-year-old was as equanimous as ever while assessing Lebanon's chances at the 25th FIBA Asia Championship, scheduled to be held in Tianjin (China) from Aug 6-16. FIBA's reporter S. Mageshwaran spoke with the Greek-Cypriot coach in an exclusive interview who named a ticket to the 2010 FIBA World Championship as his primary goal for Tianjin.

FIBA: Lebanon have finished second on three occasions at the FIBA Asia Championship, but you have never won the title. How do you plan to break this jinx?

RACA: We prepare our team to play good basketball. True, we haven't been able to transform that into winning a FIBA Asia Championship, but then we have lost to very good teams in the final on all the three occasions. From a personal experience, I can tell you that when we lost to Iran in the Tokushima final two years ago, we were defeated by a very inspired team that was running very high on energy and enthusiasm. Our target in Tianjin is to qualify for the 2010 FIBA World Championship in Turkey. That is the main focus right now. If things go well, we will look at the next step.

FIBA: Lebanon have recently naturalized (former New Orleans Hornets power forward) Jackson Vroman. Is this a move to fill the gap left by Joseph Vogel? Is Jackson the right replacement? What are your thoughts?



RACA: First of all, let's recognize what Joe did for Lebanese Basketball. On the face of it, he added size. But, then his presence also added overall solidity to the team on the court. So, overall his contribution was to shift the basketball to a higher level and helped Lebanon in qualifying for two FIBA World Championships. As for Vroman, this player has good skill, is a very hard working player and is a very good character. I am expecting that he is going to help the team a lot. But, there is no comparison between Joe and Vroman, because they are two entirely different players - not to forget there are a lot of expectations on Vroman, which I'm sure he is capable of delivering.

FIBA: Can you tell us more about the Lebanese players from the US, who will play in China?

RACA: We haven't decided on who will make the cut. Yes, we have sounded out a couple of players, because we want to take the strongest possible Lebanese team to Tianjin. But as for who exactly will make the team is not finalized yet.

FIBA: What exactly is Fadi El Khatib's role in the team now? What is his impact on the team?

RACA: Fadi, like Joe, is one of the players with great influence on basketball in Lebanon itself. He is the captain of the team and the leader as well. I expect him to lead from the front in our plans.

More importantly, I expect him to set an example for the young players who have joined the NT this year.

FIBA: Who do you think are the major challengers to your campaign at Tianjin?

RACA: You can't really pick like that in a Championship like this. All the teams that enter the final eight will be as good as the other capable of beating each other on their day. The competition will be so close that only on the game day, you can have some expectations.

FIBA: Finally, what do you think of the draw? What do you think of the new format for the Championship?

RACA: I guess it's OK. All we have to do is to play ball. More games means less risk and better chance for better teams to win.

FIND MORE INTERVIEWS ON WWW.FIBA.COM



THE WORLD IN BRIEF



HOUSTON ABOUT TO END ANDERSEN'S LONG WAIT FOR NBA

When David Andersen arrives in Turkey with Australia next summer for the 2010 FIBA World Championship, he will do so as an NBA player. One of the best players in European basketball who this season helped Barcelona capture the ACB crown, the 29-year-old Andersen is set for a move to the Houston Rockets after the Western Conference club acquired his rights from the Atlanta Hawks.

"I've spoken with the coach and the general manager (Daryl Morey) and they're all excited about me coming in and this is why the main deal was done, so things are going ahead and they're just sorting out the particulars of the contract," Andersen said to Basketball Australia. "I should get something signed and sealed soon in the next few days." Andersen will be giving up a lot to leave Europe, and especially the beautiful city of Barcelona. He says it's worth it. "I've had a great time in Europe and played with some of the best clubs around there, so it's been really good, and now I'm going to try to take on the challenge of playing in the NBA."

BASSUL CONSIDERS ROAD TO CZECH REPUBLIC AFTER DRAW

Brazil coach Paulo Bassul is optimistic his

team will play well enough this summer to qualify for the 2010 FIBA World Championship for Women in the Czech Republic. Bassul discovered that his side will face Canada, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic in Group A of the FIBA Americas Championship for Women after the draw was held.

