

ASSIST 25

FIBA ASSIST MAGAZINE FOR BASKETBALL ENTHUSIASTS EVERYWHERE MARCH / APRIL 2007



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We Are Basketball

BARRY BRODZINSKI
SHOOTING THE RIGHT WAY

DEL HARRIS
DEFENSE ON THE
PICK-AND-ROLL

PAT ROSENOW
THE THIRD TEAM ON THE COURT

CHRIS D'ORSO
EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS
BETWEEN TEAM AND FANS

KEITH D'AMELIO
CONDITIONING AT
THE NBA LEVEL

RUSSIA WOMEN'S OFFENSE

Champion





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2007 FIBA CALENDAR

MARCH 2007
31.03 - 02.04 NCAA Men's Final Four in Atlanta, USA

APRIL 2007
01-03.04 NCAA Women's Final Four in Cleveland, USA

JUNE 2007
03 - 10.06 FIBA Asia Championship for Women in Incheon, Korea
29.06 - 08.07 FIBA U21 World Championship for Women in Moscow / Moscow Region, Russia

JULY 2007
12-22.07 FIBA U19 World Championship for Men in Novi Sad, Serbia
26.07 - 05.08 FIBA U19 World Championship for Women in Bratislava, Slovakia
28.07 - 05.08 FIBA Asia Championship for Men in Tokushima, Japan

AUGUST 2007
15 - 26.08 FIBA Africa Championship for Men in Luanda, Angola
20 - 24.08 FIBA Oceania Championship for Men
22.08 - 02.09 FIBA Americas Championship for Men in Las Vegas, USA

SEPTEMBER 2007
03 - 16.09 FIBA Europe Championship "EuroBasket" for Men in Spain
21 - 30.09 FIBA Africa Championship for Women in Dakar, Senegal
24 - 28.09 FIBA Oceania Championship for Women
25 - 29.09 FIBA Americas Championship for Women in Valdivia, Chile
24.09 - 07.10 FIBA European Championship for Women in Ortona, Lanciano, Vasto, Chieti, Italy

OCTOBER 2007
11 - 16.10 FIBA World League for Women Final Round in Russia

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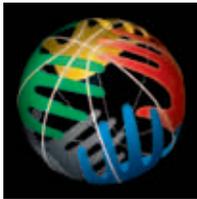
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FIBA

We Are Basketball



by Barry Brodzinski

SHOOTING THE RIGHT WAY

Barry Brodzinski is considered by many as the "Nation's #1 Shooting Instructor" (www.shootingcamps.com). A high school All-American at North Catholic High School in Philadelphia, he then played at La Salle University. As a head high school coach of Roman Catholic High School, he has 300 wins, a 70% winning percentage, and his teams have won two Philadelphia Catholic High School Championships. He has been the shooting instructor at the Five-Star Basketball Camp for 24 years and is the Director of the Five-Star Shooting Camps. He also is the author and instructor of the shooting video, "The Five-Star Shooting Method," and the new four-part Five-Star Shooting DVD Series. For more info see: www.five-starbasketball.com

Shooting the basketball has clearly become the most important part of the game and I want to describe the shooting technique that I have taught for over 26 years to players with all levels of talent. Many people will tell you that defense wins games. However, I think that while defense certainly keeps you in games, it is shooting, and the ability to score when needed, that wins games. If you look at the successful teams all over the world, whether they are in the NBA, college, or international play, the teams that win shoot the ball well from all areas of the court and have players who can make both the mid-range shot and the three pointers. A prime example of this was last season's NCAA champion, the University of Florida. This team put on an offensive clinic during the NCAA tournament that no other teams could match.

For many players, the ability to shoot consistently is the only thing holding them back from being a better player. Coaches can be a major help to their players, but many times I find that coaches are focused on fine-tuning their offensive and

defensive sets and know very little about correcting a player's shooting technique. It makes absolutely no sense to put players through drills, or have them shoot 1,000 shots without a basic understanding of how to shoot correctly. Remember that the more something is done incorrectly, the worse the habit becomes and the harder it is to correct. Whether it is during my Shooting Camps at Five-Star, or at the Shooting Camps I run all over the country, I start off every session by first teaching the basics of proper shooting technique. Let's get started with the breakdown of the proper shooting technique. This should either help a player as a shooter, or help you better teach someone how to shoot.

LEGS

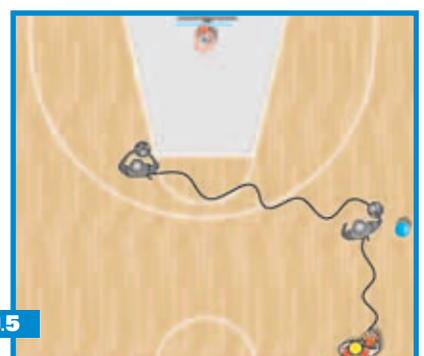
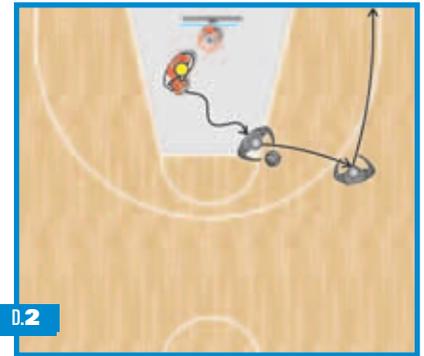
This is your power base. As a shooter, you want your legs to be as strong as possible. The knees should be bent so that you are always coming under the ball when you go to shoot. Feet should be within the width of your shoulders to provide proper balance. Most of you have heard the term "square up." The easiest way for a player to be "square to the basket" is by having your feet and chest pointing at the rim. If this is done every time, you will always be facing the basket on your shot and this increases your chances of shooting the ball straight.

Remember: It is much easier to correct a player's shot if it is short or long, as opposed to missing right or left. With proper balance and leg power, a player will be able to shoot right out of the triple-threat position with no wasted motion.

ARMS

Your arms should be relaxed and fall naturally along the sides of your body. A good offensive player will always show





his hands to his teammate and be ready to catch the ball. The elbows should remain relaxed along the sides of the ribs. Players will many times tighten their arms and force their elbows into the body. I don't want to see that. If the ball is centered properly, when a player goes to shoot, the shooting elbow will automatically fall under the ball. The guide hand elbow should be relaxed to help assist the "guide hand" in coming off the ball at the release point.

Centering the ball is extremely important. The ball needs to be centered from the belly button, chest, nose, and forehead, and this can be accomplished by getting to one of those positions right after catching the ball.

HANDS

The hands have two functions. There is the "power hand," or shooting hand, and the "weak hand," or guide hand. The "power hand" should actually be centered, gripping the ball with the full fingers and thumb. The bottom of the hand and the center of the palm are kept off the ball. The "power hand" wrist should be back early so it's under the ball. The guide hand should be on the side of the ball and relaxed (light) on the ball so it comes off easily when shooting. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to have the shooting wrist back early. The wrist snap is critical for achieving an early arc, proper ball rotation, and finishing the shot on your follow through.

HEAD

It is very important for a great shooter to have the head up at all times. This way he can see his teammates and pick up the target (the rim) as early as possible. A shooter needs to "focus" on the front of the rim facing him, so he can shoot "up and over" the rim. By "focusing" and shooting "up and over," the shooting function truly becomes one of touch along with "eye-hand" coordination.

In all of my shooting instruction, I emphasize the importance of ball handling as a critical component to successful shooting. If you cannot dribble with your head up or fumble the ball when it's passed to you, you will lose many opportunities to shoot during a game.

FOLLOW THROUGH

This is an automatic outcome of the "up and over" technique. Finish up and over by acting like you are trying to put your hand over the rim and into the basket. This also will assist with your arc, and more importantly, help you achieve an early arc to your shot. I have mentioned early arc twice because it is critical to have a consistent trajectory to your shot. The arc will differ depending on



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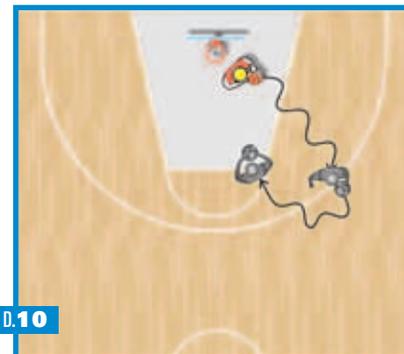
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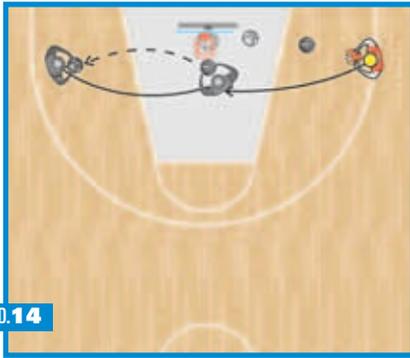
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whether you are wide open or shooting over someone, but the arc should always begin early in your release.

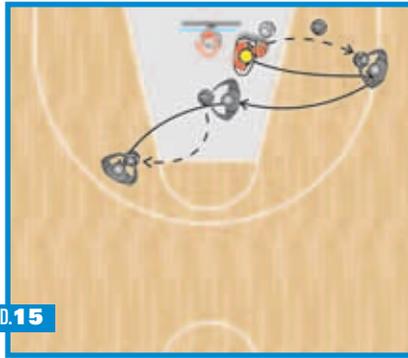
RELEASE POINT

The release point is different for younger and older players. The young player should center the ball and release it from the chest area, and then use all the other proper mechanics. The older player needs to release the ball just above the forehead, looking for what I call "see the V." This is the inverted "V" formed by proper position of the ball, hands, and arms as soon as the ball clears the forehead area. Of course, players who are shooting in the lane and over-extending their arms certainly have a different release point, but all others should be similar. Players will find that the further you are from the basket, the more the hands cannot be overextended or you will not get the power you need to make these longer shots.

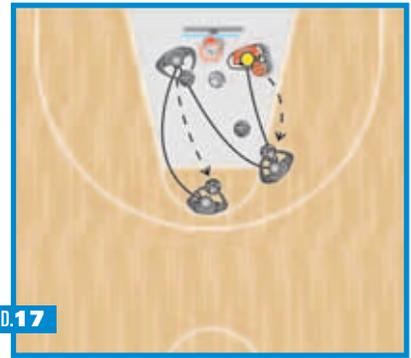
This is a simplified but basic approach to



