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FIBA

We Are Basketball



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by Matt Doherty

FIBA

We Are Basketball

THE BALL HANDLING

After a good playing career (NCAA champion in 1982 with North Carolina, then a brief NBA experience), he started coaching into the Davidson College's technical staff, in 1989. In 1992 he moved to Kansas University, working as Roy Williams' assistant coach with recruiting responsibilities (recruiting Paul Pierce, Drew Gooden and Kirk Hinrich). In 1999 he was hired by Notre Dame University for the head coach role, one year later he became head coach of North Carolina University. In 2004 he moved to Florida Atlantic, where he stayed until 2006. Since April 2006 he has been coaching Southern Methodist University. In 2001 he was named as NCAA Coach of the Year by the Associated Press.

STATIONARY BALL HANDLING

ONE BALL

1. Begin by pounding the ball twenty times with your weak hand. Be sure to stay on top of the ball and to keep your eyes up.
2. Pound the ball twenty times with your strong hand. Again, emphasize staying on top of the ball and keeping your eyes up.
3. Return to your weak hand and pound the ball twenty more times.
4. Figure "8" dribble: Bending at your knees and not at the waist, dribble through and around your legs to form an "8". Use short, choppy dribbles, staying on top of the ball and keeping your eyes up. Reverse direction. Form at least 10 figure "8's" in each direction.
5. Beginning with your weak hand, pull the ball forward and backward alongside your body. Then go to the front of your body and go back and forth in front. Go back and forth at least twenty times.
6. Using your strong hand, pull the

ball forward and backward alongside your body. Then go to the front of your body and go back and forth in front. Go back and forth at least twenty times.

7. Return to your weak hand and repeat number 6. Remember to stay on top of the ball and keep your eyes up.

TWO BALLS

8. Have one ball in each hand. Pound the balls at the same time at least 40 times.
9. Alternate dribble the two balls at least 20 times with each hand (dribble the ball in the left hand and then the right hand, left hand, right hand...).
10. Pound the balls in front of you at the same time for two dribbles, then cross each ball over to the opposite hand. The ball in your left hand goes to the right hand and the ball in your right hand goes to your left hand. Do at least 10 crossovers. Remember to stay on top of the ball and keep your eyes up. Keep the crossover low and quick.

TRANSITION DRIBBLE SERIES

ONE BALL

1. Left hand down and back.
2. Right hand down and back (diagr. 1).
3. Zig zag down and back - 3 dribbles to the right, crossover (low and tight) pushing the ball past the defender, 3 dribbles to the left, crossover... Burst out of the crossover (speed up) to get past the defender (diagr. 2).

FULL COURT ZIG ZAG DRIBBLE MOVES

1. Starting in the corner dribble to the elbow, crossover, dribble to the corner of half court. Be sure to

make your cross over low and quick. Also be sure to move at two speeds, coming in to the crossover slowly and coming out of it quickly.

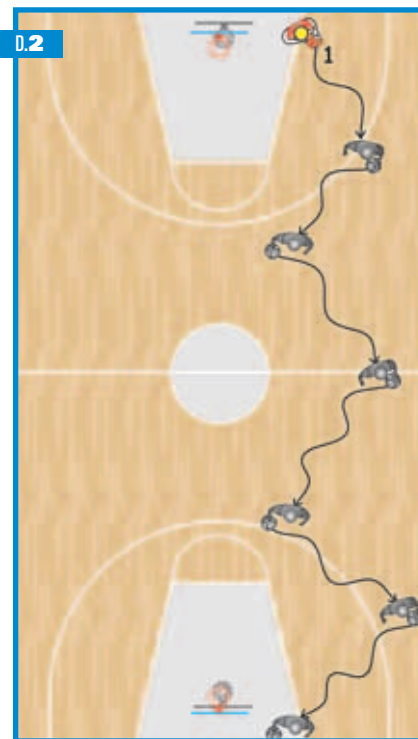
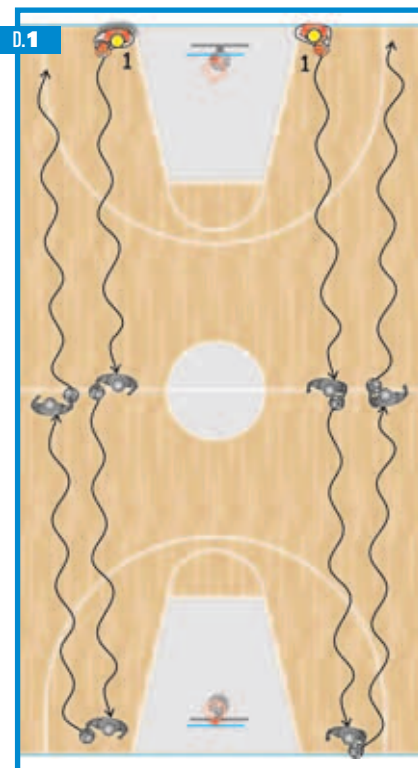
2. At half court crossover again and dribble to the other free throw line elbow. crossover yet again and dribble to the corner of the court. Dribble along the baseline until you get to the other corner, then perform the same Zig zag down to the other end of the court (diagr. 3).
3. Once you have gone down and back making the crossover move, perform the same drill practicing the between the legs dribble, behind the back dribble, and spin dribble.

Notes: Be sure to operate at two speeds (set your defender up for each move). Also, dribble with the hand that is away from the defense. In other words, the players body should be between the ball and the defender.

4. Zig zag with retreat dribble - prior to each crossover take 1-2 retreat dribbles (protecting the ball with your body) and then crossover using a change of pace to get past the defender (diagr. 4).

TWO BALLS

1. Dribble both balls at the same time down and back (emphasize staying on top of the ball, eyes up, and pushing the ball out in front). Same as in diagr. 1, except with two balls.
2. Dribble the balls alternating down and back. Same as in diagr. 1, except with two balls.
3. Zig zag down and back dribbling the balls at the same time. 3 dribbles to the right, change direction, then 3 dribbles to the left. Same as in diagr. 2, except with two balls.
4. Zig zag down and back using an



- alternating dribble. 3 dribbles to the right, change direction, then 3 dribbles to the left. Utilize a change of pace. Same as in diagr. 2, except with two balls.
5. Zig zag down and back dribbling the balls at the same time, but this time before changing direction, take 1-2 retreat dribbles. Utilize a change of pace. Same as in diagr. 3, except with two balls.

6. Zig zag down and back using an alternating dribble, but this time before changing direction, take at least 1-2 retreat dribbles. Utilize a change of pace. Same as in diagr. 3, except with two balls.

HALF-COURT TRANSITION DRIBBLE MOVES

1. One ball per player. Begin at half-court on the right side. Then, place a garbage can/folding chair at the

elbow to act as the defender.

On the right side, speed dribble with your right hand to the "defender" (garbage can on the right elbow). Then, make an inside-out move (staying on top of the ball, keeping eyes up, protecting the ball with your body, and exploding out of the move) and go to the basket. Finish the power layup off of two feet (diagr. 5).

2. Go to the left side at half court. Speed dribble with your left hand to the "defender" (garbage can on the left elbow), make an inside-out move and go to the basket finishing the layup with your left hand off of two feet (diagr. 6).

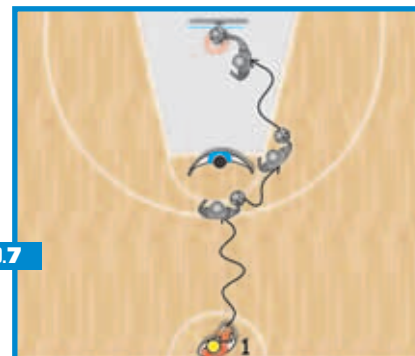
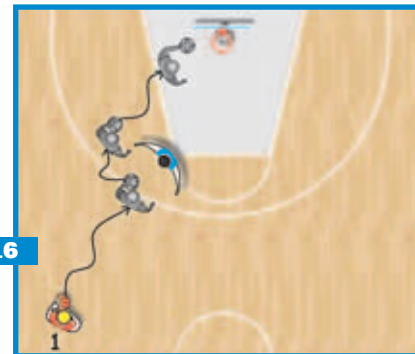
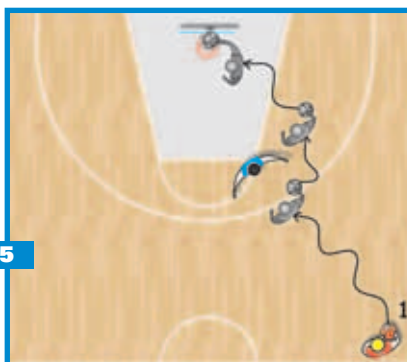
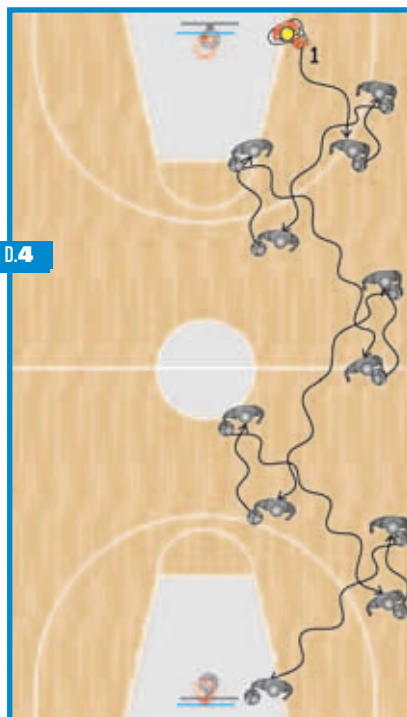
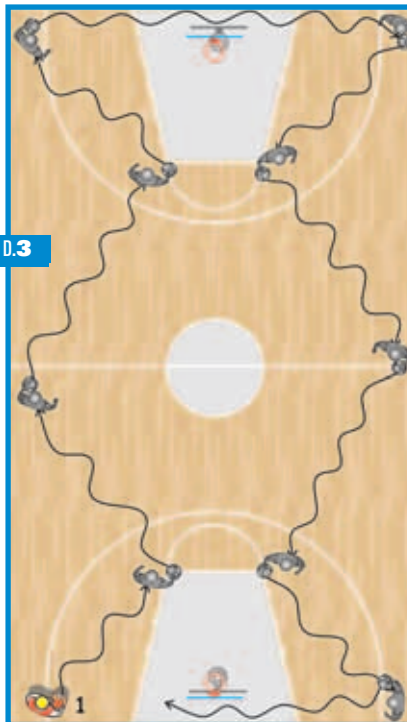
3. Go to the middle at half court. Speed dribble with your right hand to the "defender" (garbage can at the free-throw line), make an inside-out move and go to the basket finishing the layup with your right hand off of two feet. Go back to the middle at half court again and make the same move except this time with your left hand (diagr. 7 and 8).

