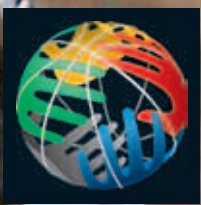




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FIBA ASSIST MAGAZINE FOR BASKETBALL ENTHUSIASTS EVERYWHERE MAY / JUNE 2007



FIBA

We Are Basketball



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ARGENTINA'S OFFENSIVE
SYSTEM

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We Are Basketball



by Ryan Kruger

THE PICK-AND-ROLL: ALL OF THE SOLUTIONS

Ryan Krueger has been the assistant coach of Virginia Commonwealth for a year and of Maine Central Institute for two seasons. For four years he has worked with the New Jersey Nets, at first as a video coordinator and, beginning last season, as assistant coach. He has written two books, "Yellow Brick Basketball Drills", whose proceeds go toward the social campaign "Coaches vs. Cancer". He has also been an instructor at Five-Star Camp.

PICK-AND-ROLL PHILOSOPHY

Guard Notes

The guard must set up his defender. If he wants to use the screen and get to the middle, then his setup is to fake to the baseline, the opposite if he wants to go to the baseline.

With the dribble I like to teach the inside-out move to get the defender leaning away from the screen. Now, with him off balance, I like teaching a quick crossover dribble to run the defender right into the screener in the direction he wants to attack. I want my players coming off "clean" in every pick-and-roll.

If a player is coming off "dirty" (where his defender is able to stay attached to him), the ball handler is now forced to attack two defenders (his defender and the screener's defender, since he was never screened), instead of one.

If the ball handler has not used his dribble, I teach two ways to set up his defender without a dribble. If the defender is crowding him, taking away his airspace, I teach the "step across." This move backs the defender off him, so he has space to manoeuvre and also get him leaning away from the screen. If the defender is giving him space, I teach a quick "rip-thru" away from the screen, a violent ball and foot fake away from the screen.

The ball handler must always come off shoulder to shoulder with the screener, as not to allow his defender any room to fight over the top of the screen.

Waiting for the screener to be set is vital. If he does not, he will get the screener called for an illegal screen. The ball handler should be setting his defender away from the screen (with an in-out dribble, a step across or rip-thru), exactly as the screener's feet are hitting the ground to set the screen. This insures that the big man is not moving when the guard comes off and that the big man will be able to set the best possible screen for the guard.

He must "turn the corner" like he is running downhill, picking up speed and cannot be stopped. He must run off the screen in attack mode!!! All he is thinking is attacking that big man, getting into the paint by either splitting the pick-and-roll or getting around the screener's defender outside shoulder.

When he comes off the screen, the ball handler must drive it at least two dribbles. He "bails out" the defense, if he takes one bounce and picks up his dribble. Even if the defense is "blitzing" him (trapping), he must "stretch" the defense by taking a minimum of two dribbles, and dragging the screener's defender as far as possible, so the distance he must recover is greater.

"Bingo" is a term I use to describe the ball handler beating his defender away from the screen.

I do not like backing his defender down to get into a pick-and-roll. Backing down a defender takes away the ball handler ability to quickly "bingo" the pick. To do so, he must spin away from the screen, which, in my opinion, is too slow. To

"bingo" a pick I want a crossover (or thru the legs) dribble, because it's the quickest change of direction move.

The first look in the pick-and-roll is always the ball handler. I want him to scoring or making a play 80% of the time. In any pick-and-roll the ball handler's first thought is "attack the big man". His options are always drive first, shoot second, and pass third. If you do not want the ball handler to shoot it, you should not be running the pick-and-roll with him. The ideal situation is to get the ball handler penetrating to the rim out of any pick-and-roll.

Pick-and-rolls "create offense". The ball handler must come off the pick-and-roll to score. He must go hard to the rim, with the chest facing the basket, as opposed to the sideline: he must go north-south, not east-west. If the ball handler has confidence in his reads, he can overcome a lack of quickness.

Big Men Notes

The key of a great pick-and-roll starts with how the big man sets his screen. I am a huge believer in drilling "screening angles" into the heads of our big men. If the center or the big forward "telegraphs" his route and saunters into it as a snail's pace, it makes the defense's coverage very easy. What is hard to guard is when the big man sprints into the screen and puts separation between himself and his defender. It's hard to give an aggressive "show" at the level of the screen, when you are trailing the play and cannot get there in time!

What is also hard to guard is when a defender does not know on which side of the pick to give his "show". The guard must help the situation by keeping the ball in the center of the floor. If he



declares a side, it's to the benefit of the defense, because now it is easy to know which side to give a "show". "Telegraphing" the screen is when everyone in the building knows which hand the defender is bringing the ball handler to. I like the big man starting with his head under the rim and coming up through the lane. Now no one knows which side the big man is going to set the screen. We call this "changing the angle late". The big man must run into the screen and set it with his back anywhere between the "flat to the baseline" and, at the very worst, "back to the corner". Setting the screen with his chest to the sideline, just make to easy to go under. I care less about "laying wood" on the ball handler's defender, than I do

make sure he goes over the screen, if the ball handler's defender has to go over the screen, he is no longer guarding our ball handler. That means that, for a short period of time, we have created a situation where our guard can play one-on-one with their screener's defender.

I want constantly put the defensive center or power forward in positions where they are unable to get a "show". It is much easier to attack a big man, who is "loose," than it is to turn the corner versus a hard show.

It is unacceptable for teams to go under your pick-and-roll. The job of your screener is to set the screen at such

angle as to force the ball handler's defender to go over the top. It is to the defense's advantage to go under and let you shoot a jump shot. They have kept you out of lane, kept you from getting the shot at the rim, and kept you from "sucking in" their perimeter defenders (which creates wide open spot up of the small forwards), all because we allowed them to go under. Pick-and-rolls should be great "attack" situations for your aggressive/athletic ball handlers (hopefully you have some!).

With flat angle high pick-and-rolls, we want to set a screen outside of the three-point line, because it gives the ball handler more room to manoeuvre and more space to get "a head of steam" and

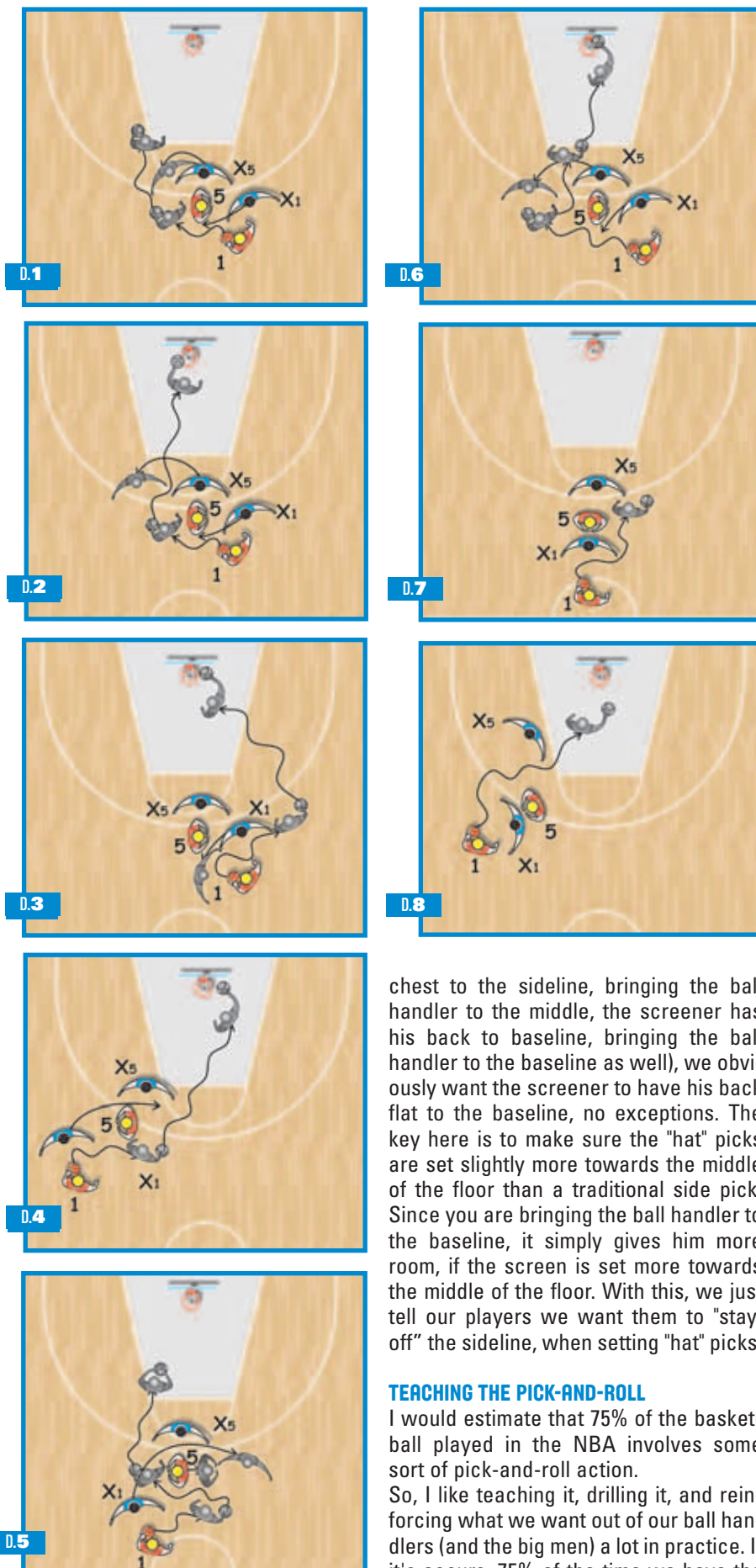
be in a dead sprint coming off the pick, as opposed to starting from a stationary position.

On traditional angle high pick-and-rolls, the big man should set the screen with his foot touching the three-point line. It's the guard's job to run his defender off the screen, not the big men's job to adjust to the guard. Whenever possible, I would prefer to set a flat angle pick-and-roll, as opposed to a traditional angle, because it causes a great deal of confusion for the defense, and consequently, much harder to defend.

A very tough situation to get a "show" on is when the big man starts on the right block, sprints up through the right elbow, and then changes the angle of the pick at the last minute, bringing the ball handler to his left hand. It makes very tough for your screener's defender to get a show, because they expect the pick to be set bringing the ball handler to his right hand. I call this coming up "thru the elbow" and setting a "banana screen."

On traditional side pick-and-rolls, I want my big men to be somewhere between setting the screen with their back to the corner and chest to the sideline (worst case scenario). This is easy when the big men start low (below the free-throw line), because of the path they take to set a screen. Where they run into a problem is in transition setting "drag" screens and when they are on the perimeter outside of the three-point line. When they run into a side pick-and-roll from the top of the key, their path ends up being a straight line to the ball, which means their back is to where half court and the sideline meet (the exact opposite angle of what we want!). In this situation, the angle the big man takes invites the under, which cannot happen. When the big man setting the pick-and-roll starts high, he cannot take a straight line path to the ball. He must take his path towards the rim and then veer out to set the screen at an acceptable angle. We tell our big men to "circle under the ball" in this situation. All this means is they must get even or below the ball, before they break off their route and go set the side pick-and-roll. Against the team that you know they will go over, chest to the sideline is ideal. When teams are going under against you, I teach setting the screen in the same spot, but adjusting the angle such that the center's back is facing more towards the opposite corner, as opposed to the sideline, forcing them over the top.