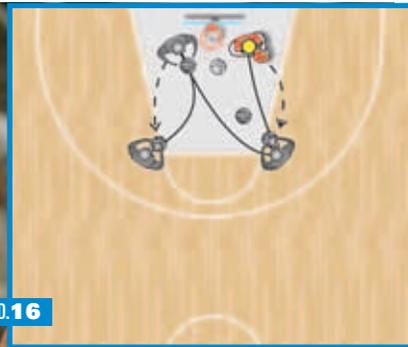
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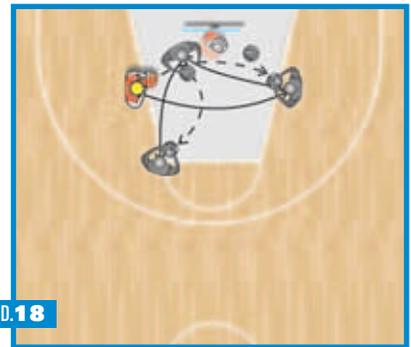
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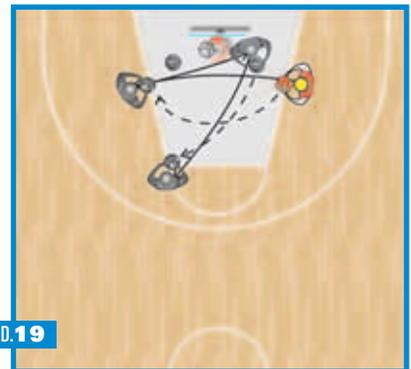
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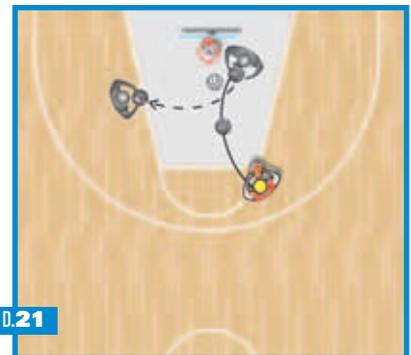
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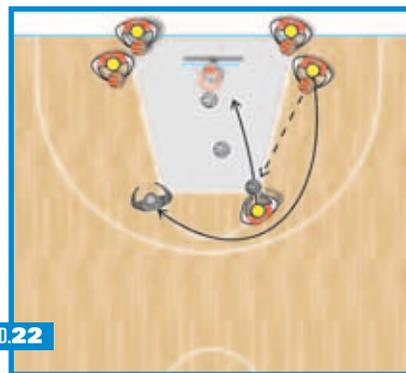
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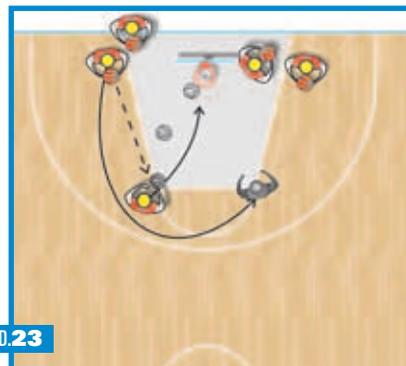
D.20



D.21



D.22



D.23

developing proper shooting mechanics. Remember that not everyone shoots the ball exactly the same way. What I have presented above are the areas of shooting that I feel every player needs to have in order to be a consistently successful shooter. Certainly, Reggie Miller shot differently than Michael Jordan, yet both were successful shooters, and did certain things correctly with their shot every time. Be comfortable and confident with your shot, and apply these basic fundamentals. You must remember, however, that to be a great shooter takes hard work. Proper Technique + Repetition = Success.

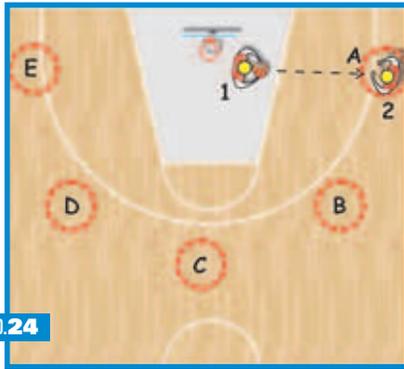
I will now present five individual shooting drills and five team shooting drills to assist both the player and the coach. Remember to use "shot making goals" with all drills to help you focus on success. Good luck with improving your shooting technique and becoming a great shooter. If you have any questions about shooting or particular problems with shooting technique, please e-mail them to me: bbrod22@aol.com

DRILLS

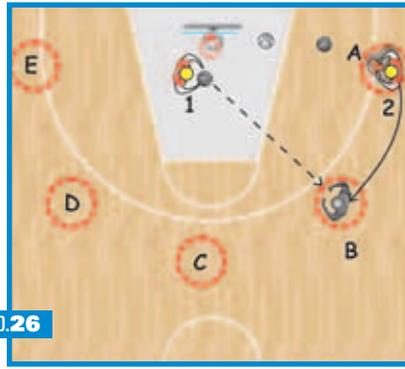
INDIVIDUAL DRILLS

"DOOMSDAY CONTINUATION SHOOTING DRILLS"

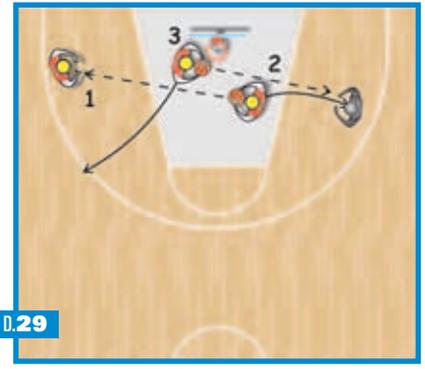
A ball is placed at the corner of the free-throw line, while the player stands at the three-point line, foul-line extension. The player sprints to the baseline, curls behind the ball, picks it up, and shoots. He gets his own rebound, puts the ball back in its original position, goes back to the wing, and continues the drill. The goal is to make 10



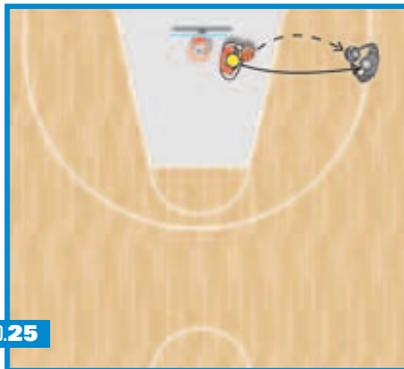
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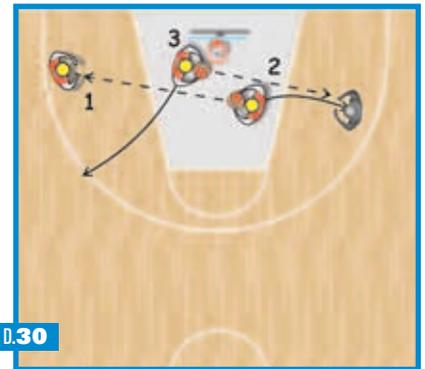
D.29



D.25



D.27



D.30

shots. The ball is placed on the other side of the court and the drill is repeated from this new position (diagr. 1 and 2).

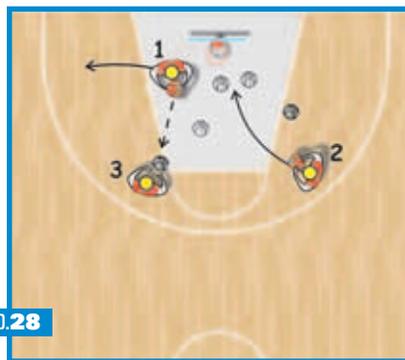
The drill can also be used for three-point shots, with the ball placed outside the three-point line. The player starts at half court, sprints to the baseline corner, sprints up to curl behind the ball, picks it up, and shoots. He rebounds his own shot, puts the ball in the same position, and continues to shoot. The same routine is run on the other side of the half court (diagr. 3 and 4).

This is an excellent drill for working on form and shooting technique. In addition, it combines more of a game conditioning workout. Remember to perform each drill on both sides of the court. Set shot-making goals, not shot-taking goals.

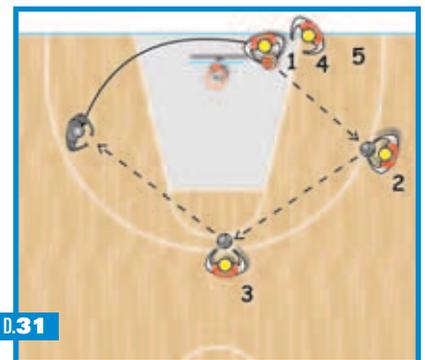
“HALF COURT X SHOOTING DRILL”

This is a fast-paced game conditioning and shooting drill that works off several dribble moves. The player starts with the ball at the half court to the hash mark area, starts to dribble, and then crosses hands to the left, and dribbles into shot with left hand. Of course, when the move is done on the left side of the court, this is reversed. He starts:

- ▼ Crossing hard into a 15-foot jump shot (diagr. 5).
- ▼ Crossing hard left, then crossing hard back right into a jump shot (diagr.6).
- ▼ Crossing hard, hesitating at the foul line, and then driving to the basket (diagr. 7).



D.28



D.31

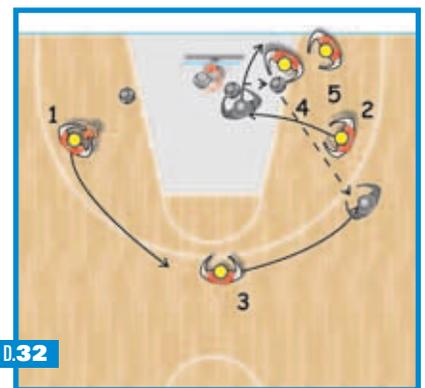
▼ Crossing hard, making an in-and-out move to the corner for a jump shot (diagr. 8).

▼ Dribbling to the hash mark and then making a spin dribble into the jump shot (diagr. 9).

The player always rebounds his own shot and dribbles hard back to the half court. He shoots two times and then changes sides.

“TRIANGLE SHOOTING DRILL”

This is another fast-paced game conditioning and shooting drill off the dribble. The player starts under the basket with the ball. He dribbles to the left, above the three-point line, turns, crosses, dribbling to the right into a 15-foot jump shot (diagr. 10). The player rebounds his own shot, dribbles to the opposite side with the right hand, cross dribbles to the left hand into a 15-foot jump shot. He takes 10 shots with the target of making at least 7 or 8 out of 10 (diagr. 11). The player can also work on his three-point shot by going above and



D.32

back into the three-point line (diagr. 12). He can also work on his bank shot, shooting by going off the low block into the shot (diagr. 13).

“CIRCUS SHOOTING DRILL”

This is a five-shot self-pass shooting drill. The player starts under the basket. He self passes the ball to the corner, catches it, turns and shoots without taking a dribble (diagr. 14). He rebounds his own shot and self passes again to the opposite wing (diagr. 15 and 16). Again, he rebounds his own shot and self passes to the top of the key area for the final shot (diagr. 17). The player’s goal is to make 4 out of 5 or 5 of 5 shots. He then repeats the same routine.

The drill can also be done by self passing and then taking one dribble into the shot, or by self passing behind the three-point line to work on long-distance shooting.

“BIG MAN LANE X SHOOTING DRILL”

This is a continuous big man x pattern shooting drill in the lane off a self pass. The player starts on the block and self passes across to the opposite low block for a short jump shot (diagr. 18). He rebounds his own shot, self passes to the corner or foul line, and takes a jump shot. (diagr. 19). He rebounds his own shot, self passes to the opposite low block, and takes a short jump shot (diagr. 20). Again, he rebounds his own shot, self passes up to the opposite corner of the foul line for a short jump shot (diagr. 21). The drill should be repeated five times for 20 jump shots. The player will be able to work on his footwork on how to get into the shot. He will also work on turning into the defender or falling away from the defender for a short jump shot. No dribbling is allowed on this drill.