4. After you have performed the inside-out move from 1/2 court on the right side, the left side, and from the middle, proceed to making a crossover dribble in place of the inside-out move.

5. From the right side, dribble in with your right hand to the "defender", crossover to your left hand, drive to the other side of the basket (the left side), and finish the power layup off of two feet with your left hand. Take as straight a line as possible to the basket. You want to take as little time as possible to get to the basket and give your defender as little space and time to catch up.

6. From the left side, dribble in with your left hand to the "defender", crossover to your right hand, drive to the other side of the basket (the right side), and finish the power layup off of two feet with your right hand.

7. From the middle, dribble in with your left hand to the "defender", crossover to your right hand, drive to the right side of the basket and finish the power layup off of two feet with your right hand. From the middle, dribble in with your right hand to the "defender", crossover to your left hand, drive to the left side of the basket and finish the power layup off of two feet with your left hand.



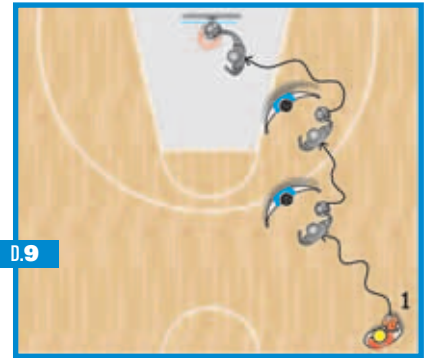
2. On the left side place two defenders in the same relative positions as on the right side. Make an inside-out move on the first defender as well as on the second defender, finishing the power layup on the right side off of two feet with your left hand (diagr. 10).

3. From the middle place one "defender" 1-2 steps above the top-of-the-key. Place the second "defender" just inside the free throw line. Make a left handed inside-out move on the first defender as well as on the second defender, finishing the power layup on the left side off of two feet with your left hand. Go back to the middle again this time completing the moves and shot with your right hand.

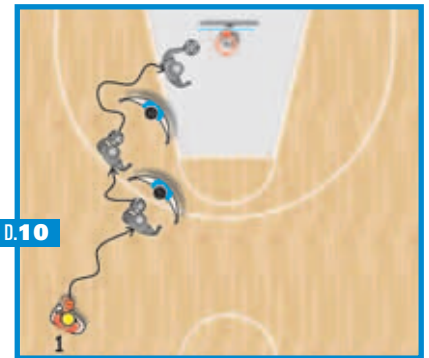
4. After you have completed the inside-out move from 1/2 court versus two defenders, you can proceed to the crossover dribble vs. two defenders.

1/2 COURT TRANSITION DRIBBLE MOVES VS. 2 DEFENDERS

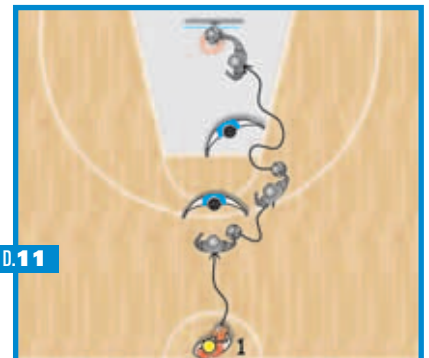
1. On the right side, move the first "defender" 1-2 steps above the three-point line. Place a second "defender" (garbage can) approximately half way down the lane line. Make an inside-out move on the first defender as well as on the second defender, finishing the power layup on the right side off of two feet with your right hand (diagr. 9).



D.9



D.10



D.11



D.12

From the right side, dribble with your right hand to the first defender, crossover to your left hand, then dribble to the second defender with your left, crossover to your right hand, and drive to the basket finishing the power layup on the right side off of two feet with your right hand.

5. From the left side, dribble with your left hand to the first defender, crossover to your right hand, dribble to the second defender with your

right, crossover to your left hand, and drive to the basket finishing the power layup on the left side off of two feet with your left hand (diagr. 11).

6. From the middle, dribble with your right hand to the first defender, crossover to the left, dribble to the second defender with your left, crossover to your right hand, drive to the basket finishing the power layup on the right side off of two feet with

your right hand (diagr. 12). Then go back to the middle and perform the same dribble sequence beginning with left hand.

Now we can begin to combine moves against two defenders. Against the first defender use a crossover dribble, against the second defender use an inside-out dribble. Then use an inside-out dribble versus the first defender, and a crossover dribble against the second defender.



by Tex Winter

THE TRIANGLE OFFENSE

Tex Winter, until 2007 a consultant of the Los Angeles Lakers, is one of the most respectful basketball coach in the world and the innovator of the triangle offense, learned from coach Sam Barry of the University of Southern California, where he played. He then entered the coaching job as an assistant at Kansas State University, then moved to Marquette University with the position of head coach. Back to Kansas State as head coach for 15 years, he then coached at University of Washington, Northwestern University and Long Beach State. His first approach with the NBA started in 1972 with the Houston Rockets, where he coached for two seasons. In 1985 he became assistant coach of the Chicago Bulls and won six NBA titles, with Phil Jackson as head coach. Then he followed Jackson to the Los Angeles Lakers, where he won three more championships.

I was not the inventor of this offense, but an innovator of this style of play. I think this is a great offense for every level of play, from the high school to the pros. To describe it, I would say it is a sideline triangle on one side of the court and a two-man play on the other side, where the offensive options are dictated by the moves and the reactions of the defenders. The system we used with the Bulls and now with the Lakers let the players takes shots out of the flow of the offense. This "method of play", as I likes to call this offense, is a unique concept in basketball, the one that gives a team the option to play unselfishly and still be creative in their offensive decisions. Naturally, this style of play demands to the players to be disciplined and to submit their own will to that of the group. Therefore, it is necessary to ask to the players to be as complete as it takes to perform the tasks demanded to them, to be able to execute the fundamental skills necessary to make the offense effective, which is the key to any system of play.

The reasons why I decide to adopt the triangle offense was that I wanted a team to

be self-reliant and in control of their game: I wanted to give to my teams a system with which to play basketball. I did not want at all to coach in a frenzy way, calling plays and isolations for the scorers. My belief was and is that a team on the floor knows what is going on and the players must be confident that they could read the defense and react accordingly. Second, basketball should be a reflexive sport and I wanted that my team play a fluid, instinctive, complete game. I rejected the idea on relying only on a point guard, who must make all the ball handling decisions: I think, ultimately, that a good opponent would pressure and destroy a point-guard oriented team.

I trust on this axiom that it is not the system, but the execution of the systems that counts. I am convinced that this is a self evidence truth, we want to obtain the proper execution through the fundamentals. Any systems can succeed or fail on the execution of the minute details of the basic fundamentals, and these details can be the difference between a great player and an average one, or between winning and losing teams. The first aim of a coach and the players should be to have the complete mastery of the individual fundamentals, while the second one is the integration of these individuals into a team. Once this is done the basketball house has been built on a solid, sound foundation. The team will go on the court with confidence and poise, so essential to success. As I told, this method of play is as old as basketball. The set is adjustable to the personnel, but, due to the nature of the offense, the only necessary adjustments from one season to the next one are possibly a series of options based on the individual strengths.

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF SOUND OFFENSE

These are the seven principles of a sound and effective offense.

1. Penetration of the defense. You must penetrate the defense, and the best way to do this is the fast break, because basketball is a full court game, from baseline to baseline.





2. Spacing. I am literally a fanatic of spacing. The floor must be spaced, so it is difficult for the defense to help as well as to trap. The players must be distant from each other a certain number of meters (feet), and the distance varies. In the high school, I would recommend from 4 to 5 meters (about 12 to 15 feet), at the college from 5 to 6 meters (15 to 18 feet), and in the NBA from 5 to almost 7 meters (15 to 20 feet). With this proper spacing, if the defense tries to trap there always will be an open player.
3. Ball and Player Movements. The players must move the ball and move themselves on the court, but with a purpose, because there is only one ball and the players will play almost 80% of the time without the possession of the ball.
4. Options for the Ball Handler. He must be able to pass the ball to all the other four teammates, so the players must be in constant move.
5. Offensive Rebound and Defensive Balance. On all the possible shots, the offense must provide a strong offensive rebounding, as well create a defensive balance to avoid the opponents' fast break.
6. To fill any spot. The offense must offer to any player the chance to fill any spot on the court, independently by his role. All the position should be interchangeable.
7. Utilize individual talents. Take advantage by your best players, but always with the respect of all the other teammates on the court. Michael Jordan taught me this.

PASSING

One underrated skill today is passing, and passing is one of the basic of the triangle offense. For this reason I think it's important that the player really understand the principles we want to apply on passing.

- ▼ No more than one meter (three feet) should be the distance between the passer and his defender and preferably less. The closer the defender covers the offensive player with the ball and less time he has to react to the passer movement, giving to the passer the chance to recognize what the defender is doing. This principle of good passing is violated more than any other.
- ▼ He must see the passing lanes and the receiver, but not look at the receiver, unless the pass is preceded by an effective fake, and do not turn and face



the receiver. Use what is called the "peripheral" vision, but without making a blind pass.

- ▼ He has to use fakes with a purpose, not over fake, because he will not be able to recognize what the defender is doing with the hands. He must make a fake and react with poise, seeing the lane of passing.
- ▼ He must eliminate all the unnecessary moves in ball handling and passing, using quick wrist and finger action, shortening as much as possible the action of the pass.
- ▼ He has to pass quickly the ball to an

open teammate, who has no more than three seconds after he received it, to make his play, such as passing, shooting, faking and driving, or passing an cutting. For every second under the three second it takes to the receiver of the pass to execute the play, the better basketball player he becomes. For every second over the three seconds, he becomes a poorer one. All the players on the court must move quickly the ball, so the defense will be occupied, opening the chances of passing lanes and scoring opportunities.

- ▼ He must pass the ball to a teammate's open side, a rule often violated also by the best players. The passer must have the vision not only of his defender, but also of the passing lane and the receiver's defender. Naturally also the receiver must help the passer offering him good target, as well as keep his defender away from the passing lane or freezing or sealing him for a second for giving to the passer the change to pass safely the ball..
- ▼ He must anticipate when he may receive the ball and have enough intuition to know in advance the best places to pass the ball. And this is a skill the best players have. This is the reason why some pro teams are outstanding also if they appeared to have very little definite team pattern. If the players do not have this ability, it is necessary to build an offensive pattern that gives to the players the chance of keeping busy the defense.