That competition will be held in Cuiabá, Brazil, from September 23-27, and Brazil will need a top-three finish to earn a trip to the Czech Republic next summer.

"Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic have players that play in the NCAA," Bassul said.

"They are teams with plenty of influence of American basketball and are generally well founded.

Canada is a team with tradition, which always has tough games with Brazil.

We'll have to wait and see if they are able to have center (Tammy) Sutton-Brown, who is with the Indiana Fever (WNBA) and is an excellent reinforcement in the squad."

Here are the complete results of the draw:

Group A: Brazil, Canada, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic.

Group B: Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Venezuela.

"Our first goal is for the World Championship qualification. Then, we go to the second goal, which is the title of the competition," said Bassul.

The United States, as Olympic gold medalists, and the Czech Republic, as host, qualified automatically for the FIBA World Championship for Women that will be played from 23 September to 3 October 2010.



ALEX NWORA REPLACES LAZARE ADINGONO

Mr. Alex Nwora has been appointed on Saturday 04th July 2009 as Cape Verde's national coach. He replaces Mr. Lazare Adingono, who is unavailable. The newly appointed head coach met his players who are camping in Praia (Cape Verde).

Mr. Alex Nwora will have to lead the Cape Verde's team to another podium's spot at the Afrobasket 2009 as the team grabbed the Bronze medal at the Afrobasket 2007 played in Angola. Ahead the 25th FIBA Africa Nations Championship for men, the team will have two camps in Praia. Cape Verde's team will jet out to the FIBA Africa Championship in Libya on 2nd August 2009. Cape Verde as head of Group D will fight against Rwanda, Morocco and Tunisia in the preliminary round of Afrobasket 2009.

COACH K TO RETAIN TEAM USA REINS FOR 2010

The Boston Globe has claimed "two sources close to the situation" have confirmed that coach Krzyzewski announced that he will lead the team next year in Turkey and at the London 2012 Olympics.

Mike Krzyzewski guided the United States to the top of the podium at the Olympics last summer in Beijing and is now ready to lead the team in its quest for a gold medal at the 2010 FIBA World Championship. Krzyzewski took the helm before the 2006 FIBA World Championship and guided the Americans to a bronze medal, with the only setback coming in a 101-95 defeat to Greece in the Semi-Finals.

The USA responded with back-to-back title-winning summers at the 2007 FIBA Americas Championship and at last year's



Beijing Games. The announcement that Krzyzewski is to remain in charge was made at a press conference before the start of the USA Basketball mini-camp that was run from July 22-25 in Las Vegas. At the camp, young NBA stars auditioned for places in the national team.

TURKEY 2010: KAYSERI CONFIRMED AS FOURTH VENUE

The Local Organizing Committee of the 2010 FIBA World Championship and FIBA have jointly announced that the city of Kayseri has been confirmed as the fourth venue to host the world's most important basketball event in 2010. Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir will host the other preliminary round groups of 6 teams each.

Kayseri will replace the city of Antalya, as it failed to guarantee the construction of a new arena within the given deadline. The 2010 FIBA World Championship will be played from 28th August to 12th September 2010. Turgay Demirel, President of the Turkish Basketball Federation, stated: "We believe that Kayseri will be an excellent venue as it offers excellent facilities such as a brand new arena, an international airport and several five-star hotels.

We have tried everything possible, in cooperation with the municipality of Antalya and the government of Turkey, to find a solution. However, we now have decided in favour of Kayseri, a city committed to promote

sports and in particular basketball. We believe that this will help grow our sport in a new and emerging market in Turkey."

The decision was backed by FIBA. FIBA Secretary General Patrick Baumann notes that, "the FIBA Central Board decided that, should there not be a fully approved and signed contract with regards to the construction works of the Antalya Arena by 15th July 2009, the venue would be moved to the city of Kayseri.