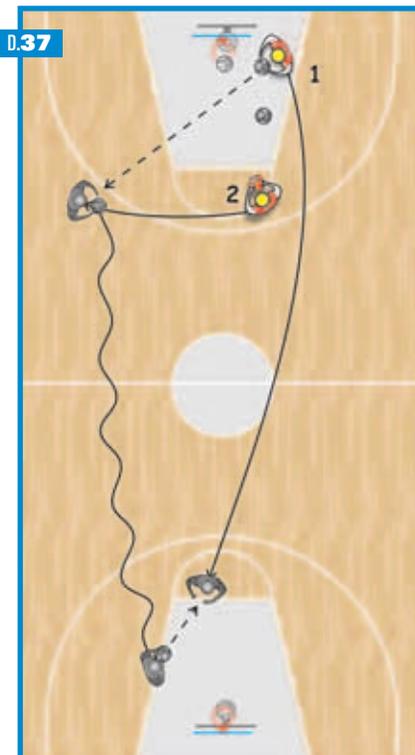
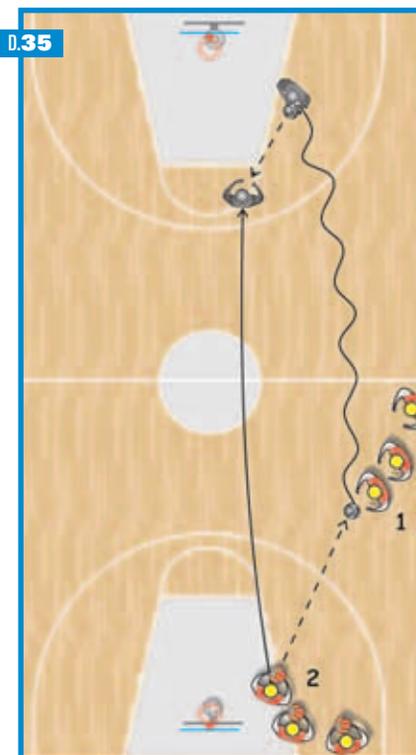
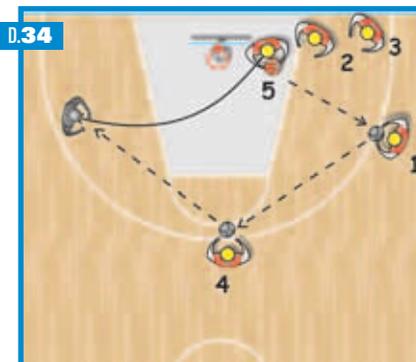
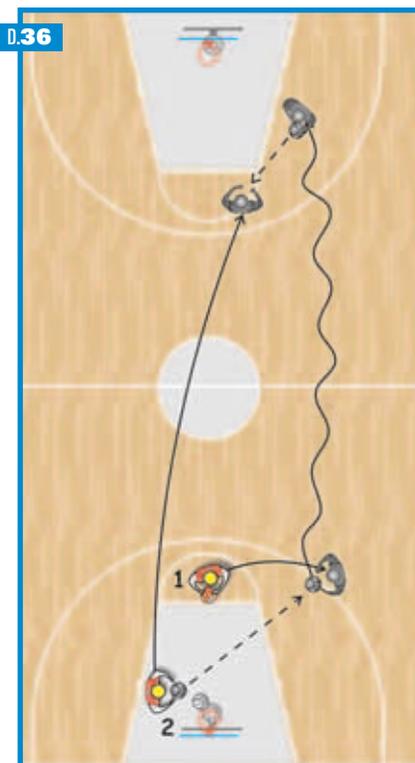
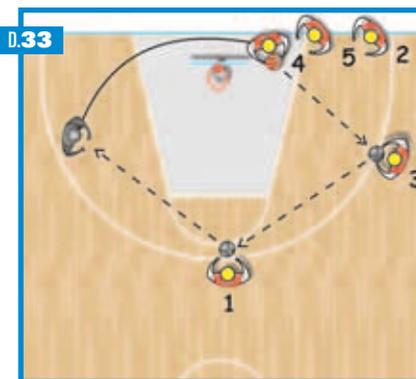
TEAM DRILLS

“WARM-UP SHOOTING DRILLS”

The players form two lines at the baseline on each side of the foul line. Each line has a ball. The drill starts with one player, who is the first shooter, at the three-point line. He receives the ball from the opposite player on the same side. After the pass, the passer cuts around the foul area, and goes on the other elbow, receives the ball from the player of the other line, and shoots. The shooter rebounds his own shot and passes the ball to the line on the same side he has shot from (diagr. 22 and 23).

“TWO PLAYERS - FIVE SPOTS SHOOTING DRILL”

This a drill where two players work as partners. Player 1 is the first rebounder and player 2 is the first shooter. Player 2 shoots two shots from the five designated spots



around the lane, starting behind the three-point line and stepping into a 15-foot shot, starting in the corner (diagr. 24). Player 1 will be the rebounder and the passer. After player 2 shoots all five 15-foot jump shots, he will cut to the sideline corner and come back for a three-point shot from each of the same five spots (diagr. 25). He will shoot 20 shots and then switch with player 1, who will become the shooter (diagr. 26). The

goal is to make at least 15 shots out of 20.

“THREE PLAYERS RELOCATION SHOOTING DRILL”

This initially seems like a confusing drill. However, once the three players get it going, it becomes a fun, fast-paced shooting drill. Player 1, inside the lane, and player 2 on the perimeter, has a ball. In the meantime, player 3 moves to a spot to receive the pass from player 1 (diagr.

27). Player 1 passes to player 3, while player 2 shoots at the same time, rebounds his own shot, and passes the ball to player 1, who has sprinted out of the lane (diagr. 28 and 29). Player 3 rebounds his own shot and passes the ball to player 2, who has relocated after passing to player 1. Player 1 will rebound his own shot and pass to player 3, who has relocated after passing to player 2 (diagr. 30). The three players will shoot until they make 20 shots as a team. This drill helps players to learn to move after passing and helps the passer to quickly find a new open player.

“CURL SHOOTING ROTATION DRILL”

This is a continuation passing and shooting drill. A line of players stands behind the basket, with player 1 with the ball, and the player behind him with another ball. Player 2 is in the corner and player 3 is at the top of the key. Player 1 passes to player 3 and curls to the opposite corner to simulate going around a screen. Player 2 passes to player 3, and player 3 passes to player 1 for a jump shot (diagr. 31). Player 2 rebounds the shot and goes at the end of the line. Player 3 replaces player 2 in the corner, while player 1 replaces player 3 at the top of the key (diagr. 32). Player 4 then passes to player 3 and becomes the next shooter (diagr. 33 and 34). This is great drill because it keeps all the three players involved. No one can just stand still because the drill involves continuous motion. You can have the shooter shoot off the catch or else allow one dribble before the shot. The passer can be told to make a chest pass or bounce pass. The coach can also make this a 15-foot shot drill or a three-point shooting drill.

“THE FRONT AND FOLLOW CONDITIONING SHOOTING DRILL”

This a full-court continuation shooting drill. There is one line of players at the hash mark, with player 1 on the court. Another line is formed under the basket, with player 2, the wing, on the court with the ball. Player 2 passes to player 1, who dribbles hard at the other basket, while player 2 trails and player 1 passes the ball back to player 2 for a jump shot at the key area (diagr. 35). Player 1 rebounds the shot and passes the ball to player 2, who went to the hash mark, and they go down to the other end. Then, player 2 passes to player 1 for a jump shot at the key area (diagr. 36 and 37). Please, note that all players on the player 2's original line have a ball. The next two players go as soon as the players in front of them cross the half-court line. The goal for this drill can be to see how many shots are made in a certain time, or the drill can end after a certain number of shots are made.





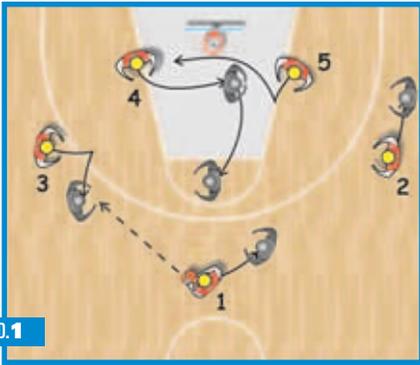
by Igor Grudin

RUSSIA WOMEN'S OFFENSE

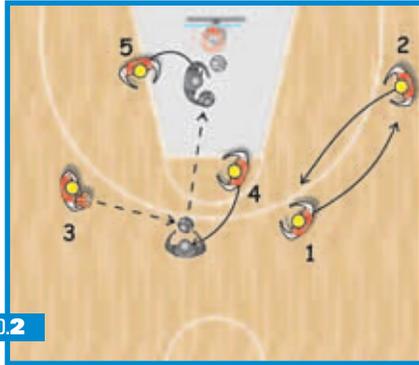


Igor Grudin has become the coach of the Russian national team in 2004, and won the silver medal at the 2005 FIBA Eurobasket for women and the silver medal at the 2006 FIBA World Championships for women. His career as the head coach of clubs started in France, where he coached Tarbes (1996-97), Mondeville (from 1998 to 2002) and Bordeaux (2002-03). Then he went back to Russia, where since 2003 he has been coaching Samara, where he won the 2005 FIBA Euroleague and played the 2006 FIBA Euroleague final, winning also the 2005 and 2006 Russian titles.

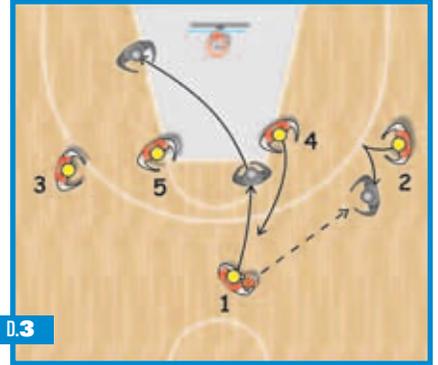




D.1



D.2



D.3

Our national team finished the 2006 FIBA World Championships in the second place, with a surprising 5-4 record, losing to France, USA, Czech Republic, and the final game against Australia. But in the semifinal our team had a game to remember against the U.S. team, defeating them 75-68 and proving that, on big occasions, we can produce great basketball.

A well-balanced team, led by guard Ilona Korstin and our center, Maria Stepanova, we finished as the third best scoring team (with an average of 78 points per

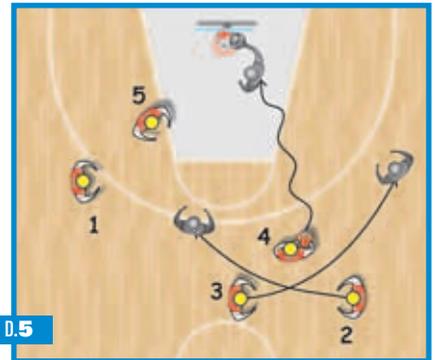
game) and fourth in assists (14.3 per game), which speaks highly of our team-oriented offense. We had trouble maintaining our motivation and concentration throughout the championship, but we still were able to obtain excellent results.

THE OFFENSE

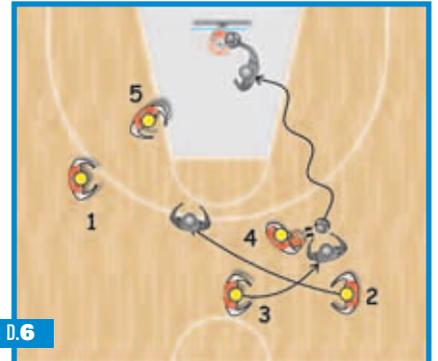
Our players were technically very gifted, and we played a smart offensive game, reading the opponent's weaknesses extremely well. Our game was mainly inside-oriented for Stepanova and the power forward, Tatiana Schchegoleva.



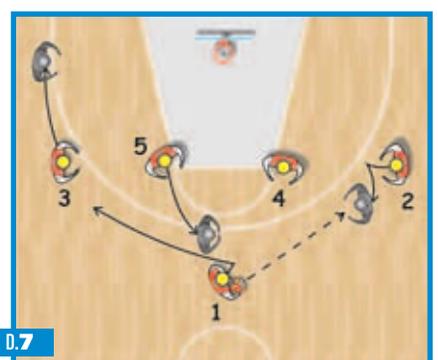
D.4



D.5



D.6



D.7



A lot of high screens were used and we employed the high-low game with great precision. The guards were quick and had a very good reading and understanding of the game, and, when needed, they were able to take over the scoring by driving to the basket or shooting from the outside. Guard Ilona Korstin carried the team in offense (she had 13.4 points per game), and she was the second best scorer of the team, behind our center, Stepanova, who scored 16 points per game.