SPACING SYMMETRY AND SPOTS ON THE FLOOR

When we talked of spacing on the seven principles of triangle offense, we underlined that this is absolutely a must for this method of play (but also for any offense).

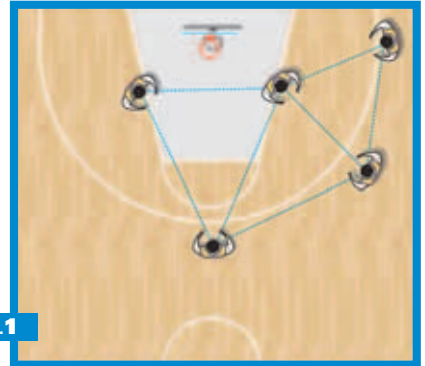
All the players must understand the importance of spacing. At the pro level the proper space among the players ranges from 6 to almost 7 meters (18 to 20 feet). This gives the room for the ball handler to play, as well as spreads out the defense and do not give the chance to help out or trap. The triangle is formed on both sides of the half court (diagr. 1)

On the triangle offense the role of the players are totally interchangeable. There is no need that the guards, the forwards and the centers play on their typical spots on the floor, but the spots area can be filled by any player. Once the spots are filled, the offense is run by where the ball on the court is positioned and by how the defense is moving.

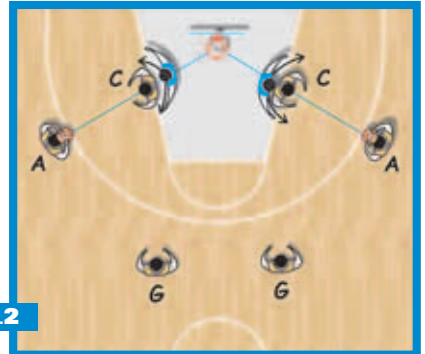
LINE OF DEPLOYMENT

One of the asset of the triangle offense is the chance to isolate the post and attack his defender. We would like now to talk of the "line of deployment", a basic concept. With this terms we mean in imaginary line which is traced from the forward with the ball, to the center in the low post, his defender and the basket.

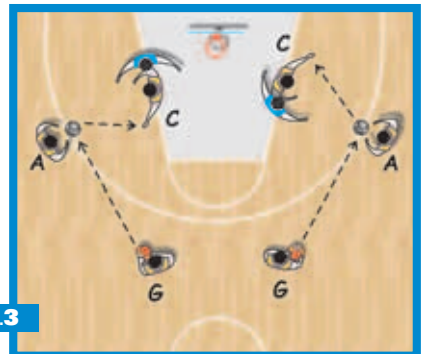
For playing a standard defensive position between the center and the basket, the defender of the center must play behind the center, as long as the center remains on the line of deployment (diagr. 2). But, defending in this way, it is easy for the forward to pass



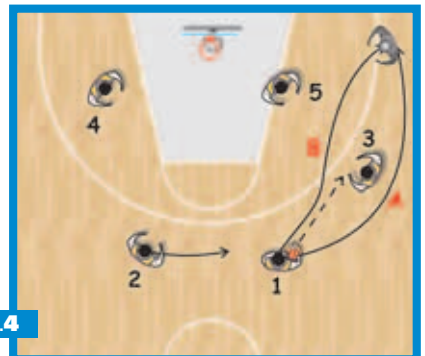
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D.2



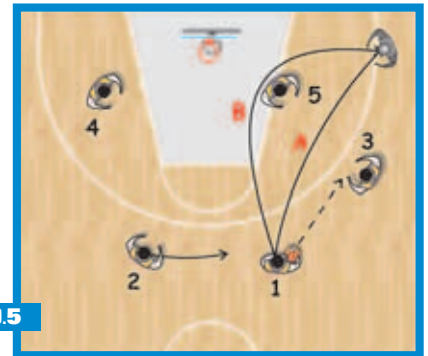
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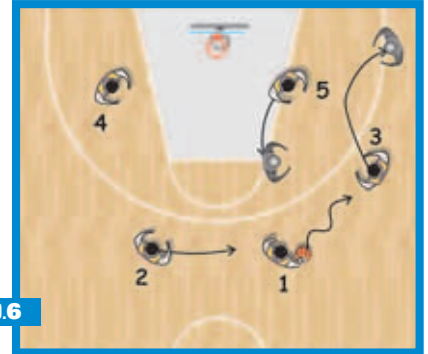
D.4

the ball to the center. If the center's defender wants to prevent an easy pass, he must overplay the center, on the baseline side or the high side, losing in this way his alignment with the center and the basket, so the forward can make a quick pass to the open side of the center. The center must master the good technique of shaping up on the post, it means playing the line of deployment (diagr. 3).

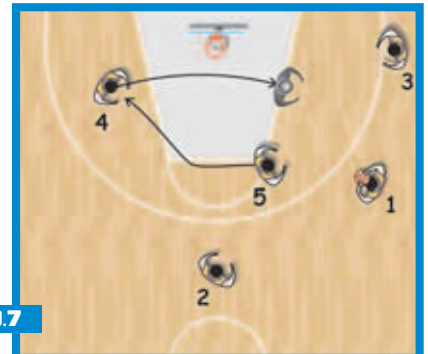
We stress this theory and we were and are successful to pass the ball to the center,



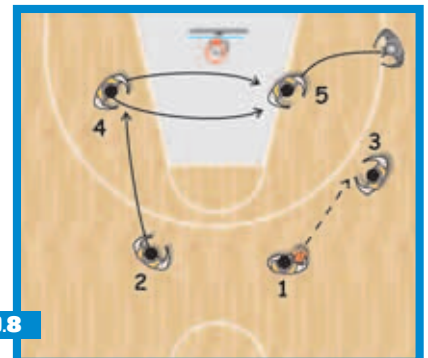
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D.6



D.7



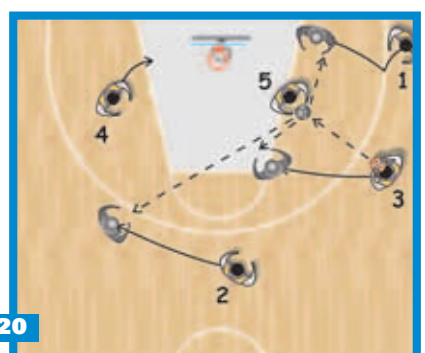
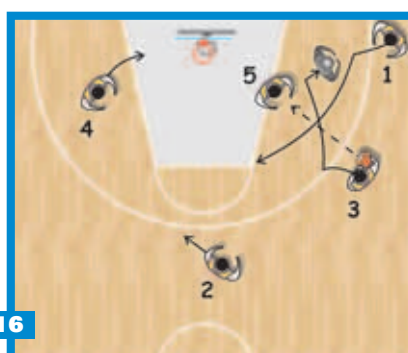
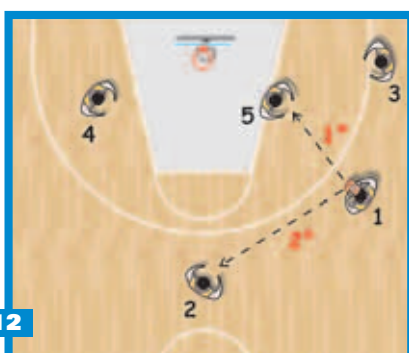
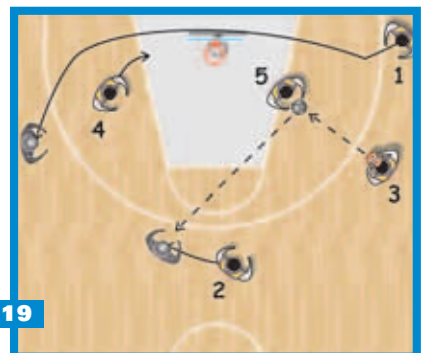
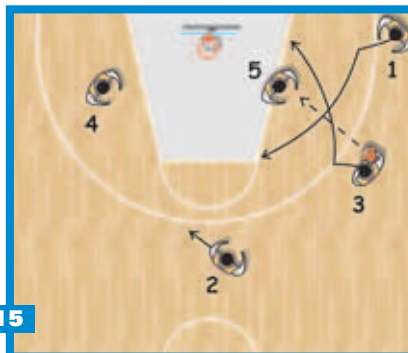
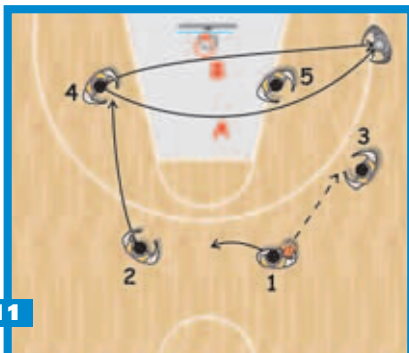
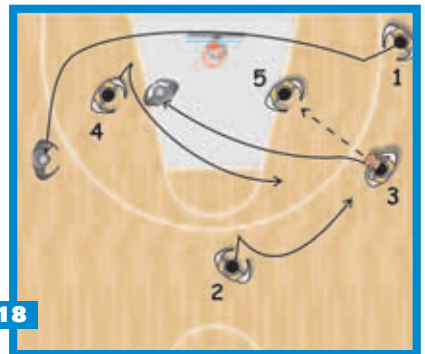
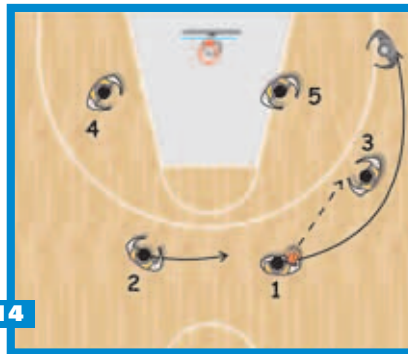
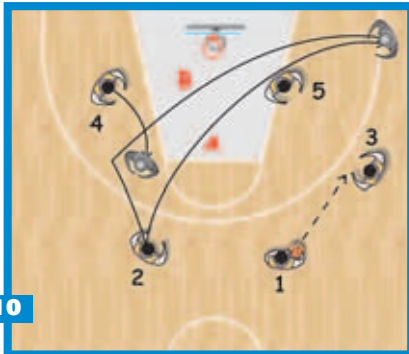
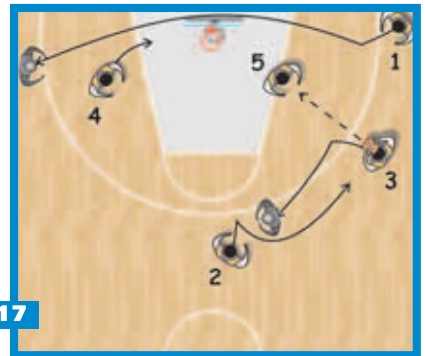
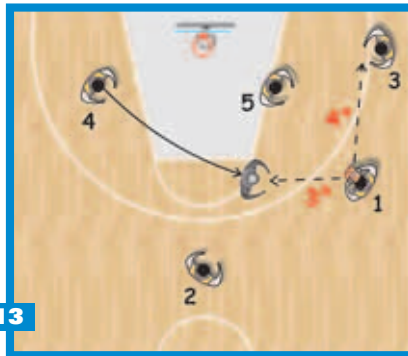
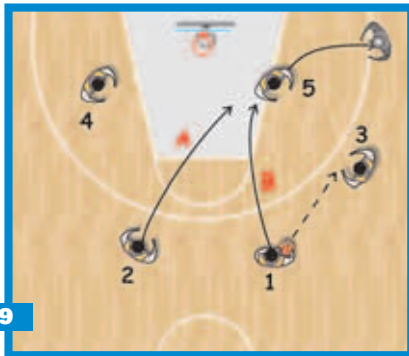
D.8

either for a shot or for a pass out to a teammate, who is in a position to do something constructive with the ball when he receives it.