When setting a "hat" pick (a side pick, but instead of having the screener with his



chest to the sideline, bringing the ball handler to the middle, the screener has his back to baseline, bringing the ball handler to the baseline as well), we obviously want the screener to have his back flat to the baseline, no exceptions. The key here is to make sure the "hat" picks are set slightly more towards the middle of the floor than a traditional side pick. Since you are bringing the ball handler to the baseline, it simply gives him more room, if the screen is set more towards the middle of the floor. With this, we just tell our players we want them to "stay off" the sideline, when setting "hat" picks.

TEACHING THE PICK-AND-ROLL

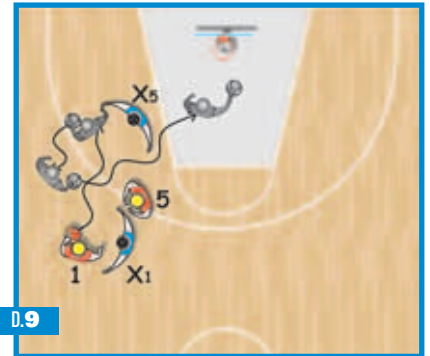
I would estimate that 75% of the basketball played in the NBA involves some sort of pick-and-roll action. So, I like teaching it, drilling it, and reinforcing what we want out of our ball handlers (and the big men) a lot in practice. If it's occurs, 75% of the time we have the ball, we should spend a lot of our practice time perfecting it! The most important



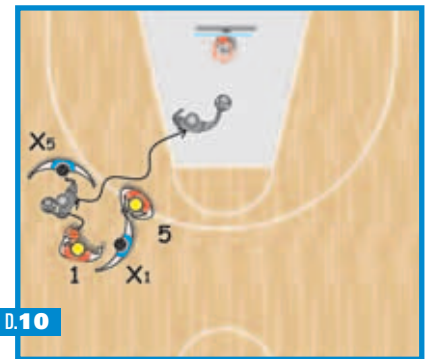
thing I want our guards to understand are our reads on how the defense is playing us. The pick-and-roll is very much a mental exercise. Many players are able to get away without having a great understanding of concepts, because of their amazing athletic ability. If you can combine that with a basic understanding of how you want to attack, as a result of how they are playing you, it

would be a scary combination.

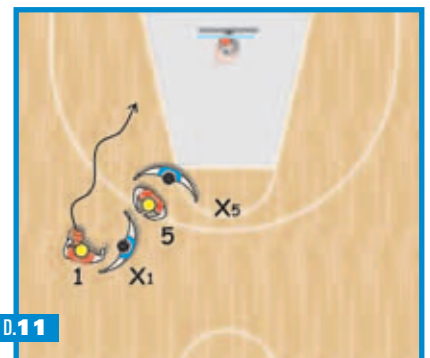
What happens though when we concentrate solely on our "reads" (how the defense is playing us) is that we lose track of the minor points of pick-and-roll. I remind our players of the "3 S's." Stay "square" (staying square as opposed to backing our defending down), "setups" (fake one way to come off another), and



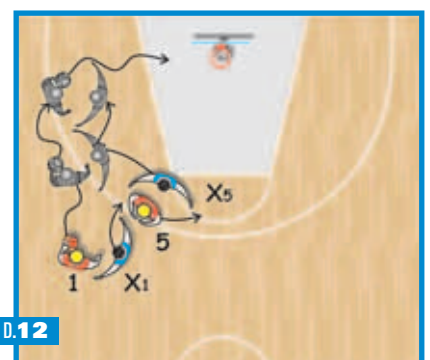
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"shoulders" (come off shoulder to shoulder with the screener). I spend most of my time reinforcing the reads, but I cannot allow the players to slack on these 3 "S's," especially the setups. They more often than anything else determine whether or not our guards are coming off "clean" or "dirty."

I have found that a routine works best when working on our pick-and rolls. For example, when working on side pick-and-roll reads, we go through the same reads



in the same order, with the same verbal commands each day. Our first read is versus "short show." When I say "short show", our players immediately understand that they must attack the big man, turn hard the corner with two dribbles, and get to the elbow of the free-throw area for a pull up jumper. I do not take time to explain every read. The first few weeks I do, because that is our time to implement our entire pick-and-roll philosophy. But, once they know what we want to get done, the commands become shorter, so that we can get more work done with less talk. Because we do the same reads in the same order everyday, it becomes a habit. I will reinforce having "good setups" or certain key points, but I keep the verbal commands to a minimum and I keep them consistent. Same reads, same order, same terminology every day. The simple commands I give to the players are in quotes. All I say is what's in the parentheses and they know what to do. I believe there must be defense in the drill. It is not enough to come off a coach, who is setting a screen and just to know that a defender hard showed, or went under. They have to see and feel it. We will have normally one coach involved in the drill or two coaches on the "red" situation on the high pick-and-roll. The following is the order of the reads we work.

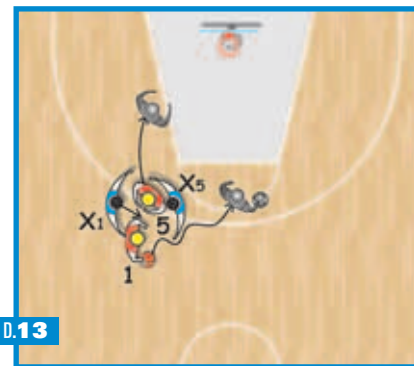
READS ON THE HIGH PICK-AND-ROLL

1. **"Soft Show."** When the ball handler sees that the screener's defender makes a soft show (when he makes a short and not aggressive step out) and his defender goes over the screen, this means that the screener's defender must totally contain him with his show. He must attack his shoulder, like a "snowball rolling out a mountain," with a minimum of two dribbles (diagr. 1).
2. **"Hard Show (and Over)."** To contain the ball handler, the big man's defender must show hard and lose contact with the screener. Any time the dribbler sees a "daylight, he takes it," looking to split the screen. The ability to consistently split the pick-and-rolls separates good from great pick-and-roll players. The ball handler throws the ball out in front of him and through the open space, and explodes through the tiny space to get a shot in the lane (diagr. 2).
3. **"Red-Quick Change."** When the two defenders show hard early, almost trapping (we call "red") the ball handler, as he gets at the level of the screen (the screener's defender is showing out hard and the ball handler's defender is running over the top of the screen), can make a quick

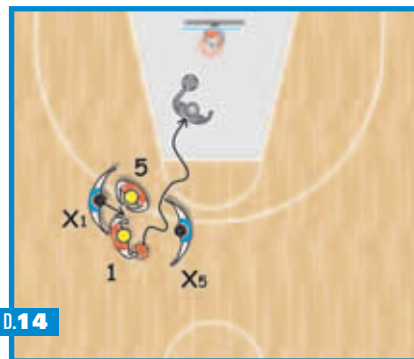
change of direction and a spin dribble to go away from the show, and drives to the rim. The ball handler's defender will have a hard time stopping his momentum, changing direction, and containing the dribble.

4. **"Bingo."** When the ball handler's defender finds out that the screen is coming, he tries to force the dribbler to the screen. When he does this, he becomes vulnerable to the "Bingo", it means to be beaten away from the screen. The ball handler sets up his defender, as he was going to use the screen, and get to the middle, then he beats him to the baseline. The one caveat with going "bingo" is that if he does so, he must be able to get his own good shot, because there are very few other options as a result of his spacing (diagr. 3).
5. **"Under-Footrace."** Whether the screener's defender shows or not, if the ball handler's defender goes under the screen, he will be unable to gather and contain the ball handler on the other side of the screen. So, if the ball handler attacks hard the rim, there is nothing his defender can do to stop him. He can try to contain him on the other side of the screen, but he will not be able to get back in front of him and control his penetration. It is a footrace to the rim. The ball handler must attack the rim with the maximum intensity, with no more than two dribbles (diagr. 4). A stop and shot behind the screen is always an option in this type of action, but we only mention this option to our players, without using it in the drills, because we want them to attack the rim.
6. **"Under-Rescreen."** The screener's defender shows out and the ball handler's defender goes under the screen. In this case, the ball handler takes one hard dribble, coming off the screen, and automatically the screener rescreens the ball handler's defender, who went under the screen. The ball handler makes a cross-over dribble back to the outside. The screener's defender will not be in a position to show, and the ball handler will be able to turn the corner and drive to the basket (diagr. 5).
7. **"Under-Change Direction."** The defensive situation is the same of "show and under". The ball handler uses the screen, but, as soon as he comes off, he quickly changes the direction. He must attack his defender, who is either loose or on his heels.
8. **"Loose & Over-Attack the Big."** The defense must pay the choice to guard,

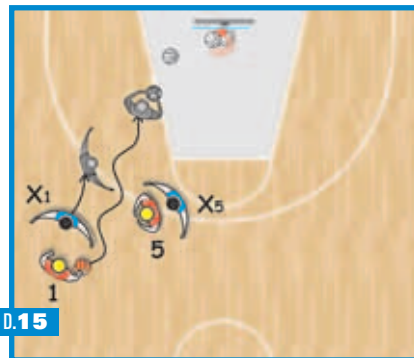
- even for a short period of time, the guard with a big man. The ball handler drives the ball hard at the outside shoulder of the screener's defender, getting him to slide, and then he spins back to the middle of the lane for a lay up (diagr. 6).
9. **"Flat Angle."** The screen must be set as high as possible, out of the three-point line, to give the ball handler more room to move with the ball. The dribbler must be in a straight line with the screener, because if he is off to one side of the court, the screener's defender can show out and help on that side. The dribbler must force his defender to lean on one side, and then make a cross-over dribble to change the side and attack the basket. Even if the defender tries to force the ball handler on one side (we call this defensive strategy "blue"), he will move on to that side, then spinning back off the pick (diagr. 7).
10. **"Blue-In & Out."** When the defender tries to force the ball handler to a certain side of the court (usually on the weak hand of the dribbler), often times the screener's defender is loose, far from the dribbler. The dribbler will fake a drive between the two defenders, and then he will go to the middle with a hard in-and-out dribble, attacking the outside shoulder of the screener's defender and turning the corner, because the dribbler's defender will not be able to defend or contain the dribble (diagr. 8).
11. **"Blue-Split."** When the defenders tries to force the ball handler on a certain side of the court (usually on the weak hand of the dribbler), often times the screener's defender is loose. The ball handler must attack the outside shoulder of the screener's defender to get him leaning, then he makes a cross-over dribble back to the middle, split him and get to the rim. The ball handler's defender will not be in a stance to guard him or contain his drive to the basket (diagr. 9).
12. **"Blue-Spin, Still Get Middle."** If the defenders try to force the ball handler on a certain side of the court - with the screener's defender at the same height of the screen - then that means there is no help on the opposite direction. The ball handler makes one dribble going to the screener's defender and then makes a spin back dribble to the middle and get and over the top of the screen (diagr. 10).
13. **"Blue-Go Early."** Same defensive situation, but many times the ball handler's defender changes its stance too