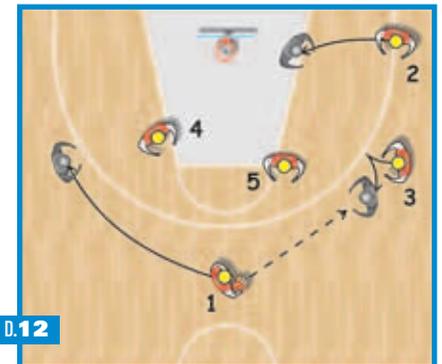
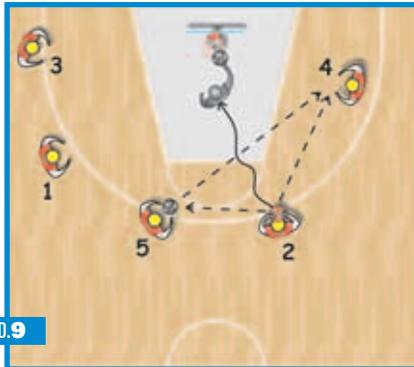
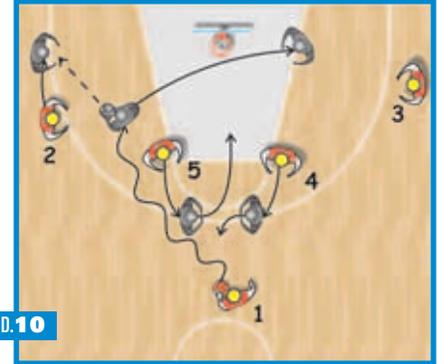
THE PLAYERS

- 1 - Oxana Rakhmatulina.
- 2 - Ilona Korstin.
- 3 - Natalia Vodopyanova.
- 4 - Tatiana Schchegoleva.
- 5 - Maria Stepanova.

OFFENSE AGAINST INDIVIDUAL DEFENSE

Play for the Inside Players

1 passes to 3 on the wing, 4 makes a cross screen for 5, and then flashes to the high



post (diagr. 1). 3 passes to 4 on top, while 5 pins her defender down and goes in the middle of the floor for an high-low passing play. 1 and 2 invert their positions, while 5 can receive and play one-on-one close to the basket (diagr. 2).

Play for the Perimeter Players

1 passes to 2 and screens for 4, then 1 goes to the weak side and 4 comes to the top (diagr. 3). 2 passes to 4 on the top and goes for an hand-off pass. 3 can be another option for a hand-off play, while 1 pops out to the wing (diagr. 4). After faking the hand-off, 4 drives to the basket (diagr. 5). If the defense is late, 4 can play the hand-off with 3, and 3 can drive to the basket (diagr. 6).

Quick play for Korstin or Schchegoleva

1 passes to 2 and receives a back screen from 5 (diagr. 7). 2 has the ball on the wing, 4 quickly sets a ball screen and pops out to the corner. 5 steps out and can help on the pass (diagr. 8). 2 has three options: kick the ball to 4, who is in the corner, to 5, who is on the top of the key (and she could pass to 4, if 4 cuts inside), or drive to the basket (diagr. 9).

Double High Play for Guards and Centers

5 and 4 set high screens on the top of the key. 1 drives and passes to 2 on the wing (diagr. 10). 2 can go one-on-one, while 5 flashes to the free-throw area and 4 flares on the wing, out of the three-point line (diagr. 11).

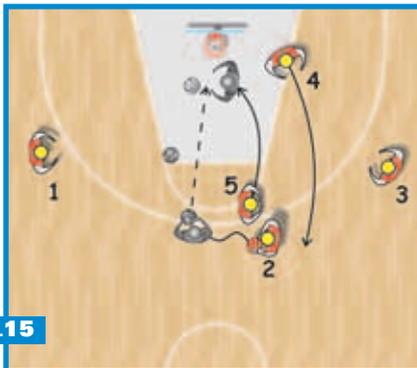
Play for Korstin

The play begins with a pass from 1 to 3, then 1 flares to the weak side, while 2 goes on the low-post area (diagr. 12). 2 can first post-up, if a smaller defender guards her. If not, she can make the "screen-the-screener" action: she screens for 4, then receives a screen from 5, and finally goes to the top of the key (diagr. 13). 3 can pass to 4, who can post up, or pass 2 on the top of the key. 5 quickly comes and sets a screen (diagr. 14). Now, 2 can play the pick-and-roll with 5. After she reads the defense's reaction, she can shoot behind the screen or drive all the way to the basket. 5 rolls to the basket, while 4 flashes high out of the three-point line (diagr. 15).

OFFENSES AGAINST ZONE DEFENSE

A Play

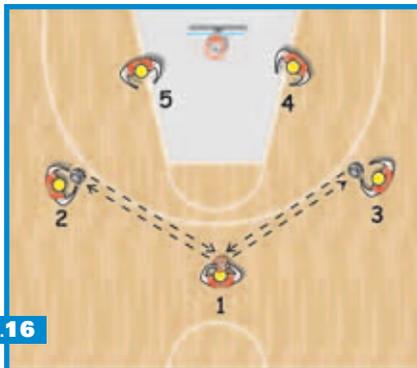
Our rule was to pass from one side to the other side of the court in order to move the defense. So, the three perimeter players pass the ball to each other (diagr. 16). When 2 has got the ball on the wing, in this



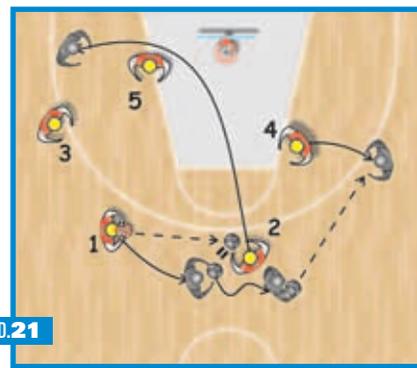
D.15



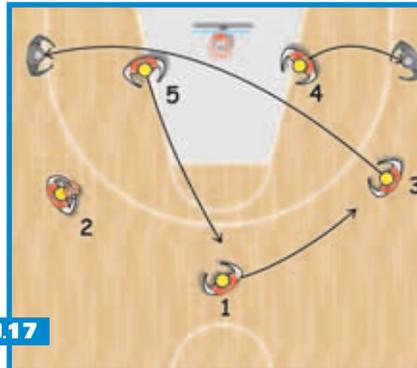
D.20



D.16



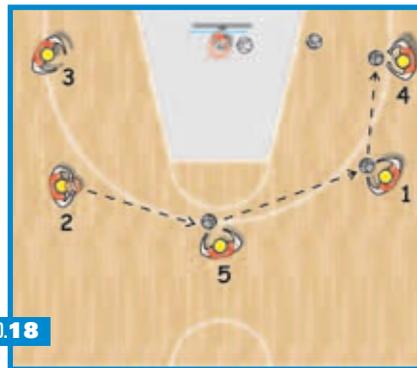
D.21



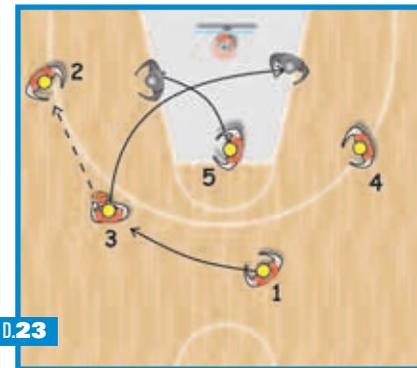
D.17



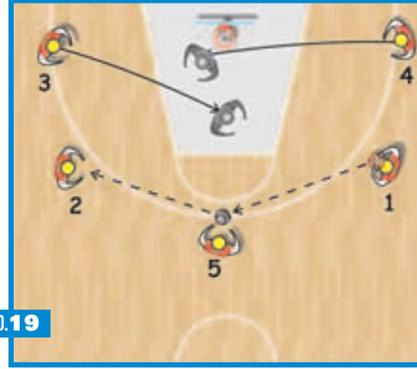
D.22



D.18



D.23



D.19

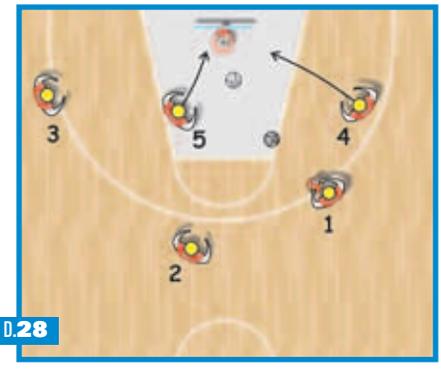
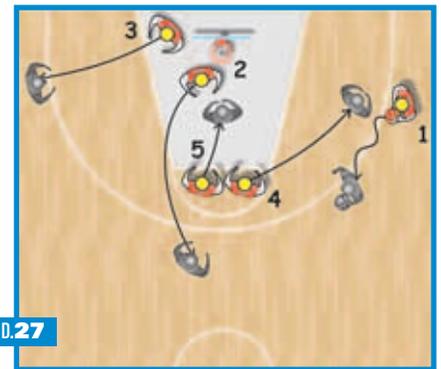
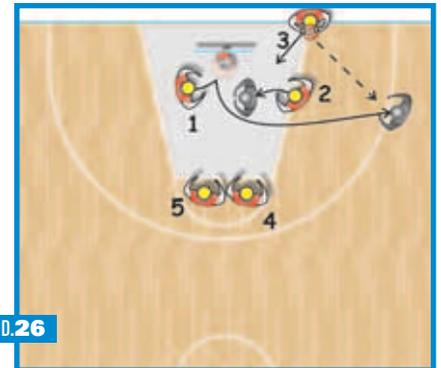
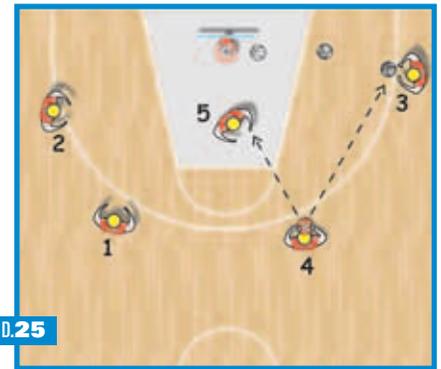


D.24

case, 1 flares on the weak side wing, 3 cuts across the lane and goes to the strong side corner, 5 flashes to the high post and 4 goes to the weak side corner (diagr. 17). The ball is quickly reversed from one side to the other side of the floor, from 2 to 5, from 5 to 1 and finally to 4, who can shoot from the corner (diagr. 18). If 4 cannot receive the ball in the corner, she cuts on the weak side corner, while 3 flashes to the middle of the lane and the ball is reversed again, now from 1 to 5, who can pass to 3, or reverse to 2 (diagr. 19). After the quick reversal, 4 comes out to the corner to get a pass from 2 and then take the shot. 5 cuts to the middle of the lane and 3 steps out. 4 can also pass to 5 in the low-post area (diagr. 20).

Another Play

We had a zone offense with two guards, one wing, and two centers, one high and one low. On the quick pass from 1 to 2, 4 steps out and receives the ball from 2, who after the pass, cuts to the weak side corner. 1 replaces 2 on the top of the key (diagr. 21). 5 flashes in the lane, 4 reverses the ball, passing to 1, who then passes to 3 (diagr. 22). 3 passes to 2, who is in the corner, and quickly cuts to the weak side corner. 5 flashes down the lane, and spots up at the low-post area. 1 replaces 3 on the strong side wing (diagr. 23). In this way we forced the defense to make many moves, and our quick passing makes the difference. 2 passes to 1, 4 steps out and gets the ball from 1. 5 flashes to the ball and 3





goes out to the corner (diagr. 24). Now, 4 has the following choices (diagr. 25):

- ▼ Pass to 3, for a shot from the corner.
- ▼ Pass to 5 for a post-up play.