By thoroughly indoctrinating the players on the line of deployment theory, we feel we have been very successful in getting the ball to our center, and this has been true despite a concentrated effort by the opponents to prevent the pass to the post.

DIFFERENT METHODS OF FORMING THE SIDELINE TRIANGLE

The triangle offense can start in several



ways, depending by the defensive adjustments or offensive strategies.

BASIC WAYS TO FORM THE TRIANGLE

"N. 1" Pass from the Triangle

We call this N. 1 pass because it is this first pass that is done for forming the triangle, and after this one we form the triangle.

STRONG SIDE FILL

Guard

Outside Cut. 1 dribbles on the lateral lane, passes to the wing 3, cuts outside him

and goes in the corner, forming a triangle with 5 and 3. The wing 3 must set himself with the proper space, away from the sideline for letting 1 cutting behind him, as well as the other types of cuts, which we will explain on the next paragraphs.

Slice Cut. 1 passes the ball to the wing 3, goes toward him and then cuts away and goes in the corner (diagr. 4).

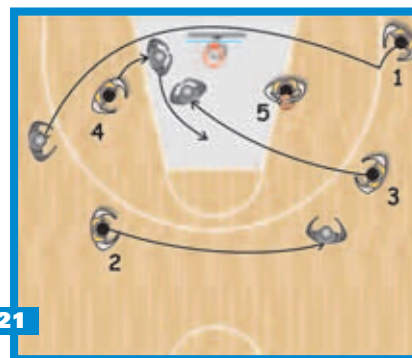
Blur Screen Cut. 1 passes the ball to the wing 3, cuts inside, brushing off the center 5, and goes in the corner.

Basket Cut. 1 passes the ball to the wing 3 and cuts to the basket, coming off the center 5, and goes in the corner.

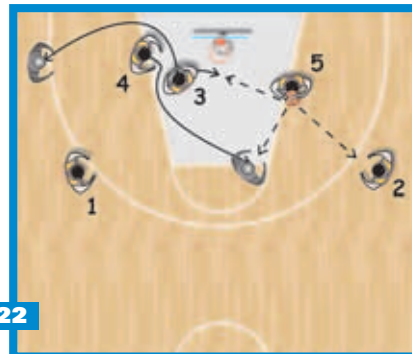
On all the cuts of the strong side guard 1, the other guard 2 gets in the middle of the floor for defensive balance and for then playing two-on two on the weak side (diagr. 5).

Wing

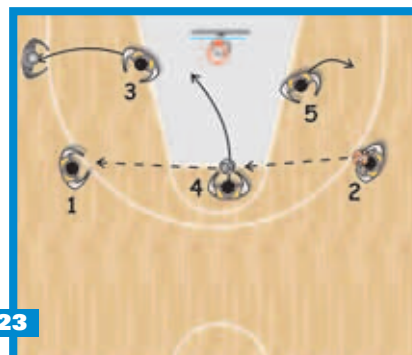
Dribble entry: 1 dribbles toward 3 and this is a signal for 3 to go in the corner, while 5 moves to high post and 2 goes in the middle of the court (diagr. 6).



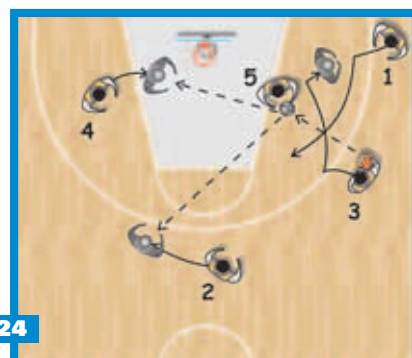
D.21



D.22



D.23



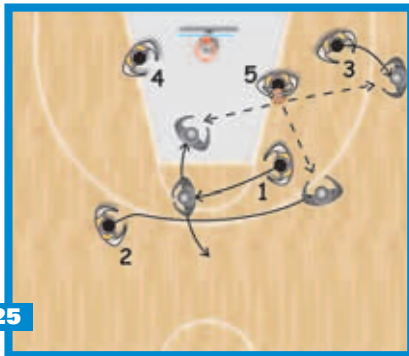
D.24

Then 4 cuts in the lane and goes on the center position, while 5 replaces 4 in the wing spot with a weak side cut (diagr. 7)

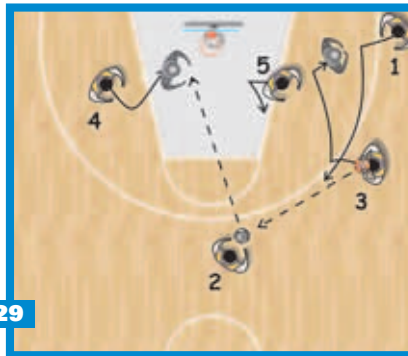
Center

1 passes to 3 and 5 goes to the corner, while 4 cuts, high or low, in the lane and replaces the center while 2 cuts to the weak side wing spot, replacing 4 (diagr. 8).

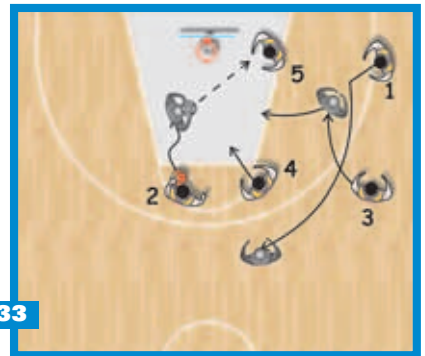
Another option is that 1 passes to 3, 5 goes in the corner and 1 (or 2) replaces 5 in the post (diagr. 9).



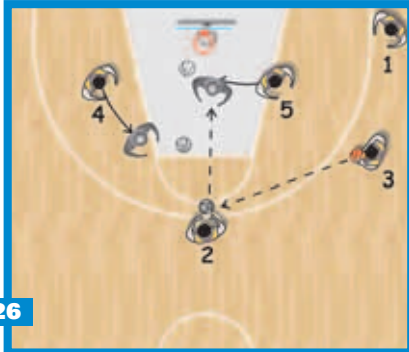
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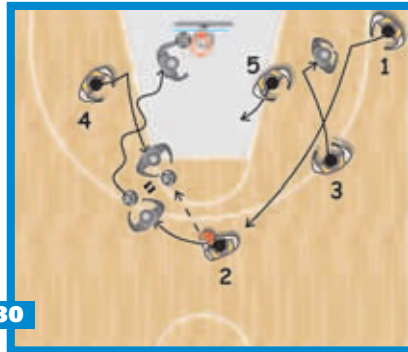
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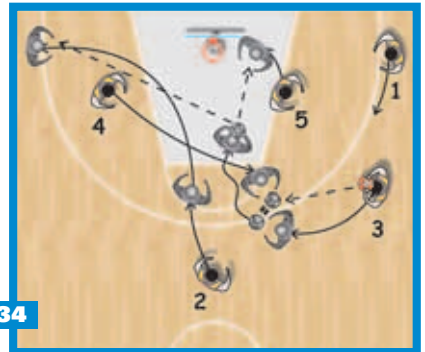
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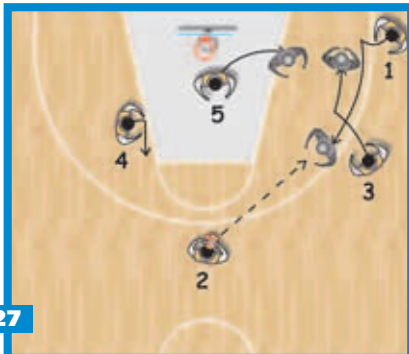
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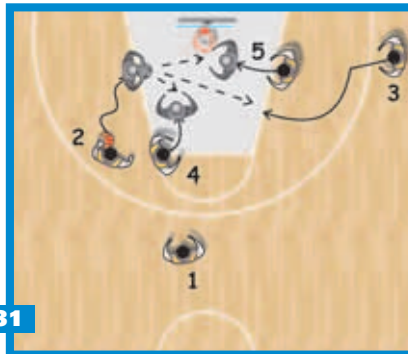
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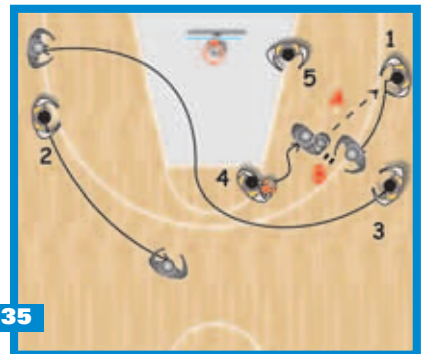
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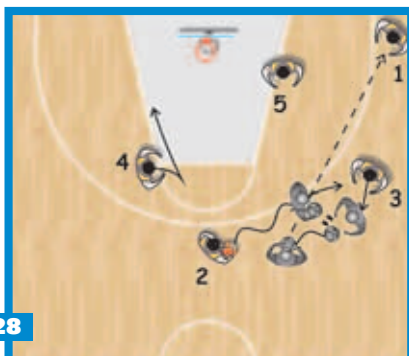
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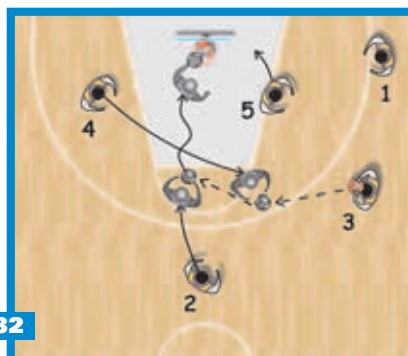
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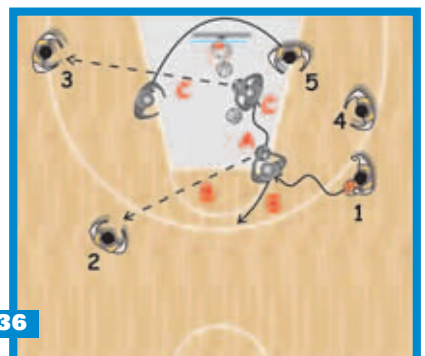
D.35



D.28



D.32



D.36

WEAK SIDE FILL

Guard

1 passes to 3 and then the weak side guard 2 can fill the corner in two ways:

- ▼ With a basket cut.
- ▼ After a back pick of the wing 4 (diagr. 10).