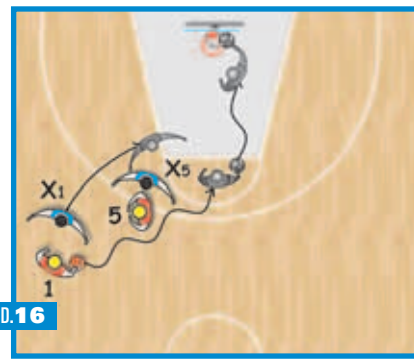
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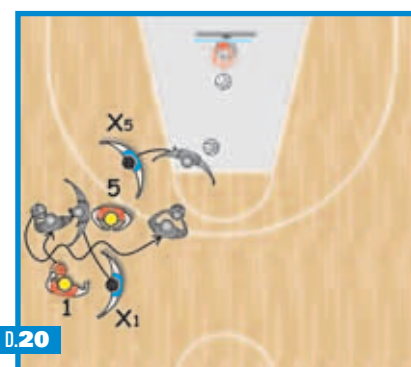
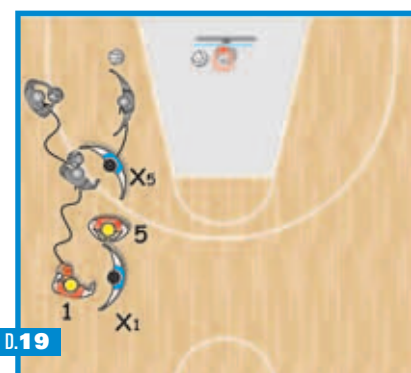
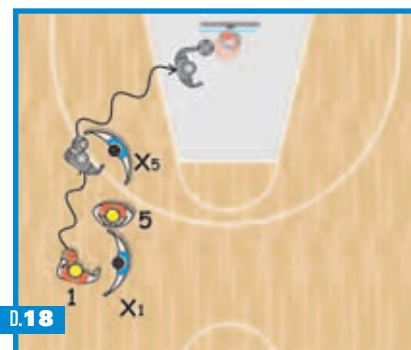
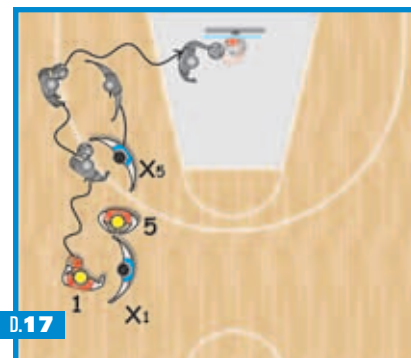
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- early, before the screener's defender is in position. The ball handler simply attacks the basket. His defender is not on the position to contain the dribble, and the ball handler will run past the screener defender, who will be going in the opposite direction (diagr. 11).
14. **"Switch."** Any time the defenders switch on the pick-and-roll, we want that the ball handler attacks the screener's defender off the dribble. We don't want to give the

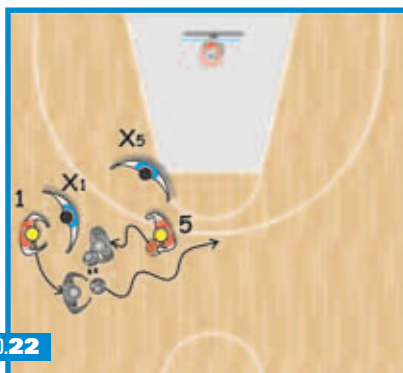
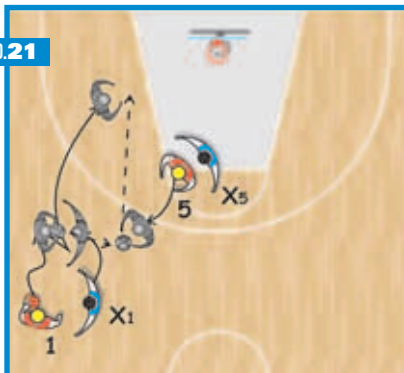
ball to the screener posting up a smaller defender down in a wrestling match. As the ball handler comes off the screen and there is a switch, the screener rolls into the post for creating space, while the ball handler takes his time, dribbles back outside the three-point line and then plays one-on-one with the screener's defender to finish with a lay-up, not with a jump shot (diagr. 12).

READS FOR THE SIDE PICK-AND-ROLL

1. **"Soft Show."** When the ball handler sees that the screener's defender makes a soft exit and his defender goes over the top of the screen, he must attack the outside shoulder of the screener's defender, like a "snowball rolling down a mountain" with a minimum of two hard dribbles (diagr. 13).
2. **"Hard Show."** To contain the ball handler the screener's defender shows out hard and loses contact with the screener. Anytime the dribbler "sees daylight, he takes it." He throws the ball out in front of him and through the open space and explodes through the tiny space to get a shot in the lane (diagr. 14).
3. **"Bingo."** Many times, when the dribbler's defender sees that the screen is coming, he tries to get into the ball handler and forces him into the pick. When it does this, he becomes himself vulnerable to the "Bingo." The ball handler sets up his defender as if he was going to use the screen and get to the middle, and then he beats him to the baseline. The one caveat with this solution is that the ball handler must be able to get his own good shot, because there are very few other options as a result of his spacing (diagr. 15).
4. **"Under-Footrace."** Whether the screener's defender shows or not, if the ball handler's defender goes under the screen, he will be unable to gather and contain the ball handler on the other side of the screen. So, if the ball handler attacks hard the rim, there is nothing his defender can do to stop him. He can try to contain him on the other side of the screen, but he will not be able to get back in front of him and control his penetration. It is a footrace to the rim. The ball handler must attack the rim with the maximum intensity, with no more than two dribbles. A stop and shot behind the screen is always an option in this type of action, but we only mention this option to our players, without using it in the drills, because we want them to attack the rim (diagr. 16).
5. **"Under-Change Direction."** Once the ball handler reads the "show and under", he uses the screen, but, as he comes off, he quickly changes direction and attacks his defender, who is either loose or on his heels.
6. **"Blue-Crossover & Split."** If the screener sets a "hat" pick, a pick with his back to the baseline, the ball handler will attack the screener's defender, creating a one-on-one situation. He will attack his outside shoulder, getting him leaning or sliding to the baseline, and then he will crossover/quick spin back to the middle and get to the rim, because the screener's defender cannot slide with him. (diagr. 17).
7. **"Blue- In & Out to the Outside."** Same "hat" pick. The ball handler will attack the screener's defender outside shoulder, with an in-and-out dribble, drives to the baseline and shots in the lane (diagr. 18).
8. **"Blue-Pocket Jumper."** Same "hat" pick. The ball handler takes one/two hard dribbles right at the screener's defender, and finds that pocket of space, where he can get a jump shot (diagr. 19).
9. **"Blue-Still Get Middle."** Even if the defense tries to force the ball handler to the baseline, it doesn't mean that he cannot try to drive to middle. Often the defender will allow a penetration in the middle. The ball handler dribbles to the baseline, and then spins back to the middle, attacking his defender on the outside shoulder (diagr. 20).
10. **"Blue, Pop, Backdoor."** On this option the ball handler can pass to the screener, who, after bringing the screen, has rolled out. When the ball handler sees that his defender comes out to guard him, but in a hard no middle stance, as soon as he passes the ball to the screener, he will make a quick back-door cut to receive the ball for a lay-up. His defender will be out of position to cover his cut (diagr. 21).
11. **"Blue, Pass & Follow Get."** The ball handler passes the ball to the screener who, after the screen, has rolled out. As the screener receives the ball, he will dribble at the guard to set a dribble screen on the ball handler's defender. The ball handler will drive and turn the corner. There will be no help by the screener's defender, because he is down too far to give any help on the drive (diagr. 22).
12. **"Switch, Drive the Big."** Anytime the defenders switch, we want the ball handler attacks the screener's



defender and we don't want him to pass the ball to the screener in low-post. As the dribbler comes off the screen and the defense has switched, the screener must roll to the post for spacing (not for receiving the ball). The ball handler should take his time and back his dribble outside the three-point line, then go one-on-one against the screener's defender, going to the rim, not making a jump shot (diagr. 23).





by Sergio Hernandez

ARGENTINA'S OFFENSIVE SYSTEM

Sergio Hernandez coached the Argentinean National Basketball League clubs Deportivo Roca Rio Negro, Regatas San Nicolas, and Estudiantes Olivarria, where he won two titles, one FIBA Pan-American Championship, and one South American League for clubs. He then moved to Boca Juniors, winning one title and one South American Championship title for clubs. He was also selected Argentinean Coach of the Year three times. In 2005, he started to coach the men's national team, finishing in fourth place at the 2006 FIBA World Championships.

OVERALL OFFENSE

We tried to flow into offense very quickly every time. We were also able to slow the tempo, based on the situation on the court. Both guards were able to alternate moving the ball on offense, while the power forward or the center were in charge of inbounding the ball.

The big man, who was not the inbounder, sprinted down the middle of the floor to take position close to the basket. The inbounder trailed behind his other four teammates.

We showed a very good transition from

the full court to the half court offense. The guard without the ball and the small forward sprinted the floor wide and deep on the outside lanes, looking to get ahead of the defense. We were able to get the offense flowing into offensive transition with the aim of playing a "high-low game" between 4 and 5. Getting the ball inside was a priority.

On-ball screens (pick-and-roll) were used in full court transition and the trailer 5 screened down for the wings, who often changed sides in "crossing" cuts. We often started the half-court offense with a high-low post set, or "horns" set.

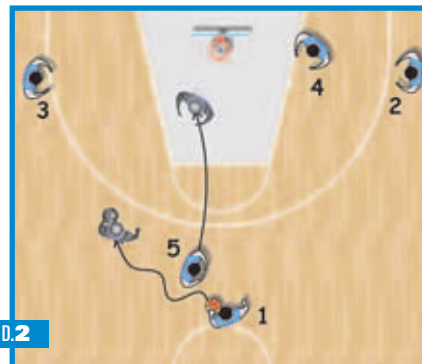
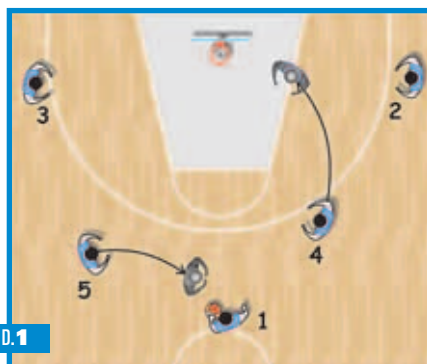
I will now describe some of the various plays designed to meet the specific roles for our players.