BASELINE OUT-OF-BOUND PLAYS

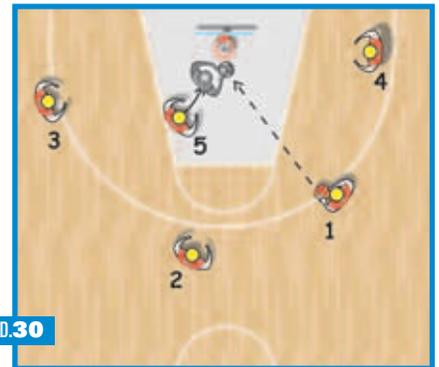
A Play

This is a play for the point guard. 5 and 4 are at the free-throw line, with 1 under the basket, and 3 as the inbounder. 2 screens for 1, who comes out of the lane, and gets the inbound pass from 3 (diagr. 26). 4 sets a ball screen for 1 on the wing, and, at the same time, 5 screens for 2, while 3 goes to the weak side corner (diagr. 27). 1 plays the pick-and-roll with 4, and she can shoot

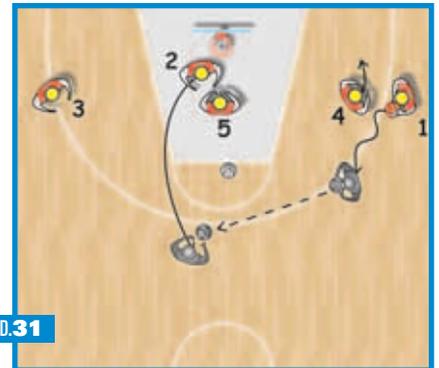
(diagr. 28) or pass to 4, who has gone to the corner (diagr. 29). The other options are an inside pass for 5 (diagr. 30) or for 2 who, after receiving the screen of 5, pops out and shoots from the top of the key (diagr. 31).

Another Play

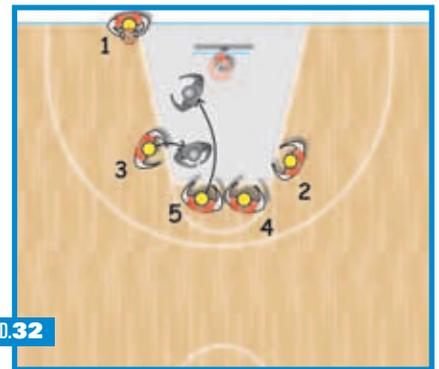
3 screens for 5, who cuts down the lane. 2 cuts off 3's shoulder and comes out on the strong side wing (diagr. 32). 3 goes to the top of the key, 4 steps out, and 1 passes to 5 (diagr. 33). 5 can play one-on-one and, if the other defenders help out, 5 kicks the ball out on the corner to 4, who has a good outside shot (diagr. 34).



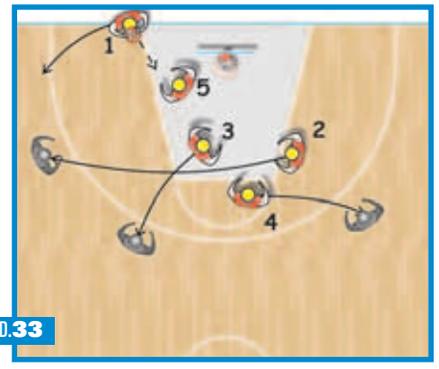
D.30



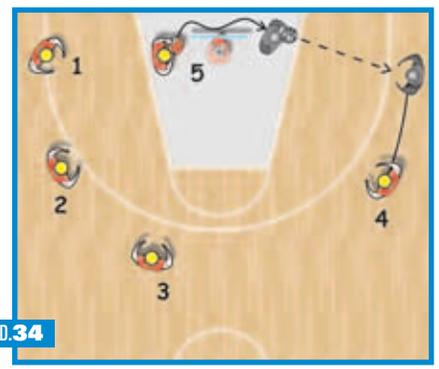
D.31



D.32



D.33



D.34



by Antonio Carlos
Barbosa

Antonio Carlos Barbosa started coaching in 1963 with Instituto de Educação Ernesto Monte. Then he coached Clube Luso, Bauru, Piracicaba, Campinas and Jundiai, winning three Brazilian titles and two South American titles. He has been head coach of the Brazilian women's national team from 1977 to 1984, and he's become again head coach of the Brazilian women's national team in 1996. He has won seven South American championships and a bronze medal at the 2000 Olympic Games of Sydney.

Brazil women's team finished fourth at the 2006 FIBA World Championship, which was hosted by our country. We failed to beat Australia in the semi-final game and then we were beat by the powerhouse USA for the bronze medal. I think we, with a veteran team, played with heart and emotion and had a good tournament, losing to France, USA, and twice to Australia. We had experienced veterans, including Janeth dos Santos Arcain, Alessandra Santos de Oliveira, and Cintia Silva dos Santos, who carried the team throughout the competition, but fatigue played a role in the defeats.

OFFENSE

When possible, Janeth and Iziane always looked for the easy transition baskets. They loved driving and drawing the fouls going to the basket, while using the crowd to motivate them. At the half-court offense versus an individual defense, we used a lot of high-low game plays for our big players. We also used screen-the-screener plays whenever we could. At the end of possession plays, we would try to drive and kick the ball for an open shot, or else work plays off the pick-and-roll.

I must admit that sometimes our urge to score quickly led us to turnovers and put us off our rhythm. Upon reflection, there were some stretches where our guards would forget about our effective inside players. Even so, I think we had a good tournament, carried on offense by three players: our center, Alessandra (13.8 ppg), and guards Iziane (16.9 ppg), and Janeth (13.3 ppg). We also finished first in offensive rebounds with 12.3 per game.

BRAZIL AT THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP





TRANSITION GAME**Inside play for Alessandra**

A quick play. 1 dribbles to the side with 3 and 2 on the wings and 5 (Alessandra) on the low post on the ball side. 4, as the second trailer, is in the middle of the court. 1 passes to 4, who then passes to 2, while 5 cuts to the ball side (diagr. 1).

2 looks for a pass inside to 5, and, after the pass, plays pick-and-roll with 4 (diagr. 2).

Another play

1, with the ball in the middle of the floor, has the two wings, 2 and 3, and the two high posts at the corners of the free-throw area. 5 steps out and screens for 1, who goes to the left side, while 3

screens-the-screener 5, and then pops out in the middle of the floor (diagr. 3).

1 passes to 3, who receives a screen from 4 (diagr. 4). After the screen, 4 pops out, 3 passes to 2, who then passes to 5, who has crossed in the lane and posted down low (diagr. 5).

HALF COURT MAN-TO-MAN PLAYS**Inside Play for Alessandra**

4 down screens for 3, while 5 comes high and 2 pops out on the wing. 1 passes to 3 (diagr. 6).

After the screen for 3, 4 comes high, back screens for 1, who cuts in the lane, and then 4 pops out on the top of the lane and

receives the ball from 3 (diagr. 7).

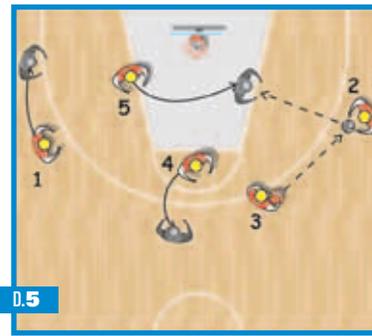
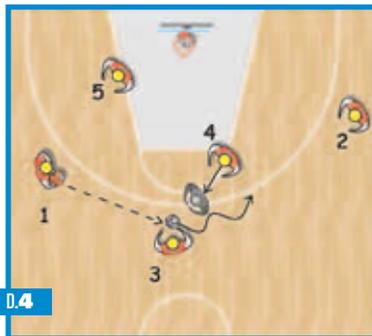
1 back screens for 5 and 4 passes the ball to 5 in the lane (diagr. 8).

Here is an option for this play: after the back screen for 5, 1 receives a screen from 4 (screen-the-screener-action), who comes high at the top of the lane, and receives the ball from 3 for a three-point shot (diagr. 9 and 10).

Plays for Guards Iziane or Janeth

Two high posts, 4 and 5, at the corners of the free-throw area, two wings, 2 (Iziane) and 3 (Janeth), and the point guard, 1, in the middle of the court. 4 pops out and receives the ball from 1, who then cuts in the lane,

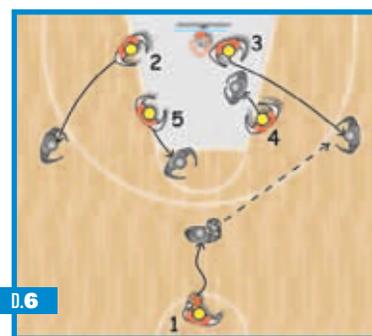




while 2 is moving toward the lane (diagr. 11).

1 goes out in the wing area, 2 receives a down screen from 5, and then goes to the corner.

3 fakes to cut in the lane, comes back, receives a hand-off pass from 4, and drives to the basket. She can also pass to 2 or 5, who ducks in the lane after the screen (diagr. 12).

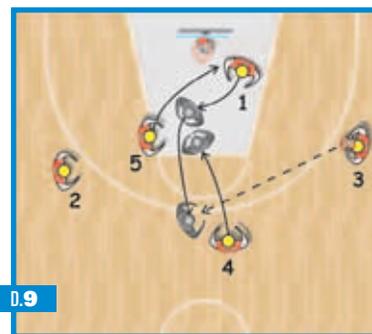
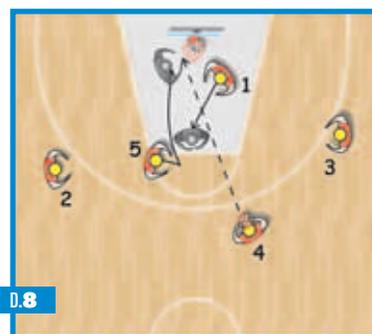


Option: instead of the hand-off pass, 4 can also pass directly to 2, who comes off the down screen of 5. Then there is a quick pick-and-roll between these two players, with 5, who steps out of the lane to the top, to clear out. 2 can go straight to the basket, or pass to 4, who has rolled to the basket after the screen, or to 5 (diagr. 13, 14 and 15).