According to the report by the independent audit company, BG-Algoe, the construction progress of the Antalya Arena would create a major risk. We are confident that Kayseri will fulfil all requirements for such a high-profile event. The decision will give adequate time to the organisers to get the things done in terms of sponsorships, ticket sales, accommodation and transportation."

A World Class Facility to Host The Finals

In the meanwhile, the Istanbul Olympic Dome that will host the Final Round, is being completed by the Turkish Basketball Association in collaboration with the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. The venue, which is being prepared to host an audience of 15,500 spectators, is expected to come into service in the first quarter of 2010. Renovation works include construction of 22 suites, each with different speci-



fications, a VIP stand with a capacity of 2,000 seats, catering halls, lobbies and exhibition halls that will be serving simultaneously. In addition, a press stand hosting 750 journalists and equipped with closed circuit TV broadcast systems, statistics systems and wireless broadband internet connection, will be made available for the journalists.

Also, the complex will have an office that could serve 500 journalists and a meeting-conference hall hosting 300 journalists. While the technical infrastructure of the facility is designed to provide a comfortable environment for supporters and journalists, it is also being rebuilt to maximize the viewers' pleasure.

The Olympic Dome, equipped to host high profile shows and exhibitions, will be furnished with four LED screens and instant lighting systems. Renovation is being per-

formed taking into consideration the optimum conditions that would allow athletes to work out in a comfortable environment. Furthermore, the facility will have six locker rooms complying with the recent standards, a modern fitness facility, an anti-doping control center and all other necessary facilities.

USA WINS FIBA U19 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

The ninth FIBA U19 World Championship have been run and won, and the USA have claimed the gold medal for the first time since 1991. The US faced a tough battle in the gold medal game, but survived a second half comeback from Greece to record an 88-80 victory, after leading 46-30 at half time.

It is the USA's fourth triumph at the FIBA U19 World Championship, while for Greece, their silver medal joins the gold they won in 1995 in Athens, and the bronze they secured in Thessaloniki in 2003.

The USA and Greece were joined on the podium by bronze medallist Croatia. Tournament MVP Mario Delas scored 24 of his 28 points after half time as his team held off a desperate Australia, 87-81.

Argentina celebrated claiming 5th place enthusiastically with their supporters, after extending an 11-point half time lead to defeat Puerto Rico, 92-70

In the final day's first game, Canada proved too good for France, taking 7th position with a 82-74 win.

So the 2009 FIBA U19 World Championship in Auckland, New Zealand has come to an end, with the USA, Greece and USA the medallists. As a confederation, the Americas were the big winners with four teams in the top 7.



The tournament returns in 2011, and if it has the drama, skill, speed and athleticism of this championship, basketball fans are once again in for a treat.

Final Standings:

Rank	Country	GP	W-L
1.	USA	9	9 - 0
2.	Greece	9	6 - 3
3.	Croatia	9	7 - 2
4.	Australia	9	7 - 2
5.	Argentina	9	5 - 4
6.	Puerto Rico	9	5 - 4
7.	Canada	9	4 - 5
8.	France	9	3 - 6
9.	Lithuania	8	5 - 3
10.	Spain	8	4 - 4
11.	Egypt	8	2 - 6
12.	Kazakhstan	8	1 - 7
13.	New Zealand	5	2 - 3
14.	Angola	5	1 - 4
15.	Iran	5	1 - 4
16.	Syria	5	0 - 5

MEDITERRANEAN GOLD FOR CROATIA AFTER WIN OVER GREECE

Croatia captured the Mediterranean Games gold medal with an 82-70 triumph over Greece in Pescara. Josip Vrankovic's team sealed the triumph by outscoring the Greeks 16-9 in the final quarter.

Damir Rancic drilled five three-balls and finished with 20 points for the winners, who also got 13 points and 11 rebounds from Ante Tomic. Both Rancic and Tomic are in Croatia's preliminary squad for the EuroBasket.

Dimitrios Mavroeidis led a balanced Greece attack with 15 points.

In the bronze-medal game, Turkey stormed to a big early lead and thumped Italy 88-71. Alaeddin Yakan's side had a 32-17 advantage by the end of the first quarter and extended that to 52-27 by half-time. There was no way back for the Italians, who ended the tournament they hosted in dismal fashion.