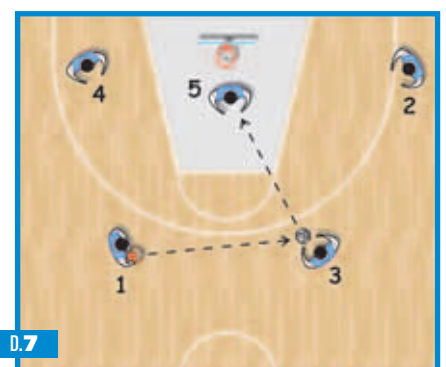
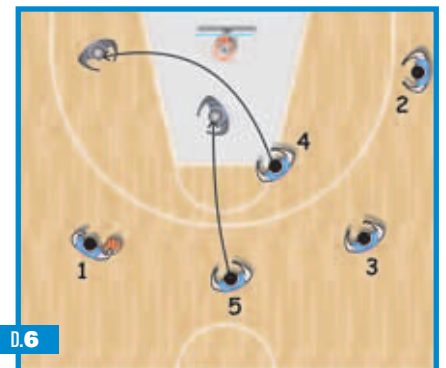
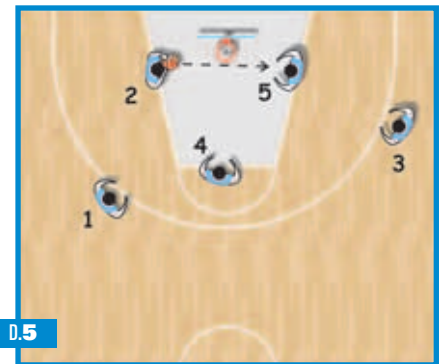
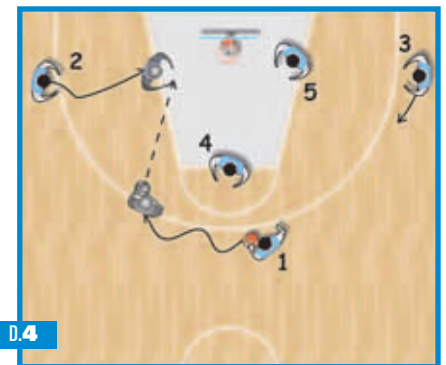
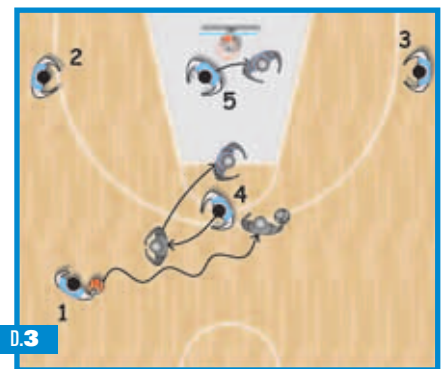
THE PLAYERS

GUARDS

All guards were excellent ballhandlers. Their main attacking moves were the hesitation, crossover, and change-of-pace dribble.

Each player could shoot well from the perimeter and were able to effectively





use the dribble penetration to get to the basket. Their ability to pass off the dribble was outstanding.

They were also very good at taking, and making, a "pull-up" jump shot, as well as driving hard to the basket and finishing it off "in traffic" with a layup. In short, they were excellent at reading the defense and knowing when to change the tempo of the play.

FORWARDS

The forwards were very athletic and ran the floor with great understanding of space and positioning. Each player passed the ball well in the half court and possessed an excellent ability to pass the ball to the open player, either inside or outside. The forwards had good range on their perimeter shots with the "catch and shoot" and pull-up jump shot. In addition, they had the skill, quickness, and strength to play inside and outside.

CENTERS

Outstanding rebounders under the offensive and defensive boards, our centers also had good medium-range jump shots and very effective moves inside. The jump hook was a favorite. In addition, they shot well from the low- and high-post position and passed well to teammates cutting to the basket from the perimeter.

TRANSITION OFFENSE

PLAYS FOR 5 OBERTO

5, Fabricio Oberto, the center, sets an on-ball screen for 1, while 4, the first trailer, cuts to the low-post position (diagr. 1). 1 dribbles off the 5's screen, who then rolls to the basket to receive the ball and shoot (diagr. 2).

If 5 is the first trailer and goes deep in the lane under the basket, 4 plays pick-and-roll on the ball for 1, and then 4 rolls to the free-throw area (diagr. 3). 1 dribbles toward the opposite wing 2, who cuts to the baseline (diagr. 4).

2 receives the ball from 1 on the low post and passes it to 5 for the shot (diagr. 5).

If 4 is the first trailer, he cuts in the lane to the opposite corner, while 5 delays his cut for a moment, and then goes deep in the lane under the rim.

1 is the ball handler on the left side of the court, in this case (diagr. 6). 1 passes to 3 and 3 passes to 5, who has sealed his defender in the lane, so he can now take the shot (diagr. 7).

MAN-TO-MAN OFFENSE

PLAY FOR 5 OBERTO

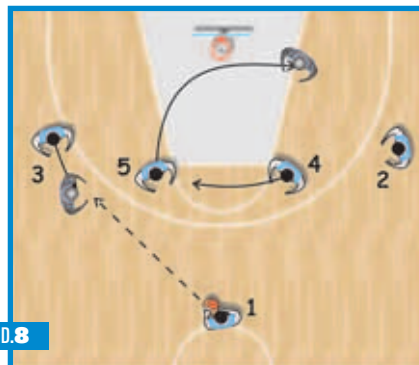
The set is a one-four formation on the free-throw line extension, with 4 and 5 at the elbows of the free-throw line, 2 and 3 at the wings, and 1, with the ball, in the middle of the court. 1 passes to 3 while 4 screens for 5, who goes to the low post on the other side of the court (diagr. 8).

After the pass, 1 cuts in the lane and goes off 5 on the other wing position. 4 then screens for 2, who cuts in the lane and looks to receive the ball from 3 (diagr. 9). 4, after the screen, pops out, receives the ball from 3, and 3 screens down for 2. 4 can pass to 2 (diagr. 10).

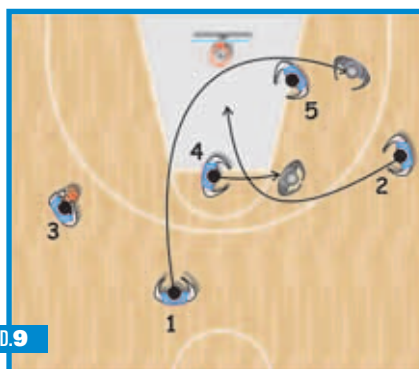
If 4 cannot pass to 2, he passes the ball to 1, and goes in the low-post position. In the meantime, 3, after the screen, cuts in the lane and goes off the screen of 5. 1 passes to 3 and 3 passes to 5 on the low post (diagr. 11).

PLAYS FOR 4 SCOLA

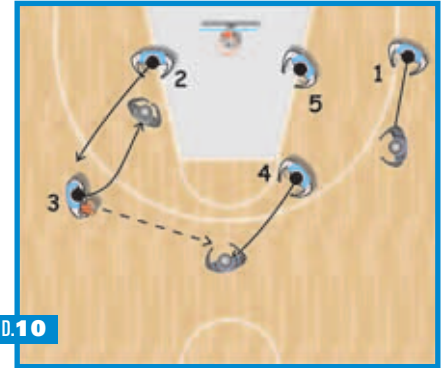
4, Luis Scola, the power forward, and 5 set up high and low. 3 is in the corner, 2 at the foul-line extension, and 1 is the ball handler (diagr. 12). 1 passes to 2, 2 passes back to 1, and then cuts off 4's screen (diagr. 13). 1 passes to 2, 4 now sets an on-ball screen for 2, who then dribbles off 4. After the screen, 4 rolls to the basket and receives a pass from 2: if he cannot shoot, he passes to 5 if 5's



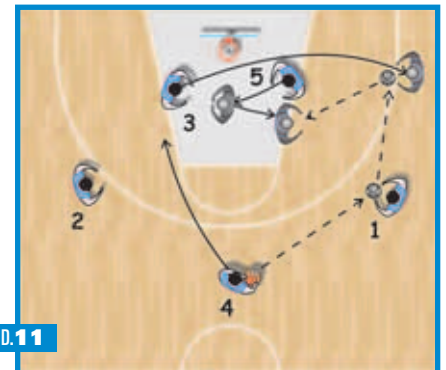
D.8



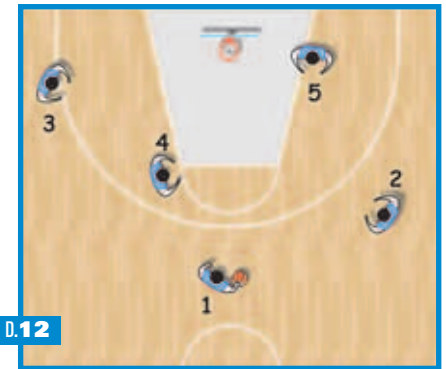
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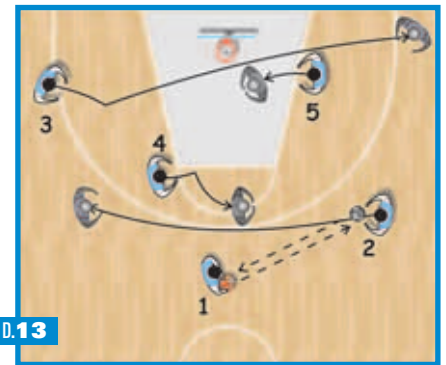
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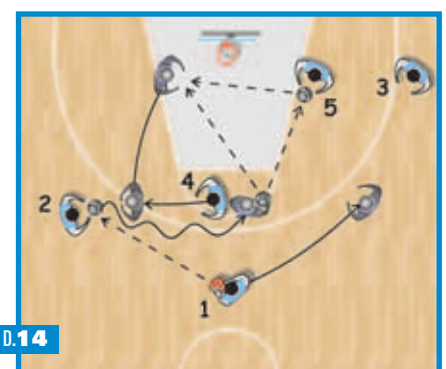
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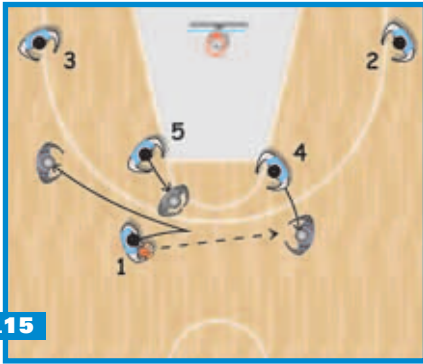
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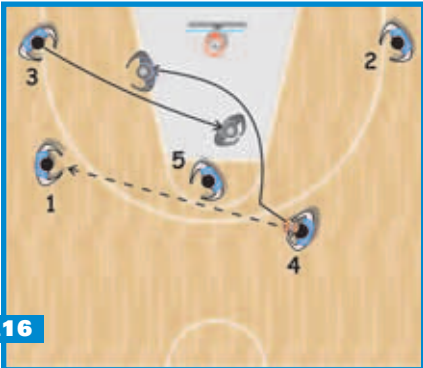
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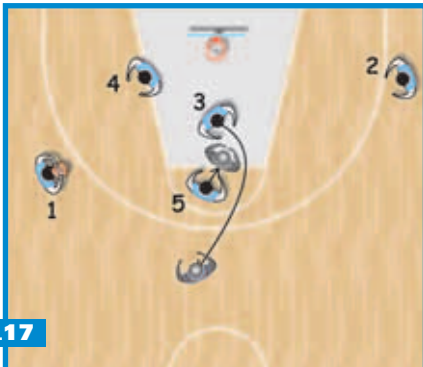
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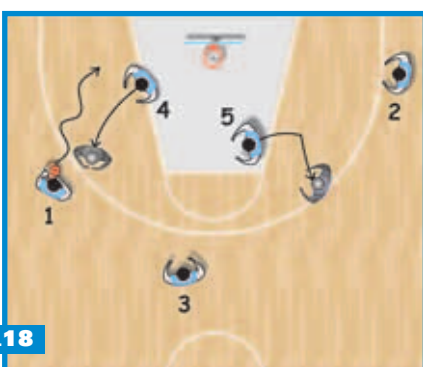
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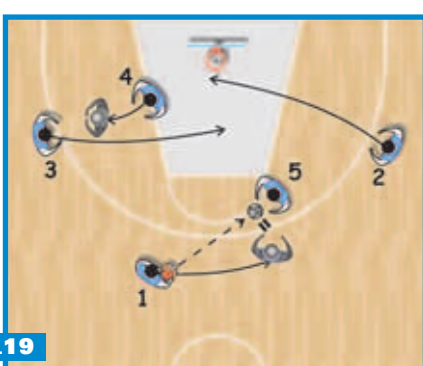
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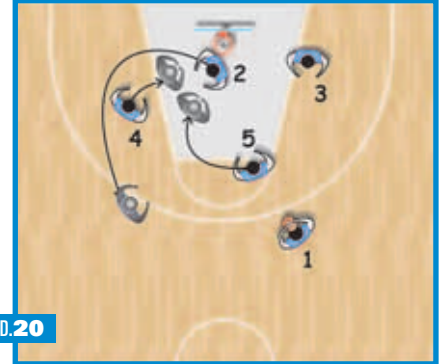
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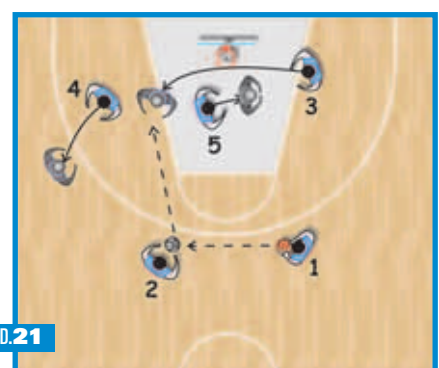
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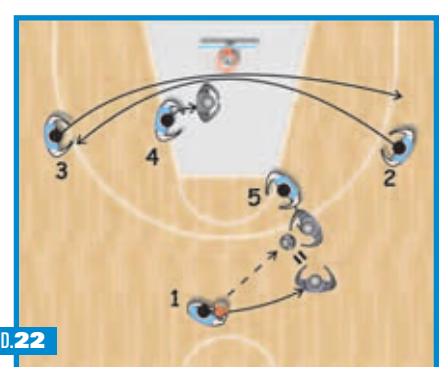
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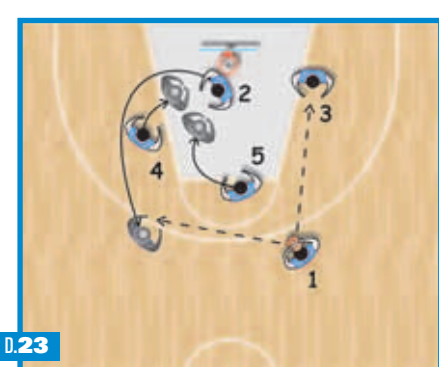
D.20