OFFENSE AGAINST A ZONE DEFENSE

The set uses two low posts and three perimeter players. 1 passes to 2, and, on this pass, 4 pops to the corner and re-



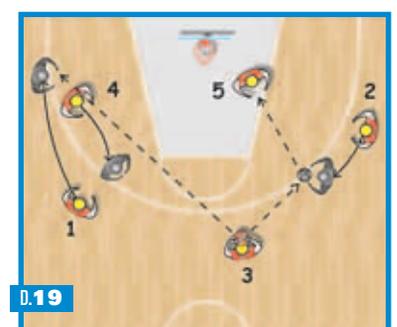
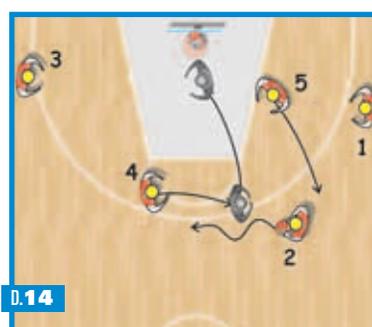
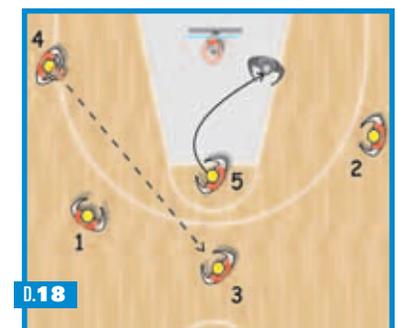
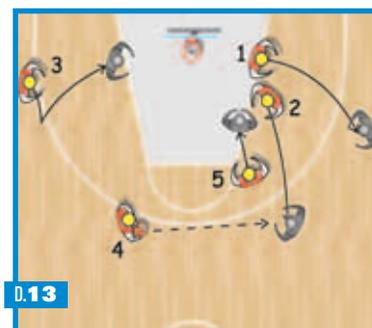
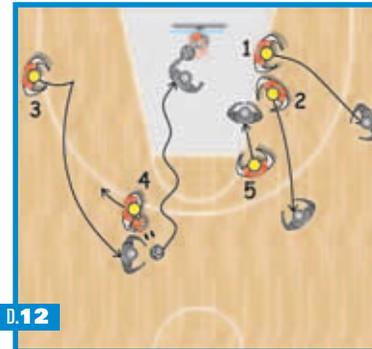
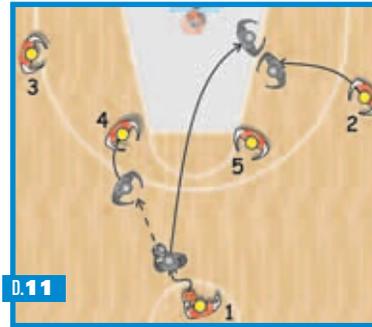
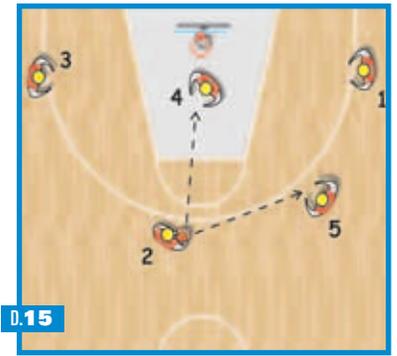
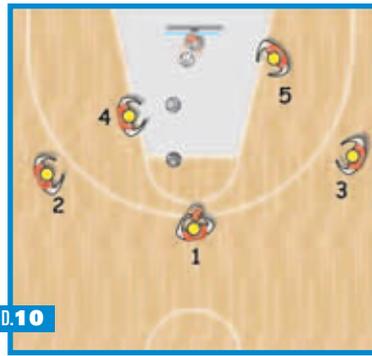
ceives the ball from 2, while 5 goes to the high post position (diagr. 16).

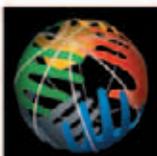
After the pass, 2 cuts in the lane and goes on the weak side corner, while 1 replaces 2, and 3 replaces 1. This movement keeps the defense busy (diagr 17).

4 makes a skip pass to 3, while 5 cuts down to the low post area (diagr. 18).

4 sets a flare screen for 1, who goes to the weak side wing position. 3 has many options:

- ▼ Pass to 1 on the wing.
- ▼ Pass to 2, who can shoot or pass inside to 5 on the low post.
- ▼ Pass to 4, who rolls to the top of the lane, after the screen for 1 (diagr. 19).





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by Del Harris

THE DEFENSE ON THE PICK-AND-ROLL

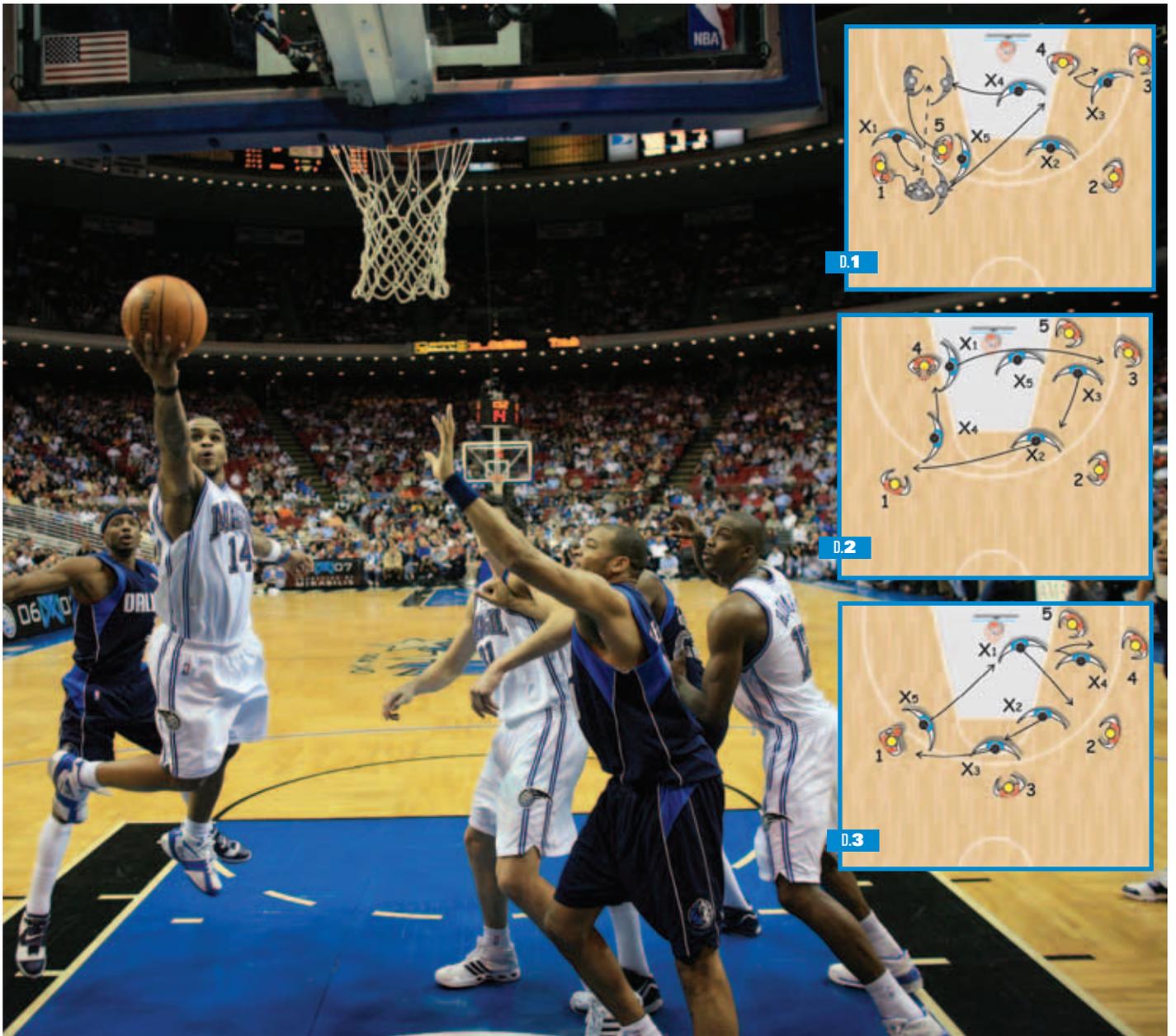
Del Harris is in his eight season as an assistant coach with the Dallas Mavericks. He landed his first NBA coaching job as assistant with the Houston Rockets in 1976, and then he became head coach, and in 1981 he led the team to the NBA Finals. He then served as assistant coach of the Milwaukee Bucks and later became head coach. Then, Harris was from 1994 to 1998 head coach of the Los Angeles Lakers. He coached at every level, from the high school to the college (Earlham College), to overseas (for six seasons in Puerto Rico, winning three national titles). At the national team level, he was advisor of the 1994 FIBA World Championship Canadian National Men's team, one of the assistant coaches of the bronze medal US National team at the FIBA World Championships in 1998, and head coach of the 2004 Olympic Games Chinese National team, which reached the eighth place. He wrote several successful basketball technical books, above all on defense.

There are many choices of coverage a coach may select from in determining his pick-and-roll strategy, but we suggest to have one way that you become best at and a second, or "B" way, to cover the various angles, when your "A" way is getting beat. In the NBA teams will often employ four or five different techniques for certain situations, but the best defensive teams have a basic choice and then a counter or two at most, knowing that a team will not be able to be proficient if it tries too many techniques. Again, this follows our belief that you cannot do a great job at any one thing, if you try to do too many things in basketball. A veteran team that has been together can do more than a novice or newly-organized one, of course.

Some of the standard choices in pick-and-roll coverage are:

Help and recover. Some coaches call this "hedging" or "showing", but the idea is that the defender on the picker will help the defender on the ball at a prescribed angle to negotiate (defeat) the screen and then each man recovers to his own original man, ideally.





D.1

D.2

D.3

There are many variations of this, like hard help: this requires the helper to be right up on the picker as the pick is set to jump quickly out at a hard angle (90 degrees facing the sideline) in the path of the ballhandler. This prevents the ballhandler from “turning the corner” over the pick and getting into the middle of the defense. It forces the ballhandler break his angle of attack, or to charge into the defender. Of course this allowing his defender space and timing to go under the defensive helper, but over the player setting the pick and re-engage the ballhandler. The helper then recovers back to the picker, unless he gets too extended and someone has to pick him up, in which case he rotates to the free throw lane “paint” area to find an open man.

In this hard help method, the helper may be told to stay with the ballhandler: a) until his

teammate recovers, or b) until the ballhandler passes, or c) just a certain number of steps, ranging from zero to two or three. These are strategic decisions based on the abilities of the two opponents and how they attempt to score on the pick-and-roll action by rolling, or popping, or by having the ballhandler shoot, or to penetrate and swing the ball to the weak side to shooters or to a posted player.

Soft help. The helper may give a much softer angle help (45 degrees or less) and jam up the middle more with his coverage. “Covering the turn” means that the defender on the picker will drop back roughly in line with the “box” along the strong side foul lane and give a sort of zone coverage to the ballhandler and the foul lane. The defender on the ball must continue a hard pursuit over the pick. This method is less

aggressive, but prevents splits and tends to offer the jump shot more than the roll or penetration for teams that do that quite well in their attack.

In any coverage the defender on the ball may be told to go over or under the man setting the pick on him. That decision is made based on two factors: the distance the pick is set on the floor and the ability of the ballhandler to shoot behind the screen relative to his skill at penetration. We prefer to go under picks set far out on the floor and against poor shooters; and we prefer to go over on closer setups and against good shooters. Again, these are strategies that scouting or time out adjustments must address.