Engin Atsur, one of the Turks' standout performers at the 2006 FIBA World Championship in Japan when they reached the Quarter-Finals, poured in a game-high 25 points with Hakan Demirel contributing 20. Atsur was three of five from long range while as a team, Turkey were nine of 16. Turkey had beaten Italy in triple overtime earlier in the competition.

CHINA BEATS AUSTRALIA TWICE

China swept Australia 2-0 in a couple of friendly games this week as they stepped up their preparations for the FIBA Asia Championship.

The Chinese, who need to finish in the top



three of the Asia Championship (August 6-16) they are hosting in Tianjin City to qualify for the 2010 FIBA World Championship in Turkey, beat the Australians 84-78 and 74-61.

New head coach Guo Shiqiang of China was buzzing after the second victory. "It's a win of defense," said coach Guo. "We knew them better after the first game and played much better defense, especially in the first half."

Without centers Yao Ming and Yi Jianlian, Liaoning youngster Li Xiaoxu is getting a chance to play and he's making the most of the opportunity. Li had nine points and four rebounds in the first win, 13 and nine in the second.

LIBYA 2009 AFROBASKET

Host nation Libya have been drawn in Group A of the Afrobasket with powerhouses Nigeria. Libya, the seeded team in the group as hosts, also face the stiff challenge of Ivory Coast and South Africa in the same group.

In the draw that took place in Sabratha, Libya, Kevin Mckenberry's team discovered they will open their tournament against South Africa on August 5 in Benghazi while Nigeria will slug it out with two-time champions Ivory Coast in a repeat of the FIBA Africa Zone-3 qualifiers.

The Nigerians, who played at the 2006 FIBA World Championship, are led by former NBA star and coach, John Lucas.

The top three teams in each group will qualify for the second round.

In Group B, Egypt, Mali and Mozambique will have their hands full when they go up against defending champions Angola, nine-time winners of the Afrobasket. The Angolans, Africa's representatives at the last



two Olympics, made a loud entrance to international basketball with a second-place finish in Egypt 26 years ago.

Egypt will attempt to roll back the years to the early sixties when they used to be one of the leading sides in Africa. Mali's men will hope to steal some of the headlines of the women's team, which won the African title last time out and played at the Olympics.

In Group C are Cameroon – the silver medalists two years ago who impressed at last year's FIBA Olympic Qualifying Tournament in Athens. They are in the same pool with five-time winners Senegal, Congo and Central Africa Republic.

In Group D are Morocco, Tunisia, Rwanda and last the surprise bronze-medal winners last time out, Cape Verde.

GASOL CONFIRMS HE WILL PLAY AT EUROBASKET

A basketball nation breathed a sigh of relief on Friday afternoon when Spanish basketball great Pau Gasol announced he will play for the national team at the EuroBasket in September.



Following talks with his NBA club, the Los Angeles Lakers, the FEB and new coach Sergio Scariolo, Gasol told everyone who had assembled in Alicante what they wanted to hear. "We needed to have talks with the FEB, and after talking to Jose Luis (Saez) and tying down certain issues, motivated by my desire and everyone else's to achieve the medal that we still need to get, I will play at the EuroBasket," Gasol said. "I think we have the mentality to be champions and play with that pressure. And that is good. The season has gone very well for me and I want to defend our country."

Gasol, the MVP of the 2006 FIBA World Championship, turns 29 this week. He captured his first NBA title last month as a member of a very talented Lakers squad. Spain will need to finish in the top six at the EuroBasket to reach the 2010 FIBA World Championship in Turkey (the top seven if Turkey are a top-six side). The aim is to win gold, though.

Friday's occasion was made even important by the presence of Spain's Secretary of Sport, Jaime Lissavetzky, who sat beside Gasol while he made his announcement. Lissavetzky played an important role for Spain's successful bid to host the 2014 FIBA World Championship back in May.