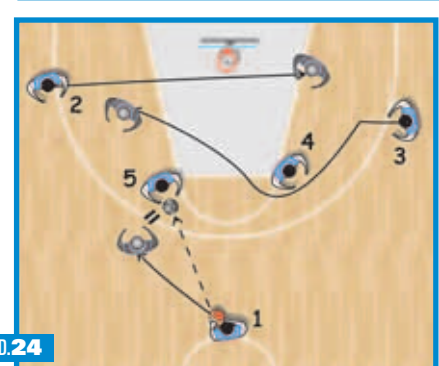
D.21



D.22



D.23



D.24

defender comes out to help. (diagr. 14). 5 and 4 are set at the high-post position, at the elbows of the free-throw area, 2 and 3 are in the corners, and 1 has the ball in the middle of the floor. 1 passes to 4 and cuts off 5's screen (diagr. 15). 4 passes back to 1, receives a diagonal screen from 3, cuts off 3's screen, and goes on the low post position (diagr. 16).

5 sets a down screen (screen-the-screener action) for 3, who cuts high (diagr. 17). 4

sets an on-ball screen for 1, rolls to basket, and receives the ball from 1, while 5 pops out to clear the lane (diagr. 18).

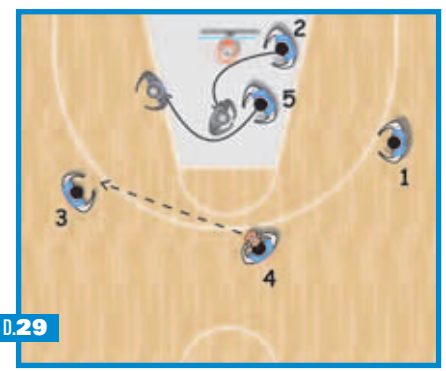
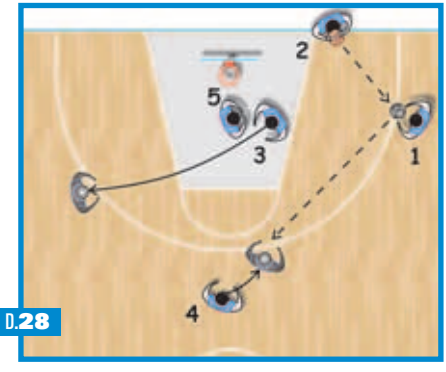
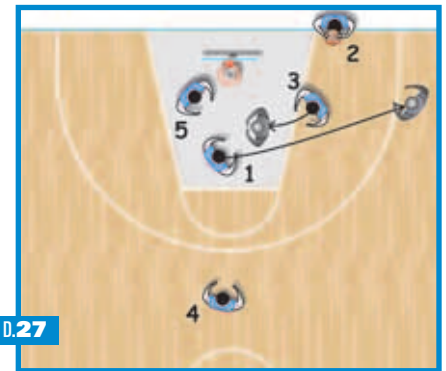
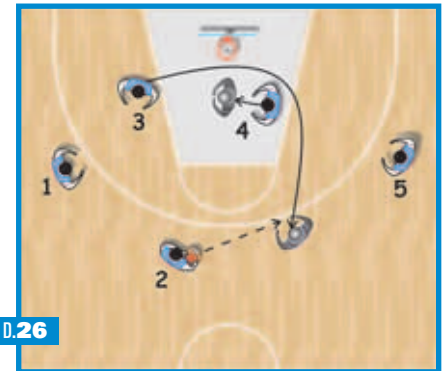
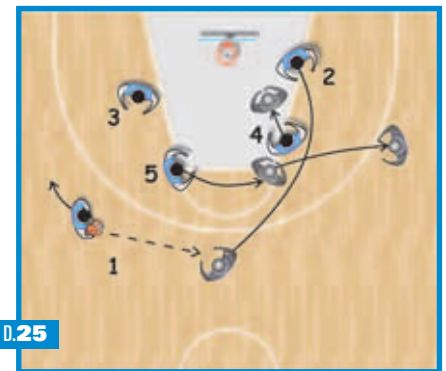
PLAY FOR 3 NOCIONI

5 is set at the elbow of the free-throw area, 4 at the low post on the opposite side, 2 and 3 (Andres Nocioni) are on the wings, and 1 has the ball. 1 passes to 5, follows the pass and receives the ball back with a hand-off pass, while 2 cuts in the lane.

At the same time, 4 steps out and screens for 3, who goes out on the other side of the court (diagr. 19). 4 and 5 set a staggered screen for 2, who comes out in the middle of the court (diagr. 20). After the screen for 3, 4 flares out in the wing position, while 5 screens again for 3. 2 receives the ball from 1, and passes to 3 (diagr. 21).

PLAYS FOR 2 GINOBILI OR 3 NOCIONI

Using the same set as the previous one, except that after the pass from 1 to 5, and the hand-off pass from 5 to 1, 3 crosses in the lane and goes to the opposite side of the court. At the same time, 2 (Manu Ginobili) cuts in the lane (diagr. 22). Right after the hand-off pass, 5 makes a staggered screen with 4 for 2. 1 can now pass to 3 or else to 2, who comes off the staggered screen (diagr. 23).



4 and 5 are set at the elbows of the free-throw area, 2 and 3 at the corners, and 1 is the ball handler. 1 passes to 5, follows the pass and receives the ball back with a hand-off pass.

At the same time, 4 steps out and down-screens for 3, who cuts in the lane and posts down, while 2 cuts also in the lane on the baseline (diagr. 24).

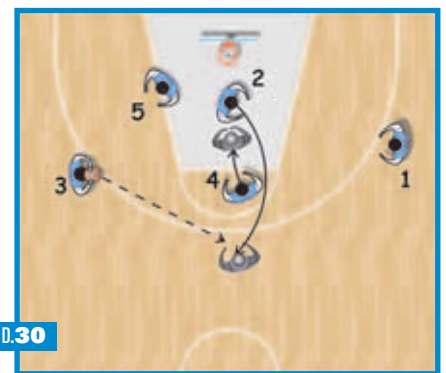
4 and 5 set a staggered screen on 2, who comes off high. 1 can pass to him (diagr. 25). After the screen, 5 pops out of the lane and 4 makes another screen for 3, who comes high and receives the ball from 2 (diagr. 26).

OUT-OF-BOUNDS

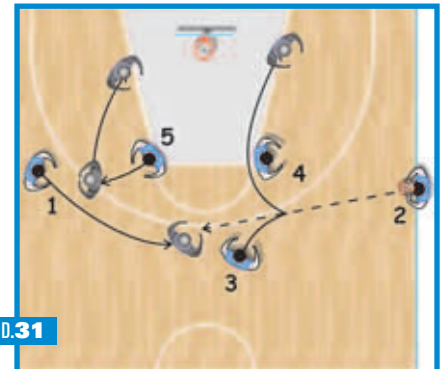
BASELINE OUT-OF-BOUNDS

This play is run for Ginobili, who is the inbouncer. 5 is under the rim, 1 in the low post on the ball side with 3, while 4 is out of the three-point line. 3 screens for 1, who runs out off the screen on the ball side (diagr. 27).

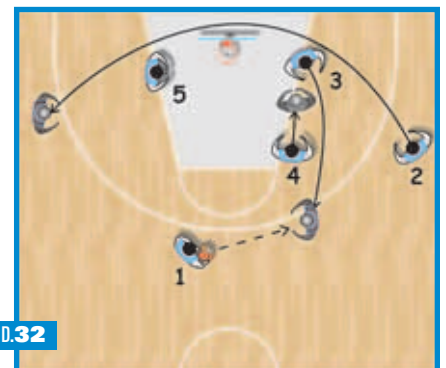
2 passes the ball to 1 and 1 passes to 4, while 5 screens for 3 (diagr. 28).



0.30



0.31



0.32

After the pass to 1, 2 enters the court and screens for 5, who then posts down low, and 4 passes to 3 (diagr. 29).

4 down screens for 2 (screen-the-screener action), who runs out high and receives from 3 (diagr. 30).

SIDELINE OUT-OF-BOUNDS

1 is on the free-throw line extension, 5 and 4 at the elbows of the free-throw area, 3 faces 4 outside of the three-point line, and 2 is the inbounder. 5 steps out and screens 1, and then rolls down to the low post on the same side of the court. In the meantime, 3 cuts off the screen of 4 and posts down on the ball side (diagr. 31).

After the inbound pass, 2 moves off the screens of 3 and 5, while 4 screens down 3 (screen-the-screener action). 3 runs high to receive the ball from 1, who can also pass the ball to 2 (diagr. 32).

THE SHUFFLE OFFENSE



by Lindsay Gaze

After an excellent career as a professional player (he played at three edition of the Olympic Games and at two FIBA World Championships in the '60s), Lindsay Gaze has coached the Australian national team in four consecutive editions of the Olympic Games (1972, 1976, 1980 and 1984) and of three FIBA World Championships (1974, 1978 and 1982). In 1985, he became head coach of the Melbourne Tigers, where he stayed until 2005, winning two Australian title and three titles of "Coach of the Year".