Forward

1 passes to 3 and 4 makes a baseline or over the top cut and fills the corner, while 2 replaces 4 in the wing position (diagr.11).

"N. 2" Pass from the Triangle

After we form the triangle on the strong side of the court, there are four potential passes that the strong side wing can make. We call these four passing options "No.2" passes, because they are made after the first pass to the wing position, that we use for forming the triangle. Four are the spots on the court where these passes can be directed and from each one of these spots there are a multitude of different offensive options.

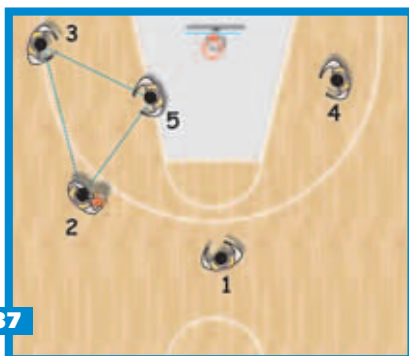
Assuming that 1 passed to 3 and then filled the corner, the wing 3 must:

- I. First look for the pass to the center 5.
- II. Second look to the weak side guard 2 on the middle of the half court (diagr. 12)
- III. Third look on the backdoor step of weak side wing 4.
- IV. Fourth look to the strong side guard 1 in the corner (diagr. 13).

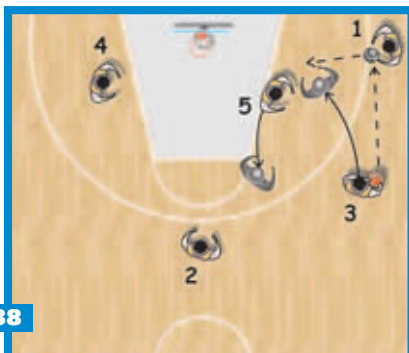
I. FIRST LOOK: PASS TO THE CENTER

Setting the Sideline Triangle

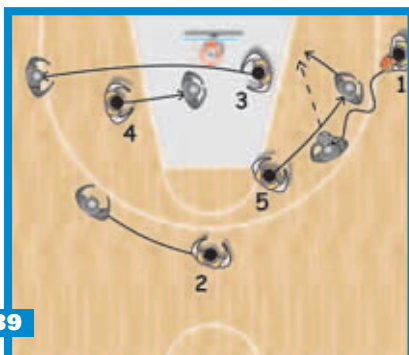
We will show now one of the simplest options of this offense, old as basketball, but still very effective. It is what is called "split cuts", or also "split the post" or "post cuts".



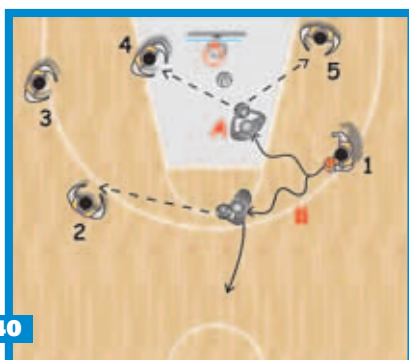
D.37



D.38



D.39



D.40

The play starts with the entry pass from 1 to 3 and the outside cut to the corner of 1, for forming the sideline triangle, while 2 goes in the middle of the court (diagr. 14).

FORWARD TO POST PASS

A. 3 passes to 5, then makes a fake to cut inside the lane and then cuts on the baseline side of 5. The passer is the first cutter and cuts to side of the post 5.

3 can make:

- ▼ A fast cut, while 1 is trying to cut as close as possible behind 3 (diagr.15).
- ▼ A change of pace cut, with an attempt of a



screen for 1 (diagr 16). 2 spots up opposite to the ball and 4 gets near the lane for the rebound.

After the pass to the post 5, 3 can also start a speed cut and then screen for 2 (diagr. 17). He can also start a speed cut and then screen for 4, while 1 speed cuts on the baseline (diagr. 18).

The post 5 can also kick off the ball to 2, who has spotted up on the weak side in a spot that we call "garden spot" (diagr. 19).

B. 3 passes the ball to 5 and 1 fast cuts to the baseline and, if open, receives a drop pass from 5, while 3 makes a over the top speed cut (on our terminology we call this action "zone speed cuts"). In the meantime, on the pass from 3 to 5, 2 spots up on the "garden spot" and can receive the ball from 5, and 4 cuts behind the defense to the "freeze"spot" (diagr. 20)

If 1, 2 or 3 are not open, 1 continues his cut, rubs off the 4's screen and goes high, while 3 cuts in the lane and screens 4 (screen-the-screener action), while 2 replaces 3 (diagr. 21).

4 pops out to the free-throw area and receives the ball from 5, or, if 4 is not free, 5 can also pass to 3, who has rolled to the basket after the screen. If he has no other choice 5 can pass to 2. 3, if does not receive from 5, fills the corner on the weak side (diagr. 22).

2 passes to 4 (or can pass back to 5) and then he moves to the top of the circle. If 4 is not free for shooting, he passes to 1 and then cuts and goes on the low post position, and 5 takes the weak side wing spot of 4. Now we have formed the triangle on the other side of the floor, and we can run again our offense (diagr. 23).

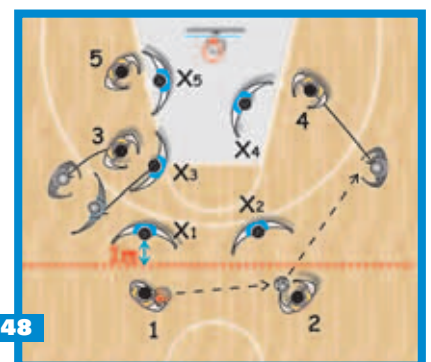
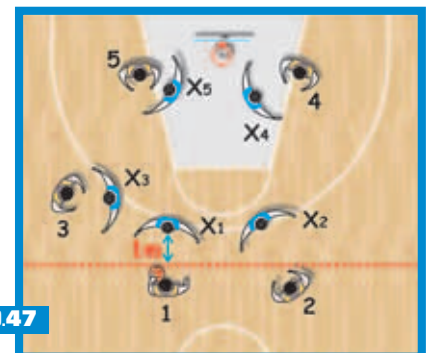
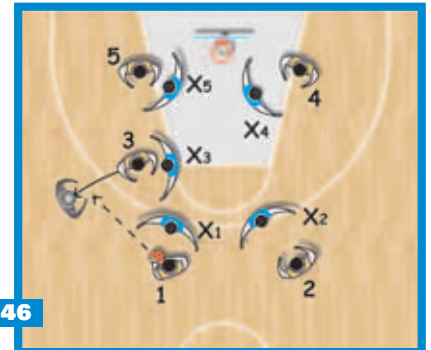
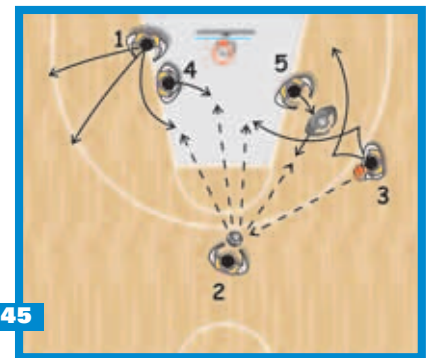
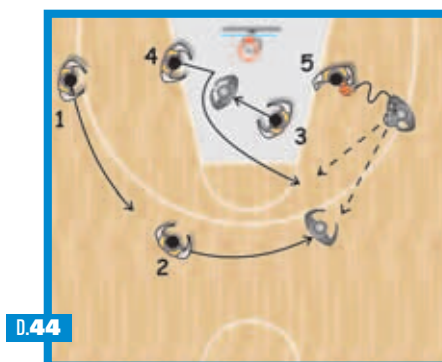
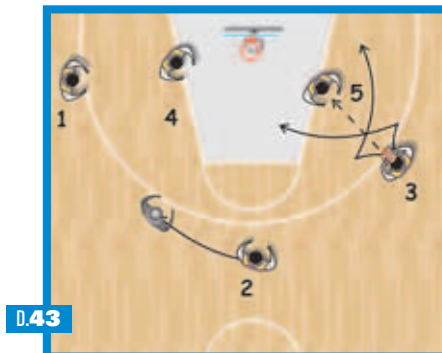
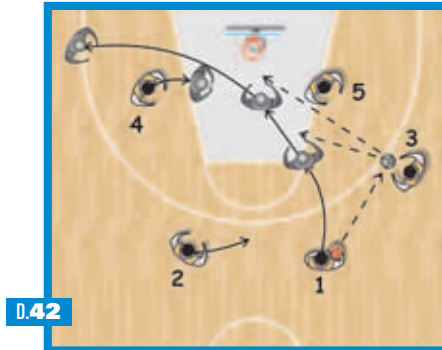
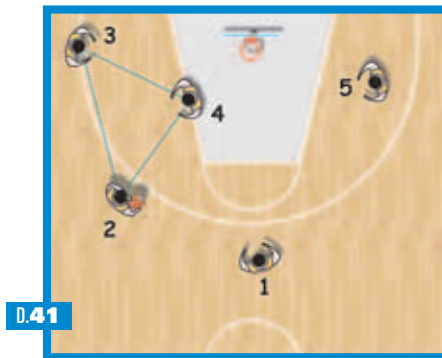
C. After the pass to 5, 3 makes a "rebound screen cut", while 1 step fakes on the baseline to set the defender up and cuts off the 3's screen to a position in front of 5, and 2 and 4 spots up opposite to the ball. 5 tries to pass the ball to one of the open teammates (diagr. 24).

If neither is open, 1 continues to the free-throw line area: he can cut in the lane, screen for 2, who has come back to the ball, and then roll to the basket or pop out after the screen. 5 can pass to 1, to 2, or to 3, who, after the screen, pops out in the corner (diagr. 25).