Trap. A more aggressive coverage is to trap the ballhandler with the defender on the picker. The most aggressive is for the de-

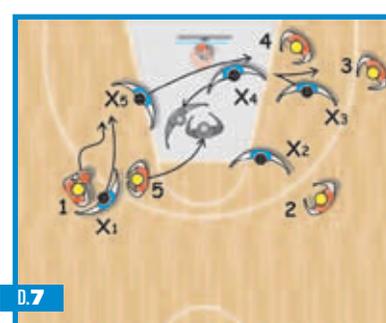
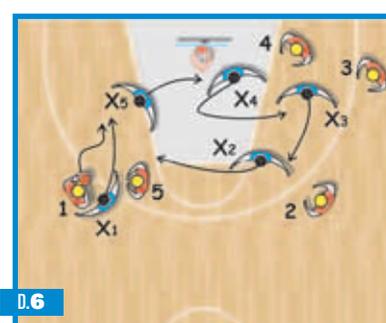
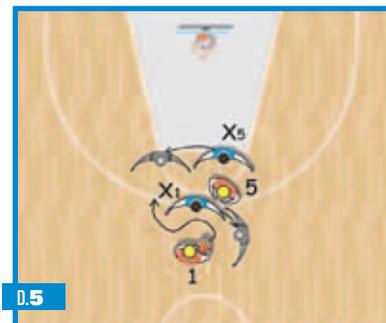
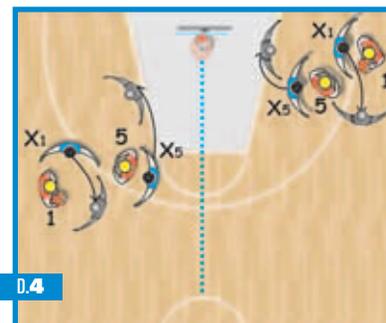
fender on the picker to trap the ballhandler before the pick is actually set, though the more common way is to trap just as the ballhandler is coming over the pick. Naturally, with either form of this aggressiveness comes some risk. A rotation is necessary if the ballhandler is able to pass the ball to the picker quickly on a pop or roll, with the lowest defender near the goal rotating to him. The diag. 1 shows such a rotation as X5 jumps out to trap 1 and X4 rotates over to pick up 5, as he sees the ball in the air from 1 to 5. X5 will rotate opposite the pass into the paint and pick up the open man, normally 4, though X3 has to help until X5 can get there. Sometimes X5 is late, necessitating him to cover 3 on the weak side.

Switching. This method is the easiest and is utilized most often when equal-sized players are involved in the pick-and-roll. However, late in the game, most NBA teams will use the switch with 4, or even all 5 men in order to prevent a quick easy shot, especially a 3-pointer. Note: this is a critical strategy move to remember when you are protecting a lead late in the game. It is a good strategy when the possession clock is down to 7 seconds as well, any time in the game. The open shots beat you, especially the threes. Mismatches caused by switching are a far less dangerous situation to be in than giving up an open shot to a good player. The coach must teach how to pass off mismatches quickly and/or drill players how to trap out

mismatches when they occur. That is, a big player must automatically trap down for a small teammate being posted by a big post as X4 does in diag. 2. A small player must rotate over to replace a bigger teammate stuck out on the perimeter defending a quick penetrating smaller player due to a switch or emergency coverage as X3 does for X5 in diag. 3. The mismatched man will rotate off to the weak side and pick up an open man. X2 rotates to 3 and X1 picks up 2.

Overplaying down to the baseline. Another oft-employed technique is to push the ballhandler down toward the baseline. To do this the defender on the picker must call out the signal for this coverage (usually a color or simply "down") immediately as he sees the pick about to be set. He then assumes a position two to three steps below the picker in the direction that the ball defender must push the ball and the defender on the ball must get into a severe overplay, pushing the ballhandler "down" toward the baseline and into the defender on the picker. This play usually occurs on wing and corner coverage (diag. 4).

"Down" can be utilized on the top as well, but it is less safe there. The defender on the picker calls "Down right or left", depending on which way he wants the defender to send the ballhandler. The ball defender will then get into a position on the high side and push the ballhandler down toward the de-



fender on the picker as in diag. 5.

In both cases X1 must maintain contact with the ballhandler to keep him from splitting quickly between himself and X5. On the sideline pick and roll the coach must decide if he will have X5 recover back to 5 on a pass to him, or to have a player rotate to 5. In diag. 6 X2 rotated to 5 because the game plan dictated that 5 was a great shooter from 15-17 feet. In the diag. 7, X4 rotated to 5 on the roll because X5 did not get back to 5. X5 then rotates on across to the weak side to pick up an open man, in this case player 4.

The same decisions must be made on the coverage of the top angle pick-and-roll.



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by Raffaele Imbrogno

ANOTHER LEGEND: DEAN SMITH

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

After our review of the new beautiful book (with DVDs) of John Wooden of the University of California, Los Angeles, here are two top level DVDs of Dean Smith, the legendary coach of the University of North Carolina. For those of you who don't know, Smith won 879 games as a head coach at North Carolina, two NCAA titles, and was College Coach of the Year four times. He was elected to the Basketball Hall of Fame in 1983.

Championship Productions has recently released new DVDs: "Dean Smith's Encyclopedia of the Scramble Defense" and "Dean Smith's Paint Zone Scramble." For fans of this great coach, these two DVDs bring new knowledge elements based of Smith's philosophy.

The people who read "Basketball Multiple Offense and Defense" (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1982, with the foreword of Bobby Knight and one section dedicated to the shuffle offense written by Bob Spear) will find that many of the ideas from the book are now in the DVDs. Smith, the great legend of basketball, describes his defensive approach with great intelligence.

In the first part, Smith goes through the main elements of

his defense on a blackboard, then uses videoclips of players on the court going through the motions, backing up what he has just described. The DVD ends with game highlights of some of his fantastic Carolina Tar Heel teams.

In the first two hours of the DVD, which are dedicated to scramble de-

fense, Smith describes his defensive weapon in great detail.

You quickly come to understand that when this defense is well executed, it offers the possibility to radically change the pace of the game. Smith says that the main objective of this defence is to force the opponent to play out of their schemes.

At the foundation of this defense is a solid man-to-man concept.

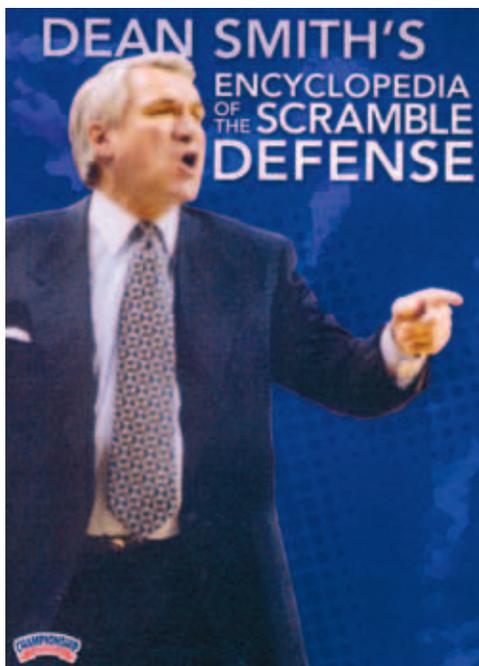
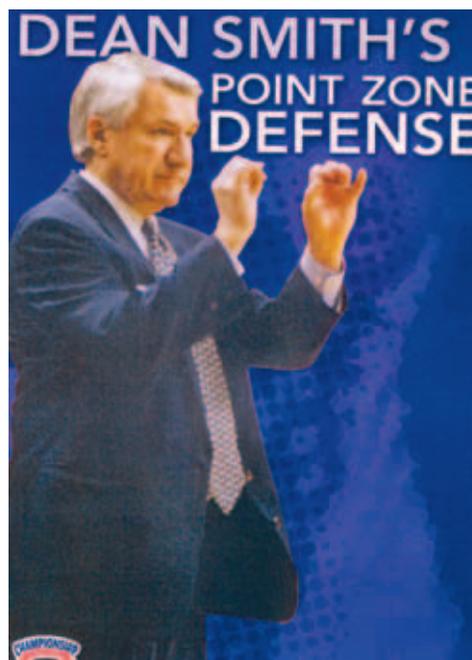
Coach Smith explains his historic defensive sequence, called "30," which is based on run-and-jump. He also details his defensive series, called "40" (zone press 2-2-1), and "50" (a zone defense that is used after a time out, and in situations involving an inbound pass). Smith uses clear examples of how to build a solid defense and uses game highlights of his winning teams to show how it all can work.

On his second DVD, Smith introduces one of his trademarks: a defense based on one player pressuring the ball, while other four defenders are set in a zone defense. Smith calls this his "point" zone."

This particular zone is presented, starting from different sets (2-3 and 1-3-1) and in different game situations. The DVD lasts 84 minutes, and Smith packs each minute with information on how to work his defense.

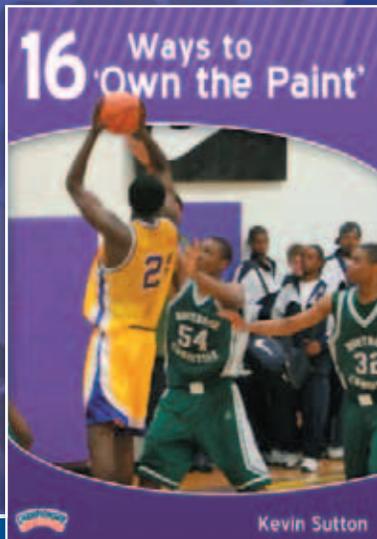
These two DVDs make excellent additions to the libraries of young coaches, who will easily be able to see and understand the greatness of a winning coach who is able to simply and effectively describe concepts that initially seem extremely difficult. We can only hope that Championship Productions will eventually produce some DVDs on the offensive concepts created of this celebrated coach.

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

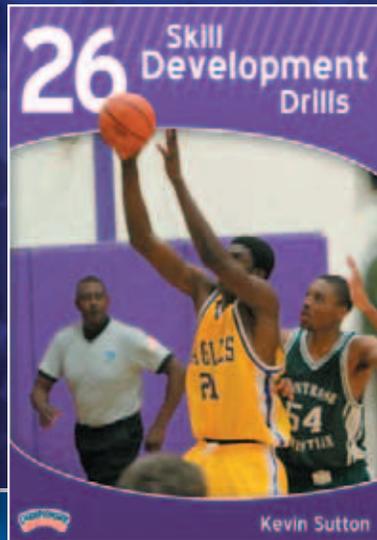


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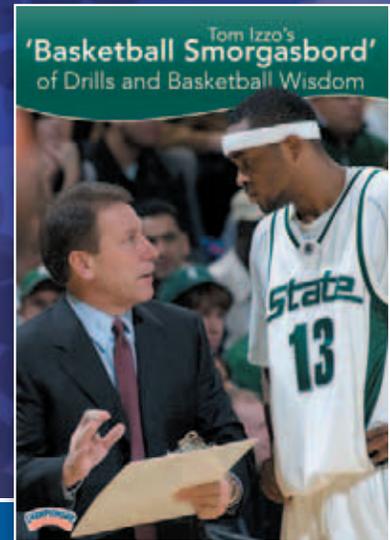


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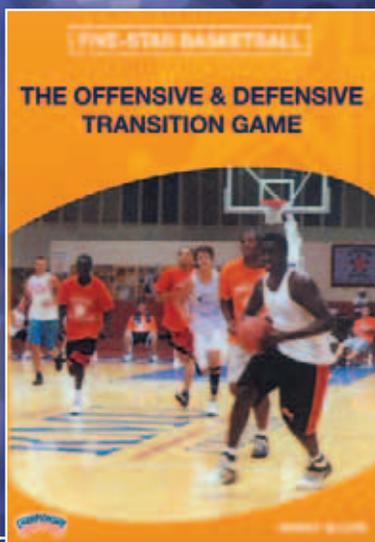
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Tom Izzo

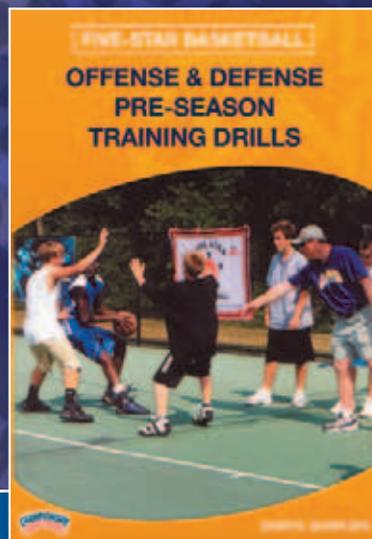


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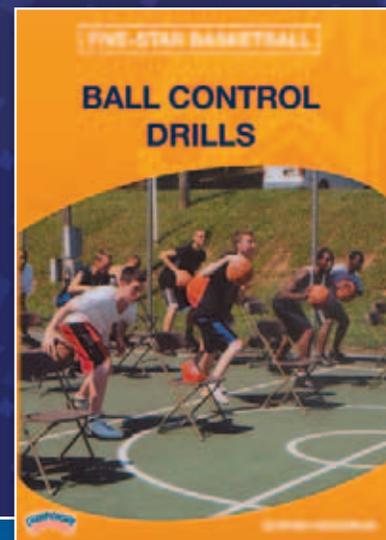
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by Pat Rosenow

THE THIRD TEAM ON THE COURT

Pat Rosenow has refereed high school and college in the United States for more than 25 years. He has also been a FIBA referee for 20 years.