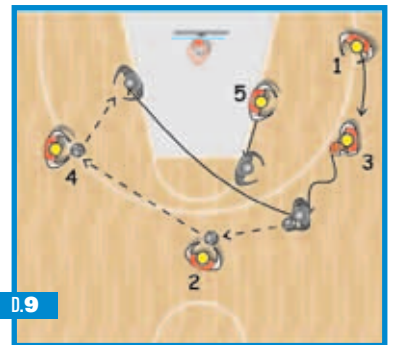
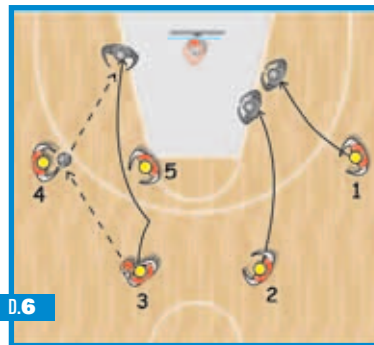
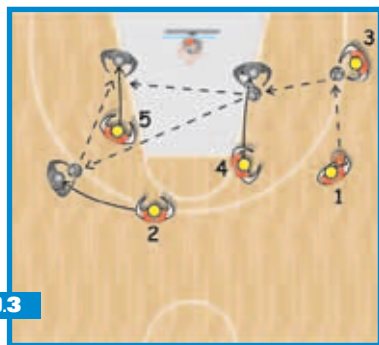
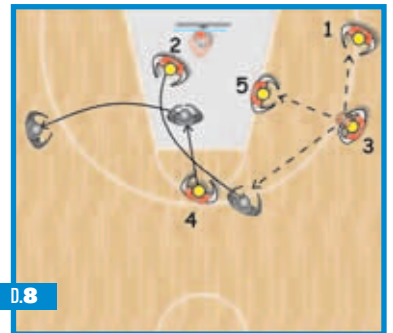
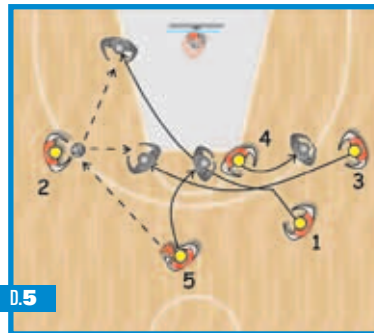
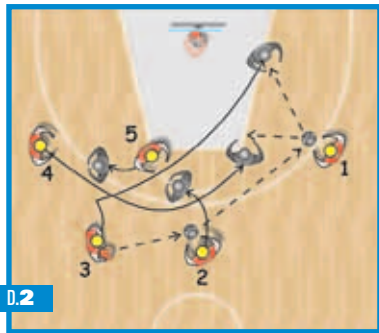
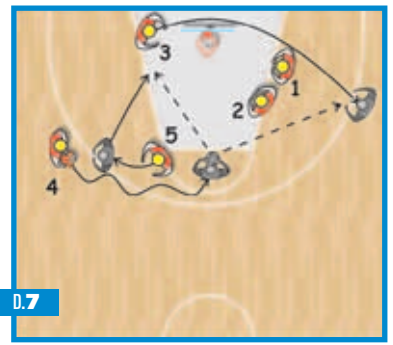
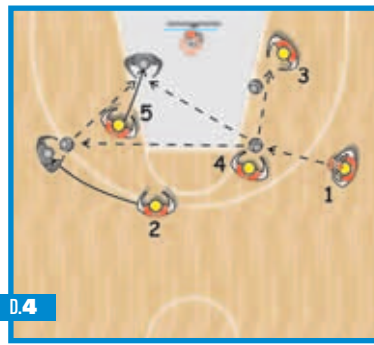
I had the chance to meet outstanding coaches, who have influenced my philosophy of the game and coaching methods. One of the most significant pieces of advice was to select a style of play, learn from others, who have similar points of view and stick with it.

When I took over coaching the Melbourne Tigers I adopted similar methods, although many refinements have been made as the skills and athleticism of players have developed incredibly since then.

The national teams I coached used the same methods as my club teams, but in each case the points of emphasis would vary depending on the talent available.

The Melbourne Tigers shuffle offense requires every player to be capable of playing every position and it is not unusual for the power forwards and centers to be playing the same roles usually reserved for guards. It has been argued that moving the big players away from the basket reduces their rebounding potential and high percentage scoring opportunities, but equally it can create problems for opponents, who, in many cases, is unfamiliar with defending on the perimeter. Similarly developing our guards to be effective post-up players provides numerous op-





portunities to exploit miss-matches.

One of the most important reasons why we used a "shuffle" offense is due to the fact that in our national league and internationally we have always given away size and height advantage to our opponents. If we were to play them at their own game we would be doomed to failure. It has only been in recent years that our national team has developed enough big men like Luc Longley, Mark Bradtke, Chris Anstey and a new generation, like David Andersen, Andrew Bogut and our 2003 World Junior champions, that we are starting to get on even terms.

When a club, or national team, uses the same methods for their offensive structure for many years and you teach your methods at camps and clinics, it is inevitable that opposing coaches will refine their defensive methods and apply different strategies to counter your play.

This has always been a learning process and as a result our club has been ex-

posed to just about every variety of defense imaginable. The defensive methods have varied from the standard 2-3 zones to the less conventional box-and-one, or triangle-and-two, alternating from man-to-man to zone etc. The great benefit of what we do is we are able to use the same basic principles of our offense, with only slight adjustments to timing and cuts, regardless of the defensive methods.

BASIC 3RD OPTION

The basic positions for all players are very important. Variation to positions will affect options that should be included to counter defensive over-plays (diagr. 1).

- ▼ 1 is the "feeder". He sets up with the inside foot close to the three point line at the free-throw line extended.
- ▼ 2 is the guard and takes up a position straight in line with the basket.
- ▼ 3 is the "first cutter", usually the play-making guard capable of posting up.

His starting position is in line with the post and the basket.

- ▼ 4 is the "second cutter", usually a strong perimeter shooter capable of making a strong drive and jump shot off the dribble.
- ▼ 5 is the "post man", a good screener and "post target."

3 passes to 2 and sets up his opponent for a cut off 5.

Note: it is important that 3 does not cut until the pass is in motion to, or has been received by the feeder.

1 may feed 3 if open on the cut (early) or in the low post, or in the corner. If he doesn't



pass to 3, 5 screens second cutter 4 to prevent 4's man from fighting over the top. 2 sets effective double screen and aims to prevent 4's defender to slide through underneath. 4 has opportunity to receive pass for a jump shot around the free throw line, or to set up a high post target (diagr. 2). If the feeder passes the ball to 3 in the corner, 4 slides down to the low-post position for a possible pass and subsequent scoring options (diagr. 3).

Note: whenever a pass is made to a high post or low post position, the player in the 2 spot and the weak-side wing make cuts for scoring options (diagr. 4).

If the feeder does not make a penetrating pass, the players adjust to the basic positions on the right side of the floor and the same options can be repeated with 1 becoming the new 3 man (first cutter), 3 becomes the new 4 man (second cutter), 4 becomes the post and 2 becomes the feeder. 5 becomes the 2 man (diagr. 5).

FIRST OPTION

Players set up in the same positions as for a regular third option shuffle cut. 3 has the choice of passing to 2, which will signal a third option, but may choose to pass to 4, which signals a first option.

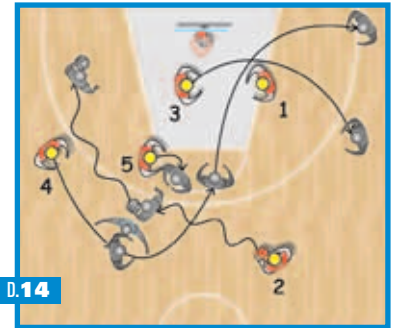
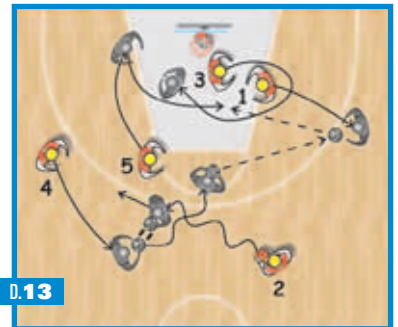
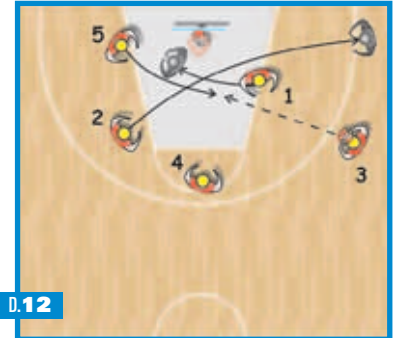
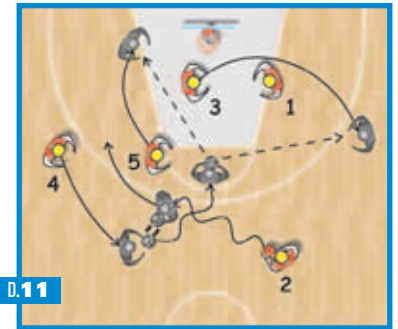
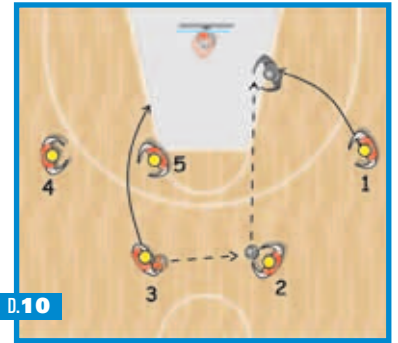
Note: In all cases the post will pivot on the foot closest to the direction of the first pass and will screen with his back to the cutter.

3 cuts using the screen set by 5 and looks to receive a return pass from 4 (and possible scoring option).

If he doesn't pass to 3, 5 sets inside screen for 4, who looks to make penetrating drive and possible jump shot around free-throw line, or screen-and-roll pass to 5 (diagr. 6).

If 4 does not shoot or pass to 5, he passes to 3, who has come off double screen set by 2 and 1. 3 may take short jump shot or look to 5 who comes off screen set by 2 (diagr. 7).

Note: 2 should stay on double screen until pass is in motion to 3, and then he crosses lane to set screen for 5. 5 must wait for screen to arrive before making a cut otherwise opposing defensive players can "zone" the inside area and make good scoring options more difficult. While 2 is setting screen for 5, 1 presents a low post target moving out just far enough from the key to force the defense to respect him. If 1 steps out too far, the defense may



choose to ignore him and concentrate on clogging the middle to defend 5.

3 may pass to 5 in low post or 1, who may have a short jump shot, as his man tends to help the post defender. However, 1 may feed post as well. 3 may also feed 2 coming off screen set by 4 (diagr. 8).

If 3 does not feed anyone, he balances the ball to the basic position and may choose to run a third option, or pass to 1, which will signal another first option on right side (diagr. 9).

REVERSE

When the feeder is overplayed, he may choose to run a back-door cut.

Note: this is the reason 3 should not be cutting, until the pass is on the way to the feeder. We do not want 3 and 1 to be cutting to the same area of the court at the same time.

If the back-door cut is not on, then 2 looks back to 3. This signals 3 to now make his cut (or look for kick back options, described later) 2 then concentrates on the 4 man's defensive opponent and starts a hard drive off the post screen set by 5. 2 aims to give 4 a hand-off pass and continues his cut around screen set by 1. After 4 receives the hand-off he may have jump shot option or a pass back to 2 (diagr. 10).

If there is no shot or pass to 2, then 4 passes to 3, who comes off screen set by 1.

Note: all of this action is similar to a regular first option, except the play is started with a drive to 4, instead of a pass, and 3 is coming off a single screen instead of a double screen. After 4 has made his drive 5 rolls to low post area on the left and waits for screen set by 1 (diagr. 11).