II. SECOND LOOK: PASS TO THE TOP OF THE CIRCLE (WEAK SIDE GUARD)

A. If 5 is not open, 3 can pass to 2 at the top of the circle and, if 2 is open, he can shot, as the first option, or he can pass to 5, who ducks in the lane (diagr. 26).

If 5 is not open on the duck in the lane, 3, after



the pass to 2, runs a "rebound screen cut", while 1 step fakes on the baseline to set the defender up and cuts off the 3's screen, on the way back to defensive balance. 2 can pass to 1. 4 fakes cut and comes back, as well as 5. This action keeps the defense occupied off the ball (diagr. 27).

2 can pass to 1 if open, or can dribble wave ball to 1, if the defense is sagging. 2 passes to 1 on the dribble interchange, about at the mid point, or 2 passes up to 1 and 1 passes to 3, who has step back in the corner after the screen. 4 reverses back to the basket

area as the dribble weave action takes place (diagr. 28).

B. We call this play "pinch post action." 4 starts to pop to the ball, when 2 receives the ball from 3, but 4 is overplayed, so he reverses to the basket, a backdoor cut, and can receive an over the top pass from 2, while 1 gets up for a defensive balance and 5 keeps his defender busy, moving in and out of the lane. 2 passes to 4 (diagr. 29).

If 4 cannot receive on the back door, he

gets to the high post area at the elbow, receive the ball from 2, who speed cuts off 4 and receives the ball back, a short flip pass off the 4's front hip. 2 must have the hands in a "ready position" to catch the ball (a two-man play). After the screen, 3 steps back in the corner, while 1 gets up for the defensive balance and 5 keeps busy his defender and "freezes" for a second at the block (diagr. 30).

2 drives to the basket, 4 reverses pivot with the pass, it means he opens up to the ball, reads the defense and reacts accordingly. If there is a direct line to the basket, he "dive" cuts to the basket and receives a return pass from 2. If 2 is double teamed, 4 opens up to the ball, with a reverse pivot, and holds for a return pass from 2. 5 "freezes" at the block, ready to receive a possible pass from 2 and 3 spots up for a possible kick off pass or cut to the front of the rim for a pass or to go to rebound (diagr. 31).

III. THIRD LOOK: PASS TO THE WEAK SIDE WING

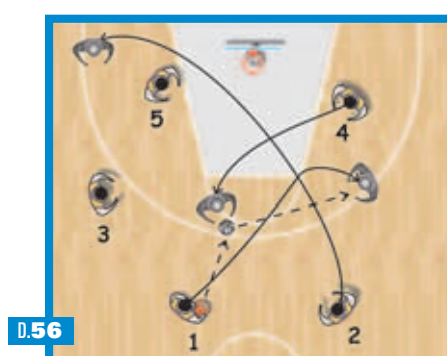
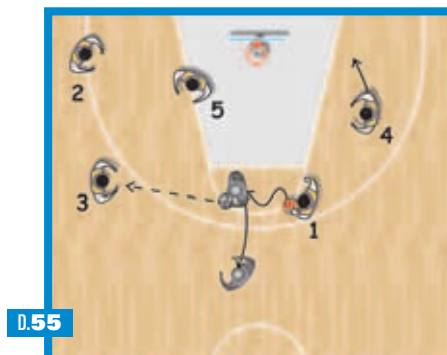
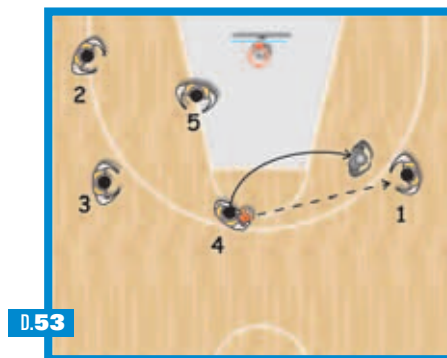
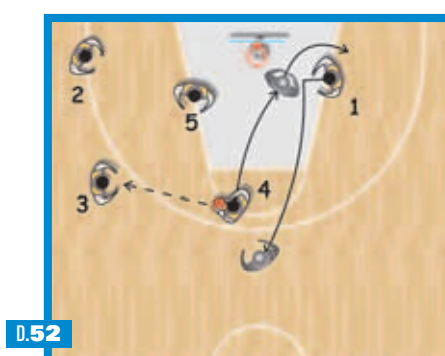
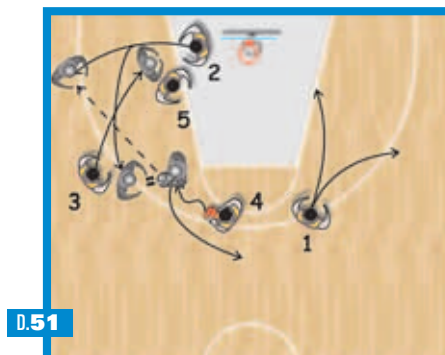
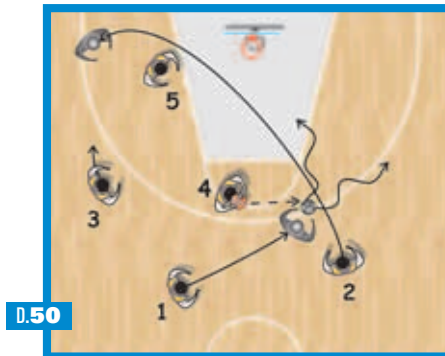
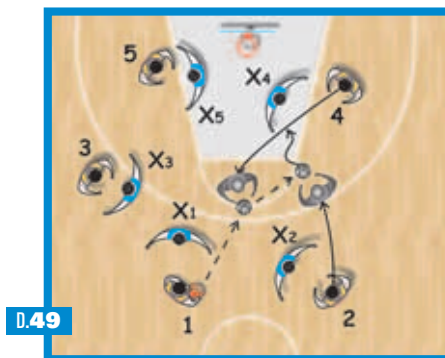
A. 3 passes to 4, who has flashed at the elbow on the high post on the ball side, and 2 makes a "backdoor speed cut" to the basket. If 2 has the head and the shoulders over his defender, 4 makes a quick drop pass to 2. 2 should receive the ball with the knee high and reaching ahead for it (diagr. 32).

3, after making the pass to 4, runs a "rebound ,screen cut", while 1 step fakes to the baseline and comes off the screen of 3. 1 goes high for defensive balance and 3 reads the play and prepares for the rebound on the front of the rim. 5 freezes at the block and anticipates a possible pass from 2, if his defenders switches to help 2's defender's on the drive. Then, 4 reverses pivot and reads the defense, staying behind the ball or diving to the basket, ready to receive a pass from 2, if 4's defender drops to cover 2 (diagr. 33).

B. 3 passes to 4, who has flashed at the elbow on the high post on the ball side, and 2 makes a backdoor speed cut to the basket. If 2 is not open, he cuts in the corner and 3 cuts right after him for receiving a pass from 4. 3 can drive to the basket for a lay up or drive and kick off to 5 on "freeze" on the block, or to 2, who spotted up in the corner (diagr. 34). If 2 is not open and also 3 cannot receive the ball, 4 dribbles wave to 1 coming out of the corner, or pass to him on the step back to the corner (diagr. 35).

If 1 receives the ball on the dribble wave, he drives straight to the basket, and can also make a jump shot, a kick off pass to 2 or 3, while 5 flashes to the low post on the other side of the floor (diagr. 36).

If nothing happens, with the pass to 2 we have formed a triangle on the other side of the court with 2, 5 and 3, with 1 at the top of



the lane and 4 on the weak side wing spot and we create continuity on our offense (diagr. 37).

IV. FOURTH LOOK: PASS TO THE STRONG SIDE GUARD

3 passes to 1 in the corner. After the pass, 3 makes a "banana" cut to the basket and can try to receive the ball, while 5 gets to the high post at the ball side elbow (diagr. 38).

Right after the 3's cut, 5 screens and rolls on 1, who drives to the top of the

key, and can try to pass to 5 on the roll, while 3 continues his cut and is screened by 4 on the weak side and 2 spotted up opposite to the ball (diagr. 39).

1 can shot or drive to the basket or pass to 2, who has spotted up. 1 can also pass to 4 or 5 if there is help on the basket penetration (diagr. 40)

We so form the triangle on the other side with 3, 4 and 2, while 5 becomes weak side wing, and 1 sets up at the top of lane (diagr. 41).

SOLO CUT SERIES OF OPTIONS

1, after the pass to 3, instead cutting to the corner for creating the triangle, makes a speed cut, and receives the ball at the free-throw line area, or under the basket, if he is free. 4 moves from 5 to 6 meters (15 to 18 feet) from the basket and holds, while 2 gets to the top of the circle and holds (diagr. 42).

3 gets in the triple threat position and looks at the post 5 for a pass. 1 holds his position in a "freeze" spot opposite to the ball. 3 passes to 5, and makes what we call "solo cut", either side of 5. 2 spots up on the "garden spot", away from the ball, while 4 screens down for 1 and 1 pops out in the corner (diagr. 43).

As 3 cuts on 5, 5 has cleared the area for a shot, 2 works behind the "sweet spot." 3, if does not receive on the cut, screens for 4, who can come high to the free-throw line area or cut to the basket for receiving from 5. 5 can also pass to 2 (diagr. 44).

Let's now assume that 3 cannot pass to 5. 3 then passes to 2 at the top of the lane and then makes a "rub cut" off 5, while 5 steps up to pinch post off 3's cut. On the weak side 4 screens for 1, who can pop out flat in the corner, or out or up. 2 has several options of passing: he can pass to 3, to 1, to 4, who has rolled to the basket after the screen for 1, or to 5 on the pinch post (diagr. 45).

PRESSURE RELEASES - METHODS OF PENETRATING THE FRONT LINE DEFENSES

I. "Moment of Truth". We must be able to overcome the problem of the defense, which puts a lot of pressure on our offensive players. Here we will show different methods of pressure releases and penetrating the front line defense. But, before we need to explain some terms we use. On our terminology we have defined "moment of truth" as the position of 3, the wing in front of the defensive player defending the ball. 1 is ready to pass the ball to the wing 3 as he reaches the "moment of truth", and 3 must coordinate his pop out, so he can receive the ball at the wing position as 1 reaches the "moment of truth" (diagr. 46). Then we call "line of truth" the imaginary line across the floor one meter (three feet) in front of the defensive player on the ball handler (diagr. 47).

II. "Lag principle". If 1 reaches the "moment of truth" and 3 is not open on the pop out, we apply the "lag principle", a guard-to-guard pass. 1 passes

to 2, as 2 "lags" behind the "line of truth", by one meter (three feet) or more as a safety valve. Then 2 passes to 4 as he pops out to receive the ball. All the three players, who are involved on this two quick passes, must coordinate their moves and timing for a successful wing entry (diagr. 48).