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CHENNAI TO HOST FIBA ASIA CHAMPIONSHIP FOR WOMEN

The FIBA Asia Executive Committee decided to award the hosting of the 23rd FIBA Asia Championship for Women to Chennai, the Southern coastal city in India. The Championship will be played from Sept 17-24, 2009.

It may be recalled the Championship was originally scheduled to be played in Chinese Taipei from June 21-28, before CTBA expressed their inability to host the Championship. The 23rd FIBA Asia Championship for Women will feature 12 teams - divided into two levels. The top three teams from Level I of the Championship will book their berth to the 2010 FIBA World Championship for Women scheduled to be held in Czech Republic from Sept 23 to Oct 3, 2010.

This will be the first time India will host the FIBA Asia Championship for Women. "Naturally, we are all excited about hosting the event," said Harish Sharma, Secretary General of the Basketball Federation of India.

"The Indian women's team has shown some notable progress in the last couple of years, including entering the elite Level I in the last tournament in Incheon in 2007. We hope they show an even more improved performance at home," he added.

BOB ELPHINSTON ELECTED AS 2010-2014 PRESIDENT FOR FIBA OCEANIA

FIBA Oceania has announced today that current FIBA President Bob Elphinston was unanimously elected as FIBA Oceania President for the 2010-2014 term of office. The election took place in Saipan at the FIBA Oceania Congress in the presence of Mr. Elphinston and FIBA Secretary General and IOC member Patrick Baumann. Elphinston will replace in 2010 the current President and FIBA Central Board member



Barbara Wheadon from New Zealand.

As a consequence of this election, Bob Elphinston will also remain a member of the FIBA Central Board for the period 2010-2014. He had already served one term as President of FIBA Oceania in the period 2002-2006 before he took over the FIBA Presidency for the 2006 - 2010 term of office.

John Maddock from Australia, John Gallaher from New Zealand, Bill Keldermans from Palau, Michael White from the Northern Mariana Islands and Robert Vautrin from New Caledonia have also been reappointed unopposed to the FIBA Oceania Management Committee for 2010-2014.

YAO'S BROKEN FOOT NOT HEALING SO FAR

The hairline fracture in China national team center Yao Ming's left foot has not healed yet, the Houston Rockets have revealed. The club says there is no timetable to return for Yao.

Yao felt pain in the foot during a May 8 play-off defeat to the Los Angeles Lakers and x-rays showed shortly after that he had a broken foot. Doctors decided the best course of treatment at the time was for Yao to stop all physical training and to use a walking boot to immobilize the foot and promote healing. "Yao is not experiencing any pain in his left foot, however, the results from the CT and bone scans we per-



formed over the past two days, indicate that the hairline fracture has not responded to the degree that we expected," said Houston's team physician, Dr Tom Clanton. "We will review a variety of treatment options before proceeding."

Yao, who is back home in China, is remaining positive. "I think I've been in harder situations before, much harder than this one," he said. "I believe that I can get through this one, too."

Yao will not play for China this summer when they host the FIBA Asia Championship. The national team is hoping he will be fully fit next summer to play at the 2010 FIBA World Championship in Turkey, if the country qualifies for the event.

TURKOGLU TOPS OF THE LIST FOR TURKEY

Hedo Turkoglu, who recently signed with the Toronto Raptors, enjoyed his finest season in the NBA this year with the Orlando Magic, helping them make it all the way to the Finals.

Now the 30-year-old has turned his attention to Turkey's national team, with the star forward among the 17 players named in Bogdan Tanjevic's preliminary squad for the EuroBasket - Europe's qualifying tournament for the 2010 FIBA World Championship. As next year's big event will be staged in Turkey, Turkoglu and Co. already have a spot in the tournament as hosts.

They will therefore use the EuroBasket in Poland as a warm-up for 2010 and no doubt go for a medal to build some momentum.

Former NBA champion Mehmet Okur, who plays for the Utah Jazz and represented Turkey two years ago at the EuroBasket in Spain, has not been included in the summer's squad.