If 3 does not have a shot opportunity, he looks for 5 coming off the screen by 1, or a pass to 2 in medium low post area, or resets the offense to run any of the options from the right side (diagr. 12).

Variation: 3 may run a curl cut off 1 for possible jump shot, or continue to set screen for 5. 1 steps back after screening 3 and if he receives pass from 4 will feed 5 or take possible jump shot (diagr. 13).

REVERSE - VARIATIONS

If 4 is overplayed, 2 should not force the hand-off. 4 may just hold his position temporarily allowing 2 to continue his drive to about the level of the hash marks along the

lane. 2 may have a jump shot or he may look to 4 now after 4 has cut around screen set by 5 (diagr. 14).

If 2 does not have shot or pass to 4, he looks to 5, who has held his ground after the drive of 2. 5 makes a bounce drive for possible jump shot, but more likely to pass to 3, who is coming off a screen set by 1.

Note: an important rule for 3 is to wait on the screen until the ball gets to the middle of the free-throw line. This might be by way of a drive from 4 or from 5. The timing is critical, as there is no point for setting free 3 if the pass is not yet available (diagr. 15).

Alternatively, if 4 is overplayed, he may choose to make a back-door cut for possible pass from 2. If 2 does not make the pass to 4 on the back-door cut, he continues his drive for jump shot options or the same continuity as described above (diagr. 16).

Note: the options described here are useful when aiming to establish early jump shot opportunities or post up options for either guard.

KICKBACKS

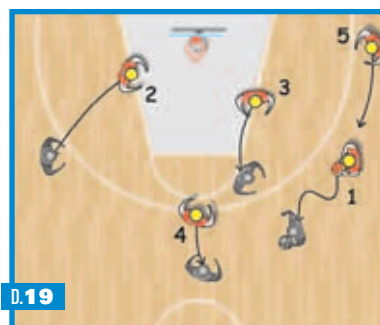
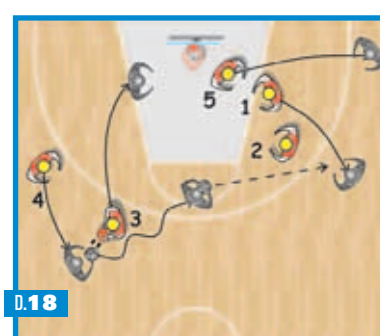
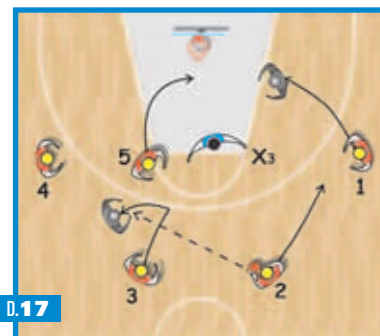
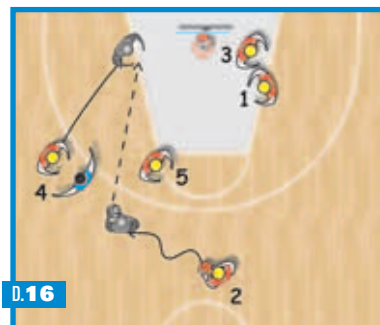
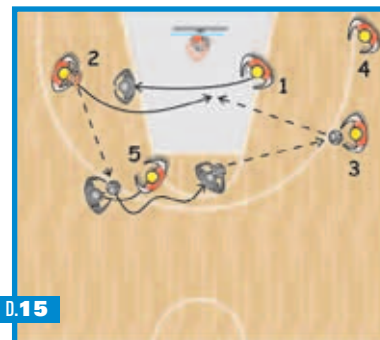
When the first cutter's defender "cheats" to clog the lane, 3 may elect to call for a "kickback" for potential shot aided by a screen set by 5. 5's opponenet may try to help to prevent, or block the shot and therefore 5 rolls to the basket on all kickback options (diagr. 17).

If 3 does not shoot or pass to 5, he hands-off to 4 and thus effectively generates another variation of a first option. 4 drives off a screen set by 3 and if he doesn't shoot or pass back to 3 on the roll off, he passes to 1 stepping out off screen set by 2. 5 always continues his roll to the low post on the right side. If 1 does not have shot, he looks to 3 coming off screen set by 2 or looks to five in medium low post position (diagr. 18).

If there are no scoring options taken, 1 balances to new three spot on right side and prepares to run a regular third option or first option (diagr. 19).

The same rules apply if a kickback is run off a first option. 5 must roll on the pass back to 3. 3 may choose to feed 5 or to hand off to 4 or take a one bounce drive to the middle of the key and pass to 1.

After 4 passes to 3, he waits just a moment



to assess 3's decision. If 3 drives to the middle, then 4 cuts to the baseline and waits for screen set by 2 (diagr. 20).

INVERSION

When both forwards are being over played guards look to post 5, who steps out to top of lane (or as far as necessary to release the pressure). Guards and forwards invert (diagr. 21).

Sometimes cheap scoring options on a hand-off or bounce pass, or late back-door cut on feeds from 5 are available.

The guard, who makes the first pass, is the designated back-door cutter (we don't want both guards to clutter the low post area).

With no "sucker" plays, the rule is "whichever side the post passes the ball dictates the option." If he passes to the right side it will be a third option with 4 as

the first cutter and 3 as the second cutter. If 5 passes to the left side, it will generate a first option with 4 as the cutter and 3 as the driver (diagr. 22).

Note: as 3 is now in a much lower position than normal for the second cutter of a third option, the options vary slightly. 3 is told to wait low for the double screen set by 5 and 1. 3 looks for jump shot opportunity and if no pass balances to new 2 spot.

Usually, because of the attention given to 3, 5 becomes the next target as he will curl back inside after 3 cuts off his screen and presents a good option inside. 1 will balance to new feeder spot on left side.

If 2 does not pass to anyone he balances to run another regular third or first option (diagr. 23).

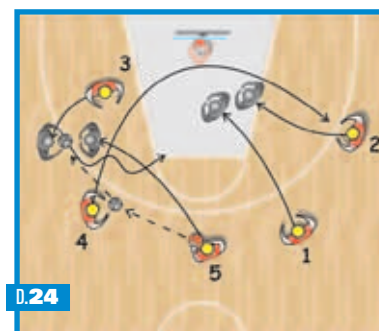
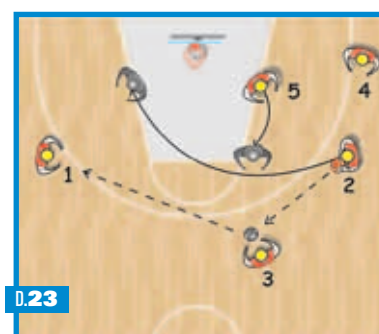
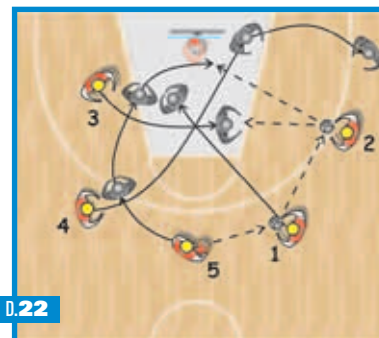
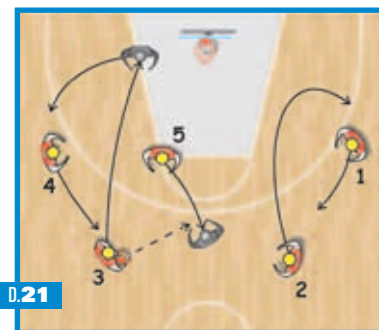
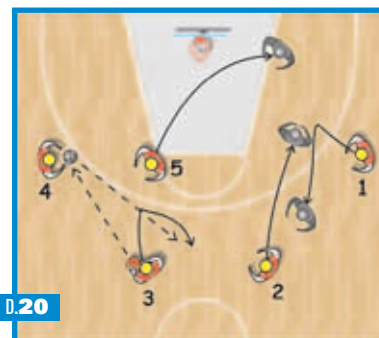
If 5 passes to left side, it will lead to a first option. 4 cuts off the screen set by 5 and 5 will then screen for 3, for screen and roll options or regular continuation if necessary (diagr. 24).

What has been shown here was the basic foundation for the Melbourne Tigers Shuffle offense. There are many other options included in our structure to deal with different types of defense, particularly pressure defense.

Also transition options that allowed us to exploit specific players and balance quickly into out halfcourt game, if necessary. The adjustment to the structure is minimal for zone defenses, although the timing of cuts and decisions for dribble penetration are important.

We always try to remind our players that it is not so much the structure, but how it is executed and why priorities are given to certain elements that will govern success. Trying to include too many options can lead to confusion and poor execution, while not having enough variety will invite strong defensive pressure and unless players are well prepared the structure will quickly break down.

Our methods require all players to have skills in every aspect of the game and it is almost impossible to "hide" inferior talent. It is not easy to teach and all players must be committed to the team structure and the team outcome. However, the satisfaction the players get when everyone contributes to team success is much more rewarding and team morale usually remains high.





by Zelimir Obradovic

PANATHINAIKOS' OFFENSE

Zelimir Obradovic is the winningest coach in Europe. He has won 6 Euroleague (one with Partizan Belgrade, Yugoslavia, one with Badalona and one with Real Madrid, Spain, and three with Panathinaikos Athens, Greece). He also won one national and one Yugoslavian Cup with Partizan, two Saporta Cups (Real Madrid and Benetton Treviso, Italy), six Greek titles, and four Greek Cups with Panathinaikos. With the Yugoslavian, and then the Serbian National team, he won a silver medal at the 1996 Olympic Games, one gold medal and one bronze medal at the FIBA European Championships, and one gold medal at the FIBA World Championships.

I would like to introduce my starting five players, as well as thank our outstanding reserve players, who helped us to win the 2007 Euroleague.

This is how the players are numbered on the diagrams:

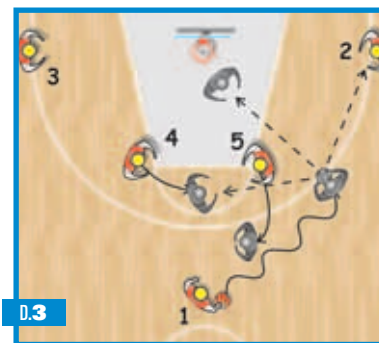
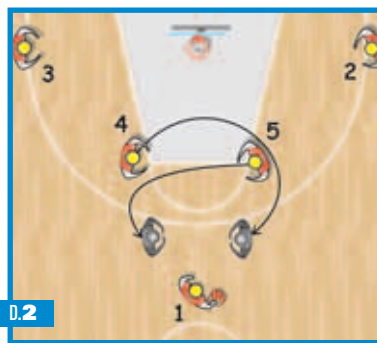
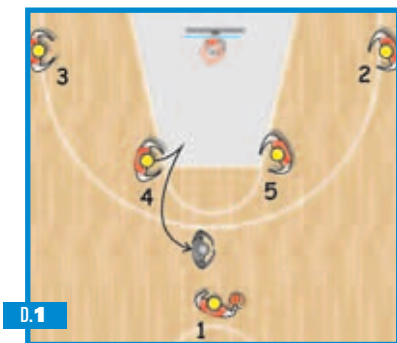
- 1- Dimitris Diamantidis, point-guard.
- 2- Sani Becirovic, guard.
- 3- Ramunas Siskauskas, forward.
- 4- Mike Batiste, power forward.
- 5- Demos Dikoudis, center.