III. "Blind Pig Action". If 2, the player, who should receive the "lag" pass is overplayed, 4 flashes to the top of the lane, 1 passes quickly to 4, 2 speed cuts down back side, a back door cut, and if he is open, receives a drop pass on the cut to the basket (diagr. 49).

If 2 is not open he continues the cut to the weak side "freeze" spot, 1 cuts over the top on down back side of 4 and receives the ball from him. 1 drives to the basket or dribbles on the operating spot, on the wing or on the corner (diagr. 50).

If 1 is not open on the cut, he continues to the basket area and then steps out and looks for late pass and holds position. 4 then drives on the other side of the court for a dribble weave, and meets 2, coming off the down screen of 3. After the pass, 4 goes in the middle of the court and can play on either sides, or can pass to 2, popping out to the corner and filling the wing spot to form the triangle (diagr. 51).

Options for 4

4 can pass to 3, and, instead screening for him, screens down for 1, who moves up at the top of the floor. 2 holds on the "freeze" position and reads the action, while 3 holds wing position, instead screening down for 2. If 4 goes away to screen for 1, 2 pops out to the corner area and a sideline triangle is formed by 3, 5 and 2 (diagr. 52).

4 can also pass to 1 and set a screen on the ball (diagr. 53). 1 has the following options:

- ▼ Make a drop pass to 4 on the 4's roll to the basket.
- ▼ Drive right to the basket.
- ▼ Penetrate to clear for a jump shot.
- ▼ Penetrate and kick off the ball to 5 on the block; to 3, who is holding in the weak side position; or to 2 in the corner spot (diagr. 54).

If no solution is possible, we can form the sideline triangle with 3, 5 and 2. 1 can pass to 3 and then get at the top of the circle (diagr. 55).

After the "blind pig" (please see the diagr. 6.50), and the cut of 2, 4, with the ball at the top of the circle, passes back it to 1, and

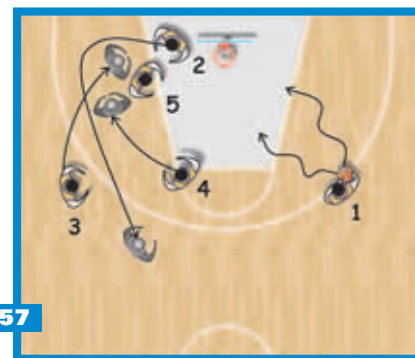


then goes away (diagr. 56).

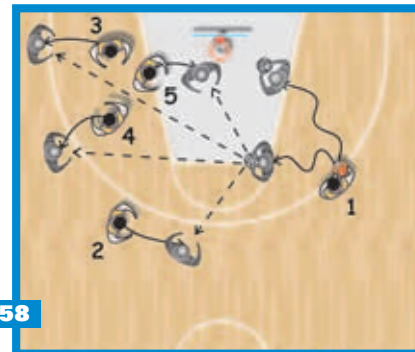
4 sets a second screen, a staggered screen for 2, who has come out of the lane and has received a first screen from 3.

1 is isolated on one side of the court and can play one-on-one, while 2 continues his cut and has come off the screens of 3 and 4 and is back on the center of the court for defensive balance (diagr. 57).

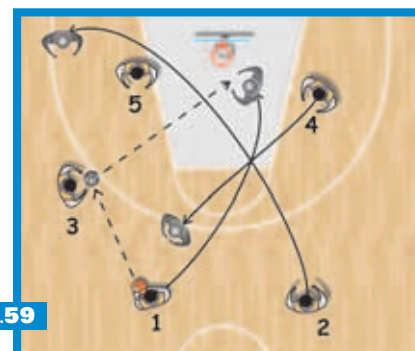
If 1 cannot beat his defender to the basket, he can kick off the ball to one of his four teammates, who spaced out on the weak



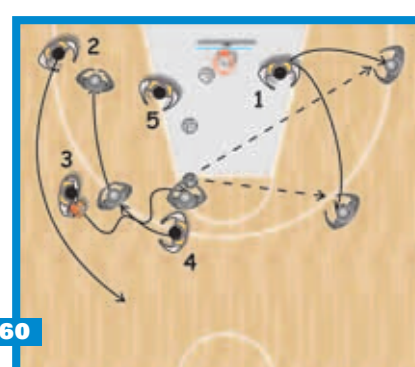
D.57



D.58



D.59



D.60

side. Again, we form the sideline triangle with 4, 5, and 3, while 2 sets himself on the top of the lane and 1 on the weak side wing spot (diagr. 58).

Wing entry on the "blind pig"

4 has flashed to the top of the circle and 2 speed cuts in the lane. But this time 1 cannot pass to 4, so he passes to 3 and then 1 receives a back screen by 4. 1 speed cuts and 3 looks for a high over the top pass to 1 (diagr. 59).

After the screen for 1, 4 sets a sideline screen for 3, who drives around 4 and to the

lane (we call this action "wing screen and roll"). 1 spots up to the corner or at the wing spot, or comes back for a dribble weave interchange with 3. After the screen for 3, 4 screens again for the third time, now in the corner for 2, who comes up for the defensive balance. 5 "freezes" on the weak side post area (diagr. 60).

After the screen, 4 continues to the weak side rebound position, 3 posts down after the kick off pass to 1. 5 sets himself in the lane for the possible rebound on a shot of 1 (diagr. 61).

If 2 is overplayed or he has violated the "lag principle", 2 cuts first and 4 cuts second, right after 2's tail (we call this "blur" screen), 4 receives the ball from 1 and then 1 speed cuts back side of 4. 3 screens for 2, who comes up for defensive balance (diagr. 62).

1 can also make a high pass to 2, if open (diagr. 63).

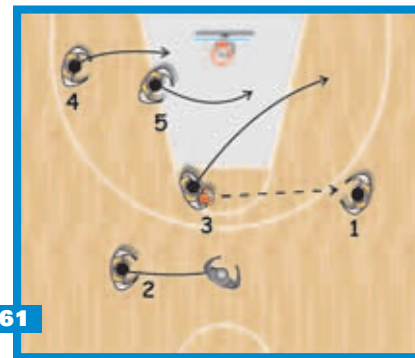
IV. Wing Reverse. If 1 cannot pass to 2 or 3, he can pass to 5, who has flashed to the high post position at the elbow on the

ball side, as usual, respecting the spacing with the other teammates. 3, on the pass to the high post 5, cuts backdoor (we call this action "wing reverse"). 5 passes the ball with a drop pass to 3, if 3 is head and shoulders over his defender 5 (diagr. 64).

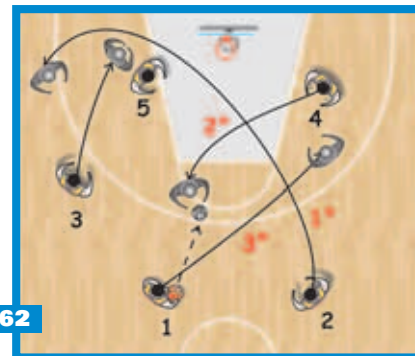
If 3 cannot receive the ball, 1 screens on 2 (we call this action "guard squeeze action"). 2 cuts off the 1's screen and to a position one meter (three feet) in front of 5, and 5 passes the ball to 2, if open. After the screen, 1 rolls to the free-throw area and can also receive the ball from 5 (diagr. 65).

CONCLUSION

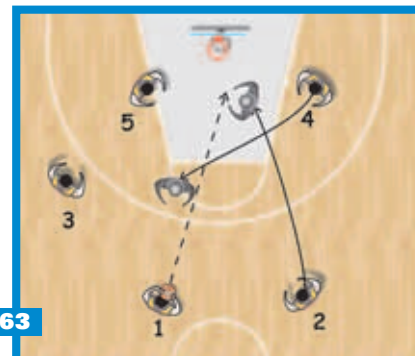
We hope these information will provide you insight into basketball at another deeper level. It may give you some information you have to wanted to have about the game or aid you in coaching your team, be it in the high school, college, amateur or pro. We think this style of playing basketball back to a teaching level, and, at the same time, liberated the players to bring their skills higher in an individual and team level. We solicit your attention to the details of the fundamental execution skills, because these are the necessary tools to carry out the triangle offense. And remember always: "It is the execution that counts."



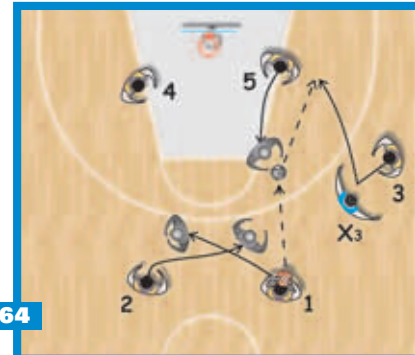
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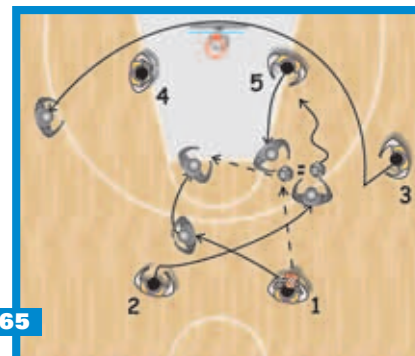
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by Tom Maher

CHINA'S OFFENSE AT THE FIBA WOMEN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Tom Maher is one of the most respected and experienced coaches in the women's international game today. He led the Opals (the Australian women's national team) from 1993 to 2000, winning a bronze medal at the Olympic Games of Atlanta in 1996, and a silver medal at the Olympic Games of Sydney in 2000. After coaching the WNBA's Washington Mystics, he took over the New Zealand women national team in 2004, playing in the Athens' Olympic Games. He has been coaching the Chinese women national team since 2005.

Our team entered the FIBA World Championship with the goal of preparing for the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008 and performing well there. Seven players returned from the previous FIBA World Championship in China in 2002: Song, Zhang, Miao, Ren, Sui, Zhang, and Chen. The team is now more mature, with an average age of 23 years, and, of course, with experience from the previous FIBA World Championship. Even though our aim was to do the very well in Brazil, the main focus for us has been the 2008 Olympics.

STARTING LINEUP

This was our starting five:

1. Lijie Miao, point-guard.
2. Guang Jia, shooting guard.
3. Lei Ren, small forward.
4. Xiaoni Zhang, power forward.
5. Nan Chen, center.

There are three key players on the Chinese team, and most of the offensive sets are built and developed for them. The most experienced player is the point-guard, Lijie Miao, an excellent shooter, both from the middle and from the long distance. She also likes to drive to the basket as well as finish on a fast break, when possible. She finished as the fourth top scorer in the World Championship, averaging 17.6 points per game.