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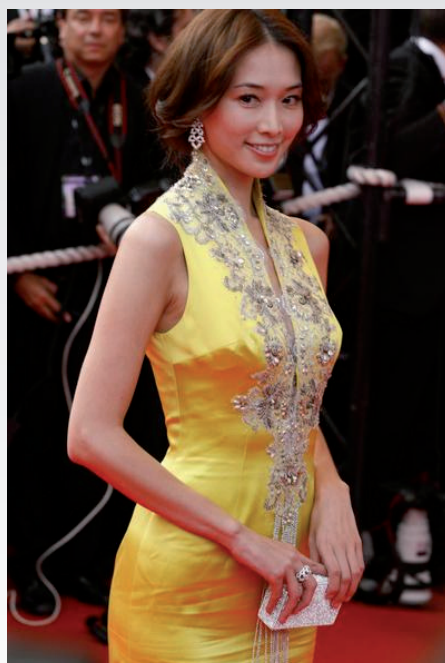
OPALS GATHER AS BATKOVIC TIES THE KNOT

Suzy Batkovic has shared some of the happiest moments in her life wearing an Australia uniform, so it's no surprise that a few Aussie teammates showed up at her wedding. Lauren Jackson and 2006 FIBA World Championship MVP Penny Taylor, along with former Opal Trisha Fallon, were maids of honor as Batkovic married Matt Brown in Cronulla, New South Wales. Now going by the name of Suzy Batkovic-Brown, the Australia center who played professionally in Italy this year has other aims. She wants to have a baby, and to play for the Opals at the London Olympics in 2012. "As for having someone to babysit while I'm playing, that's why you get married - to have a husband to look after the kids," she said in the Daily Telegraph. "I warned him before we married."

YAO LENDS VOICE TO CARTOON FILM

The deep voice of China's 7ft 6in national team center Yao Ming is heard in the Chinese-language cartoon film the Magic Aster that was released on June 19. Yao, who will play a leading role for China if they qualify for the 2010 FIBA World Championship in Turkey, has donated income received from the film to the Shanghai

Special-Care Foundation. "It's a cartoon of many Chinese culture aspects," the 7ft 6in Yao said in a Xinhuanet story. "It reminded me of the good memory of the old China-made cartoons like Brothers Cucurbit and Making Havoc in Heaven." Yao, who held a press conference, poked fun at himself when discussing his part in the movie. "I hope the audiences recognize my voice in the, though my voice is not beautiful," he said. Yao admitted after four hours of dubbing in Beijing that he needed a glass of water. "I'm dying of thirst," he said. "I feel like I've spoken for an entire day. And you must do the dubbing with lots of emotion." Taiwan supermodel-actress Lin Chi-ling



and Hong Kong actor-singer Leon Lai are also in the movie. Yao is no stranger to the studio. He once played himself in an episode of the Simpsons.

CURIOSITIES: DID YOU KNOW?

- ▼ In 1894 Dr. Nai-smith, the inventor of the game, asked A.G. Spalding & Bros. to develop the first basketball. Before that, the sport of basketball was played with a soccer ball.
- ▼ Carl Lewis, the 10-time Olympic medalist considered by many as the greatest athlete of all time was drafted by the Chicago Bulls in the 1984 Draft with the 208th overall pick. Of course Lewis never put on the Bulls uniform, other way he would have ended up on the same roster with Jordan, Chicago's first pick that year.
- ▼ Michael Jordan was drafted third in the 1984 Draft. Houston used their number one pick to select Hakeem Olajuwon and won two championships with him. Portland had the second pick and selected... Sam Bowie.
- ▼ Kobe Bryant was selected 14 by the Hornets and then traded him to the Lakers. Manu Ginobili was selected 57th, and Ben Wallace didn't even make the draft and signed as a free agent.
- ▼ Larry Brown broke a record in 2005-06. No, his 23 victories weren't the worst in Knicks history, but he used an NBA record 42 different starting line-ups. He started 16 different players and 29 of those lineups were used only once. And you were wondering why his players weren't happy with him.

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too, for superior ball control. And Molten Full-Flat Seams help players achieve a consistent, smooth backspin to boost shooting accuracy.

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