If we cannot run in transition, we set up this half-court offense. I use this offense with all my teams. It has a lot of options for all the players and the play-makers must be able to read the situation and run the different and simple options.

The premise of this offense is to give the ball to players, who are able to effectively play one-on-one.

We set with two players low and wide, and two posts at the high post position, where I need players, who are able to score from the three-point line and also read the defense. We start the play with one of the high post players, 4 in this case, faking a cut to the basket and then screening (diagr. 1).





Another way to start is to have the two posts cross and then screen (diagr. 2). In this offense 5, the center, is the player that I normally want in the three-second lane and 4, the power forward, usually a better shooter, who can pop out and pick. This way, we create a three-on-three play, where two players, 2 and 3, our good shooters, are in corners ready to shoot. On the screen for the ball handler, there are three passing options (diagr. 3).

If the ball is passed to 4 (which keeps the defense busy), we screen on the weak side for the player in the corner (diagr. 4).

1 passes to the guard 2, and then he receives a back screen by 5. 1 cuts off 5 and goes to the low post position on the ball side after the pass, while 4 and 3 start to go in the lane (diagr. 5).

4 screens for 1, who cuts baseline on the other side of the court. 4 then receives a back screen by 3 (screen-the screener action), and goes back on the other side of the court. 2 passes the ball to 5 and follows the pass for a hand-off pass, and then he drives to the other side of the court (diagr. 6). If 2 cannot pass to 5, 5 screens for 2 and the play is run in the same way.

2 can pass to 1 in the corner or to 4 in the low-post position. If he passes the ball to 1, but 1 cannot shoot, he receives a side screen from 4, who has popped out of the low-post position, and cuts in the lane to get a pass from 1 (diagr. 7).

If, on the screen in the lane of 3 for 4 (see diagr. 6), 3's defender helps on 4, 3 then cuts high, receives a screen from 5 and pops out to receive for a two- or a three-point jump shot (diagr. 8). In this play we have set a pick on the player that screens the screener.

A mistake that usually occurs in this play is that a screener stays too long in the screen, pushing the defender. This is oftentimes called for an offensive foul. What needs to be done is to jump in front of the defender. One of my rules is that the player who screens the big man must be a shooter. After the screen, he is normally open for a shot and many of the best shooters of the teams I have coached have scored from this action. I would like to underline that on this action, if

the defender goes under the 5's screen, 3 will shoot. However, if the defender goes out aggressively, 3 will drive to the basket.

ENTRY PASS

Let's now examine the situation in the case where 1 cannot start the entry pass to the wings or the posts. Here are three different solutions.

- 1 cannot pass the ball to 2 on the wing because 2 is aggressively overplayed. 5 can flash to the high post position at the corner of the free-throw area, and receive the ball from 1, while 2 makes a back-door cut and can get the ball from 5 (diagr. 9).

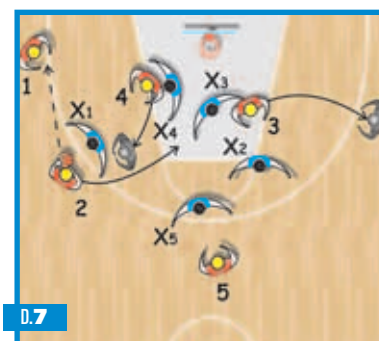
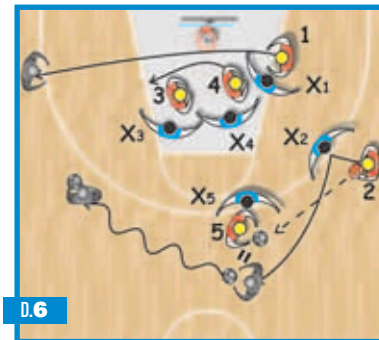
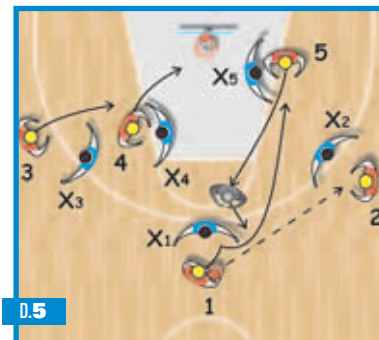
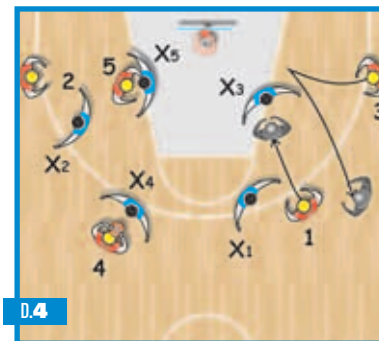
- 1 can also pass to one of the posts, 5, in this case, cut around the other post 4, and receive the ball from 5 since there is no help on the other side (diagr. 10). When the defense is punished a couple of times, in this way with two easy baskets, it will not be so aggressive anymore.

- If the ball cannot be passed to 5 at the high post, and 2 is also overplayed, 1 dribbles towards 2, who starts to cut in the lane to receive 4's screen (diagr. 11).

In these situations, the players must read what happens on the court and react to the reaction of the defense. I teach the guards that there should be no space between them and the defenders while playing pick-and-roll. After a screen and the defender pops out in front of the ball handler, the ball handler must take a step-back dribble, a difficult, but important move, and then, changing speed, drive to the basket.

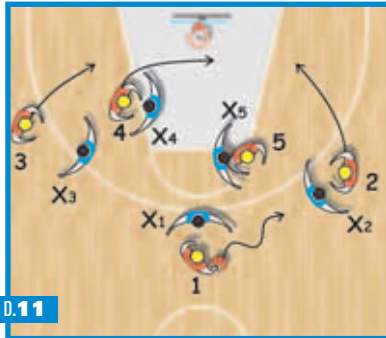
Let's go back to the situation of 4, who is screened by 3. If the defense reacts to 3's screen and covers the cut back of 4, as described in diagr. 6, 4 can make a fake to cut back. He then goes high and runs off the screen of 5 (diagr. 12).

At Panathinacos (and other teams I have coached), I have many good shooters at the 4 and 5 position. Another important detail on the situation described is that when 3 sees 4, who rubs off 5's screen, he must roll quickly back to the ball to receive it in the lane. However, if he receives the ball outside, 2, screens quickly for





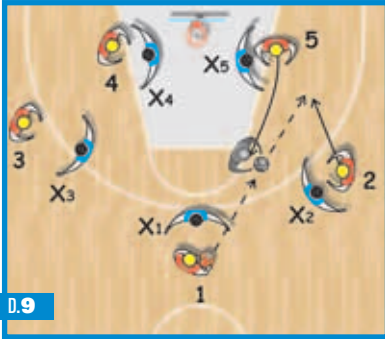
D.8



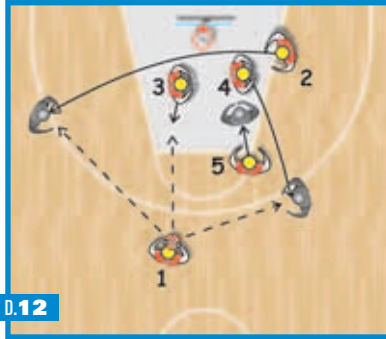
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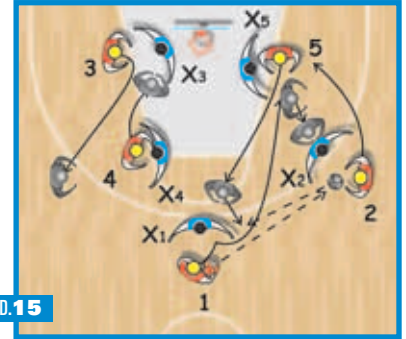
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D.9



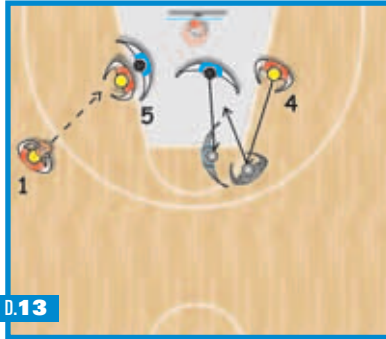
D.12



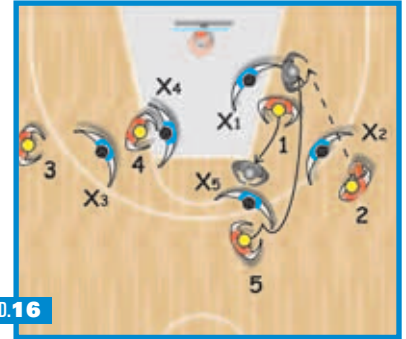
D.15



D.10



D.13



D.16

him right after the pass. When 5 receives the ball on the low-post position (diagr. 13), the other post, 4, goes to the high post position on the other side of the court. He keeps moving in this area to keep the defense busy, while 5 plays one-on-one in the low post.

After a hand off and the drive to the other side of the court (see diagr. 7), the ball handler has three options: pass to the corner, pass inside the lane, or pass to the weak-side teammates, who have popped out of the post's screen (diagr. 14).

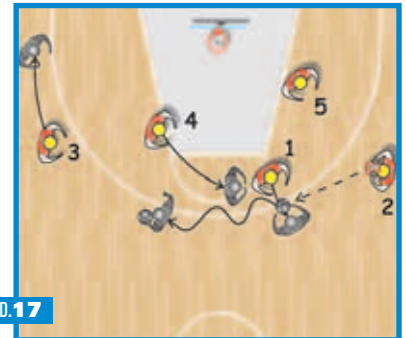
Lets go back to the situation of diagr. 5. Another option, after the back screen of 5, is that 1 goes down to the low-post position, 2 passes the ball to 5, who popped out after the screen, and then 1 runs out to back screen for 2. As soon as 4 sees this screen, he down-screens for 3, who has first made a strong fake as if he were going to move into the lane (diagr. 15).

Another option is that 1, instead of back screening 2, pops out of the the low-post position, screens high for 5, who cuts off

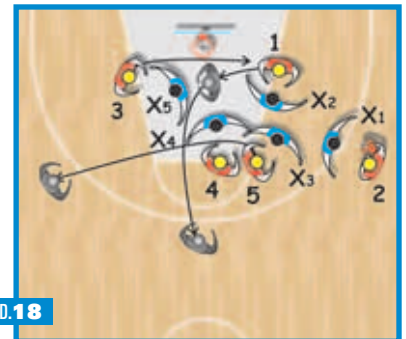
the screen and receives the ball from 2 (diagr. 16). If the ball is not passed low to 5, but passed to 1, 4 fakes to cut in the lane and then runs high, screens for 1, and plays pick-and-roll (diagr. 17). On the pick-and-roll, the ball handler must be patient and read the defense. In addition, the screener must react to the reaction of his defender.

On this play, there are many options that your player can run. They have to be able to read and react to any defensive situation. As coach, it's your job to take care of every option and the details that go with them. I will now describe this final option. The two posts, 4 and 5, set a double screen at the free-throw area, with the ball in the hands of 2. 1 screens for 3, who goes to the low post, and then 1 runs high off the double screen of 4 and 5.

Usually the defense on the double screen stays high to the ball side to delay the pass to the screened player. Therefore, in this situation, 4 screens for 5, cuts in the lane and 5 cuts off outside the lane (diagr. 18). This option can only be run when there are at least 16 seconds remaining on the clock.



D.17



D.18