The main post player in the Chinese team is Nan Chen, a left-handed, solid center, who is able to set good screens and attack the basket, mainly from her favorite left-hand side. She finished 6th on the top scorers list with 17.3 points per game.

The third key player is the power forward, Xiaoni Zhang. She is very mobile and technically sound, with a good middle-distance jump shot. An excellent free-throw shooter, she finished third in the final standings in free-throw percentage with 89.2%.

STYLE OF PLAY

I wanted to give my team a good organization on both aspects of the game, offense and defense. We have good perimeter players who can shoot and drive to the basket as well as feed the post players inside the lane. We have a quick transition game and like to run the fast break.

Offensively, most of our plays are developed to create an open shot for Miao on the perimeter, or else feed the ball close to the basket to Nan Chen or Xiaoni Zhang. The perimeter players spread the floor well and create options for the two inside players to attack the basket, using either a high-low combination or pick-and-roll.

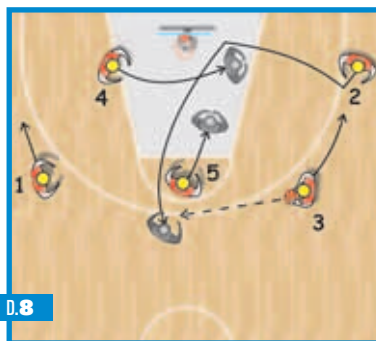
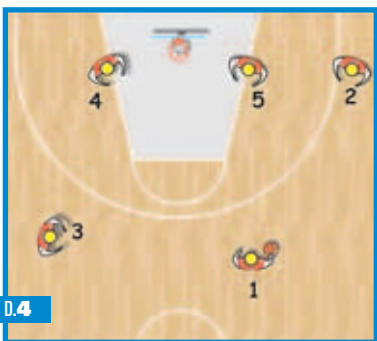
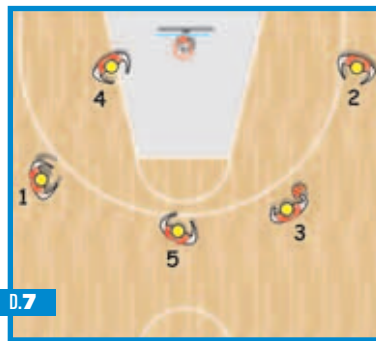
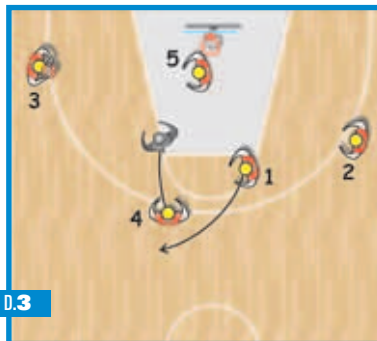
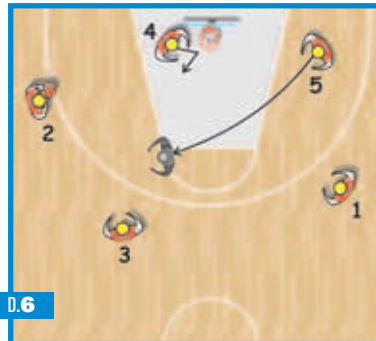
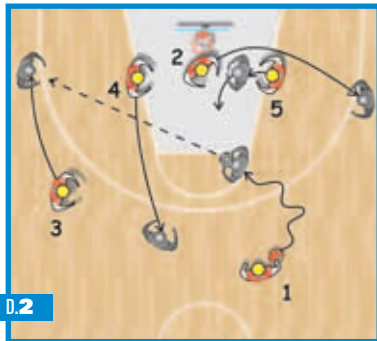
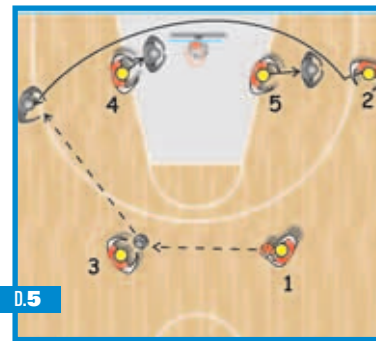
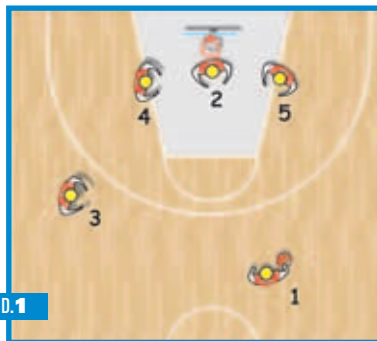
The guards and forwards are shooting the ball well from the three-point range and therefore they take a lot of shots from that distance. Of course, some times this creates problems if the team is not shooting well, because it exposes us to many easy fastbreaks. Miao is an excellent scorer, very confident, and likes to take charge in tough situations. Most of the plays go through her.

We finished 5th in overall shooting percentage with 50.8% which is an excellent achievement. We were also second overall in the free-throw percentage, shooting 77.3% from the line. We sometimes found it difficult to create opportunities to score, especially when playing against big and physical teams.

Against zone defenses, we wanted to use the principles of overload with the high-low in the paint, relying mainly on the quick movement of the ball on the perimeter and the outside shooting of the perimeter players. The two inside players, Chan and Zheng, rotate well inside the key and also look for their shots from close range, or from the top of the key.

We were also organized against the press defenses, and





had no major problems attacking them. We spaced well on the court, had clear understanding of roles, being also able to find the gaps in the defense easily.

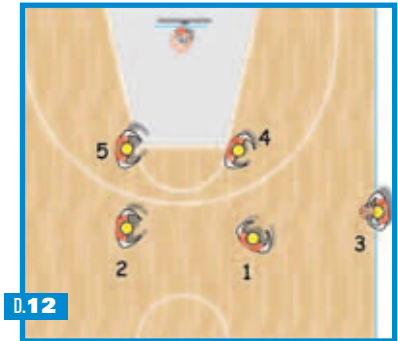
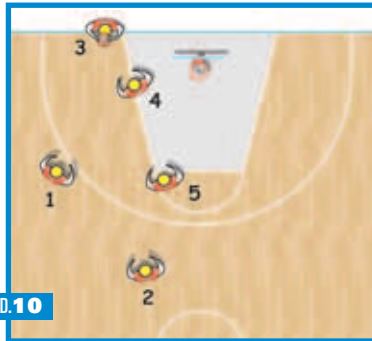
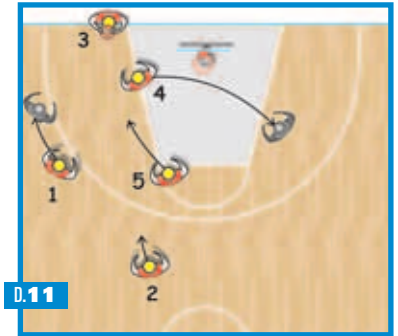
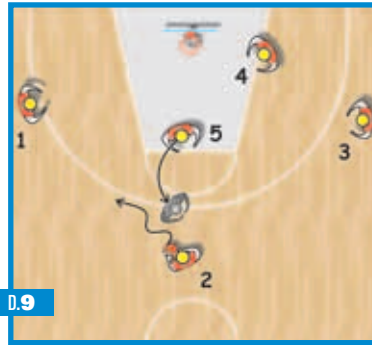
Defensively, we preferred to start the games with a man-to-man defense, trying to play aggressive half-court defense with a lot of help and communication. The players always try to get over the screen and switch only if trapped, trying to cover the shot and help inside the key.

Sometimes, we allowed an easy drive on the baseline or through the middle, which was a problem against more athletic teams. We box-out well. However, in the big games against the more powerful and athletic players, we allowed too many easy rebounds.

On defense, we used a press, usually half or 3/4 court, either 2-1-2 or 1-2-2 formations, and our zone defense worked quite well. We also pressed sometimes after a successful free-throw and tried to steal the ball and score an easy basket.

BASIC PLAY

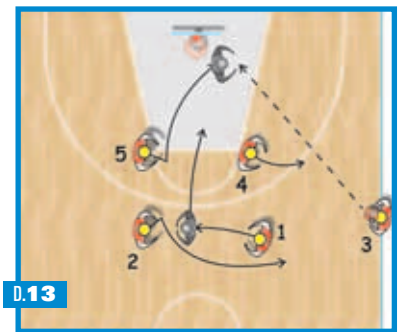
The basic play (diagr. 1) starts with 4 and 5 on the low post positions, 1 and 3 outside, and 2 under the basket. 5 sets a screen for 2. 1 dribbles to the free-throw line, while 3 drops to the corner, and 4 steps out of the three-point line (diagr. 2). 1 can kick out the ball to 3 or 2 for a three-point shot, or to 5, who rolls to the basket after the screen for 2 (diagr. 3).



STAGGERED SCREEN PLAYS

We set in a two-three formation, with 4 and 5 at the low post positions. 4 and 5 set staggered screens on the baseline for 2, 1, and 3 wide out (diagr. 4 and 5).

1 passes to 3 and 3 passes to 2 for a three-point shot. If 2 cannot shoot, he can pass to 5, who, after the screen, rolls to the basket. The third option is a pick-and-roll play between 2 and 5, or a high-low play between 4 and 5 (diagr. 6).



Another play starts again from a staggered screen, but now set vertically for 2 (diagr. 7), who starts from the corner and goes off the screens of 4 and 5 and comes out to the top of the key, and receives the ball from 3 for a three-point shot (diagr. 8). 2 can also play the pick-and-roll with 5, or can pass to 3, who has gone to the corner for a three-point shot (diagr. 9). If nothing happens, 5 can deliver a high-low pass to 4, or maybe pass to 1 on the weak side, or can drive to the basket.

OUT OF BOUND PLAYS

From the baseline

This is a play for the post 5 (diagr. 10), who is set on the elbow, while 4 is on the low post on the same side. While 4 clears out, cutting to the opposite side, 5 makes a vertical cut to the basket and receives the inbound pass from 3, on the left-hand side (diagr. 11). If 5 won't receive the ball, 2, who spots up in the corner, can receive the ball for a three-point shot.

From the sideline

4 and 5 are at the elbows on the free-throw line, while 1 and 2 are the guards and 3 will make the inbound pass (diagr. 12). 1 sets a screen for 2, 4 steps out to the three-point line, while 5 makes a back-door cut to the basket. 3 can pass to 5 under the basket or to 1, who rolls to the basket after the screen, or also to 2 (diagr. 13).