One of the reasons basketball is such a great sport is that a team with less talented players who play well together can beat a team that has better players who don't play well together. In other words, teamwork can make a group of players better than the sum of the talents of each individual player. Two past NBA Champions, the Spurs and Pistons, developed a reputation for great team play, as did both men's and women's Olympic Gold Medal winners. That teamwork comes through long hours of practice, during which each player learns to have trust and confidence in his or her teammates, develops loyalty to them, and establishes close communications with them.

While all fans love to watch two great teams of skilled players, they often forget there is a third team on the court. That team is the officials. Certainly, the two or three floor officials and to a lesser, but still an important extent, the table officials, are a group of individuals who must work as a team every bit as much as the players. They need to have the same degree of trust, confidence, and loyalty.

Even in a normal situation, it could be difficult, since officials don't come to each game with the same partners and don't have long hours of practice

to develop relationships. We have meetings and clinics, and standard mechanics and signals, but it is still a challenge to create the "chemistry" that is critical to teamwork.

In the context of international competitions that challenge becomes even greater. Although English is the default language for communicating an official's decisions in FIBA, in many cases the officials may not share a common language through which they can easily communicate. And even though there has been a vast improvement in the standardization of FIBA referees over the past decades, we still see some variations in mechanics, interpretations, and philosophies between officials from different regions or nations.

But that's what makes being a FIBA referee and working in international competitions so rewarding. There's no better feeling as a basketball referee than to come together as teammates and do a great job under very high pressure with partners who you have just met and with whom you can speak only limited phrases. Having an arena full of fans and two sets of coaches and players screaming at you and your partners can quickly forge a strong bond and create enduring friendships.

While many of the things that help officials work as a team apply to officiating at every level, there are a few things that are particularly important in establishing relationships in interna-



tional competitions.

Loyalty is very important. You may have been selected by your national federation to go to the competition. You may already know many of the players and coaches. You may have even traveled with your nation's team. Nevertheless, you are there as a part of the team of referees and that team deserves your primary loyalty. In some competitions, it may be possible for you to watch your nation's team play. While you may be inclined to enthusiastically support that



team, you must resist the temptation to do anything that would indicate your criticism of any call or decision made by the officials working that game. Your primary loyalty must be to the officials.

If your nation's team loses and you think there may have been incorrect calls, do not say a thing to anyone. First, you may not have had the most objective view of the plays in question. Besides, if there were incorrect calls, the head referee will know it and address it with the officials who made the mistakes. If your

nation's team has a game and you watch it, you should always take the next opportunity to congratulate the officials from that game and tell them "good game," regardless of the outcome. Leave any criticism to the head referee and observers.

Also, don't get trapped if anyone from your nation's delegation (or anyone else for that matter) comes and ask you to give an opinion on the quality of officiating. Answering a specific question about a rule is acceptable, but don't turn on your referee teammates and criticize

them to your nation's delegation. It might be appropriate to discuss the officiating with your nation's chief referee, once the competition is over, everyone has returned home, and tempers have cooled; but not before. If you demonstrate loyalty, you'll be respected by your fellow officials, the teams, and the organizers.

Trust and confidence are vital to the creation of an effective team of officials. One of the quickest ways to destroy teamwork is for an official from a nation

with a "strong" basketball background to assume that an official from a nation with a more limited basketball background needs help or can't be trusted. He or she may make calls out of his area right in front of that official or even worse, try to change a call. That does nothing but destroy the confidence the players and coaches have in the officials as a team and will lead to trouble in the long run.

First of all, the assumption about the level of officiating in various parts of the world is probably not true. Because of FIBA's standardization and training the overall quality of international officiating is better than ever. In fact, it may be that the official from the "stronger basketball country" has much less FIBA experience than the partner he or she is worried about.

Leave the determination of who should be working the game with you to the head referee. The assumption must be that if your partner is there, he or she is competent and can handle the game. Teamwork is based on mutual respect and trust; even a star must pass the ball and trust his teammate to make the shot. Similarly, international officials in particular must concentrate on working their primary areas and trust their partners to do the same.

While good referees trust their partners, they also have confidence in their own abilities. A good official believes he or she belongs on the team and is ready to contribute. That confidence is not arrogance, but simply a sense that everyone on the officiating team is competent and worthy of mutual respect. Mutual trust and confidence means the officials will work not as individuals but as a unit.

The most challenging aspect of teamwork in the international context is effective communication. Of course, there are normally a number of referee meetings before international tournaments which give all the officials a chance to meet each other and discuss various items. That is important and helpful, but just as critical is to develop good communications with your specific crew for each game. Of course, if language is not a problem, a good pre-game meeting will be much easier. On the other hand, if language is a barrier, you'll have to work harder. The good thing is that a lot can be done by look-





ing at the charts in the officials' manual and acting out certain plays. Just the attempt to go over a few things is an important step in building trust and confidence.

Communications during the game are harder without a common language, but not impossible. Non-verbal communication will always work. That means eye contact is absolutely vital. A head nod or thumbs up can make all the difference in the world in keeping every-

one focused. A quick glance during a time out can help remind everyone where the ball will be put in play. Of course that's true in all games. However, it is even more useful in international competitions as a tool to reinforce trust and confidence.

In the United States we have a famous saying from our early history as a collection of colonies that "If don't hang together, we will most certainly be hanged separately." That applies to us

as basketball officials. Trust, confidence, and effective communications are the keys to teamwork in officiating international basketball. There is no greater reward for a referee than to do a good job on a challenging game with new partners from totally different backgrounds. We discover that our love and respect for the game is a common bond which crosses cultural differences and national boundaries. And that is what international sports is all about.

RIGHT OR WRONG?

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



QUESTIONS

1. A4 releases a shot for a goal from a position near the baseline. The 24-second signal sounds while the ball is in the air on the shot, after which the ball does not touch the rim or go into the basket. Shall the resulting throw-in awarded team B be administered from the free-throw line extended?
2. Near the end of the first period, A4 is erroneously awarded two free-throws and is successful on both attempts. The period ends without the error being realized. During the first dead ball following the beginning of the second period, the error is discovered and brought to the attention of the officials. Shall the free-throws scored by A4 be canceled?
3. A2 ends a dribble while both feet are off the floor, after which A2 comes to a stop by landing on both feet simultaneously. May A2 now take a pivot step?
4. Team A has been in continuous control of the ball in its backcourt for four seconds when the clock is stopped because of an injury to a team A player. When play resumes, shall team A be given a new 8-second period to move the ball to the frontcourt?
5. While the ball is in the air on a last free-throw a double foul occurs, after which the free-throw is successful. Is this a jump-ball situation?
6. On a throw-in, is it acceptable for the official administering that throw-in to blow the whistle when the ball becomes live?
7. B3 commits a disqualifying contact foul against A5. May the resulting free-throws be attempted by any opposing player?
8. Coach A is given a warning for disrespectfully communicating with the table officials. Later in the game and while team A is in control of the ball, coach A again disrespectfully addresses the table officials, after which A2 scores a field goal. Coach A's repeated action is now brought to the attention of the referee who charges coach A with a technical foul. Shall the goal by A2 also be canceled?
9. A5 commits a dribble violation, after which a fighting situation occurs between A5 and B5. A5 and B5 are charged with disqualifying fouls. Shall play resume with a team B throw-in?
10. During an interval of play, team A is entitled to the next alternating possession. During the same interval of play, a technical foul is charged to a team A player. Shall team A continue to be entitled to the next alternating possession?

ANSWERS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. No; Art. 29.3 | 6. No; Art. 47.2 |
| 2. No; Art. 44; FIBA Interpretation | 7. No; Art. 37.2.3 |
| 3. Yes.; Art. 25.2.1 | 8. No; Art. 38.1.5 |
| 4. No; Art. 28.2.2 | 9. Yes; Art. (39.2.3 |
| 5. No; Art. 35.2.2 | 10. Yes; Art. 12.4.8 |



by Chris Orso

EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE TEAM AND THE FANS

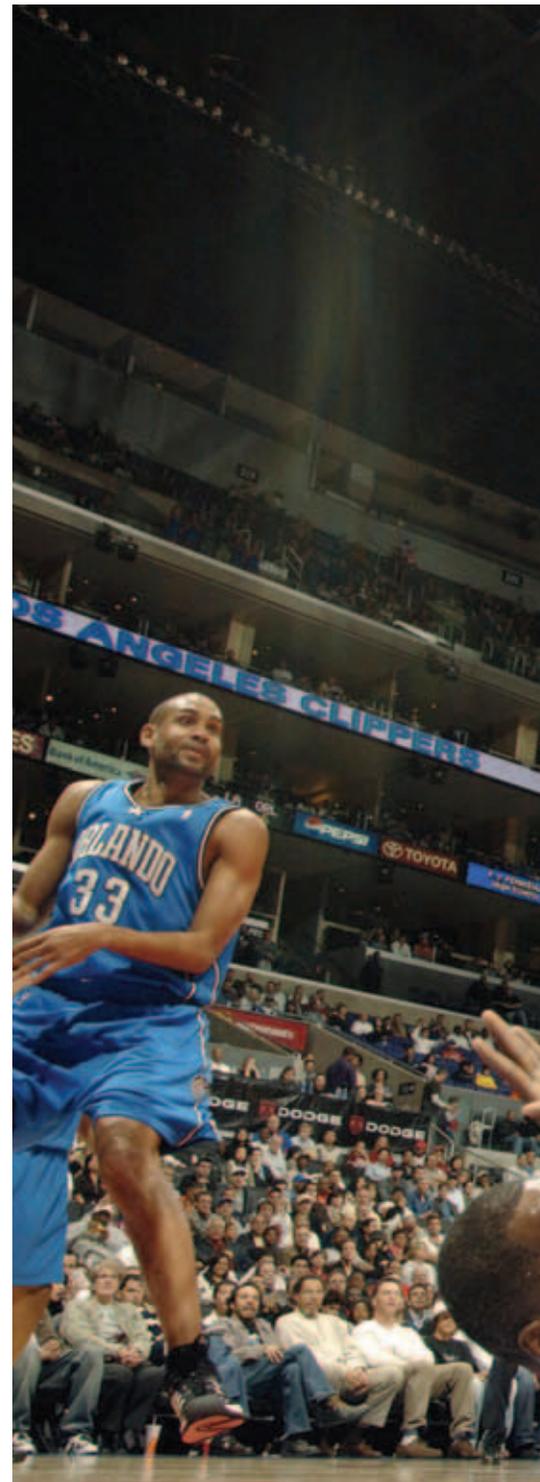
Chris D'Orso joined the Orlando Magic in 1989. He was appointed as Promotions/Publicity Coordinator, then he moved into Sponsorship Sales Department, as a Corporate Account Manager. In 1994 he was promoted to the Assistant Director of Marketing position and in 1998 became Director of Marketing. Since 2002 he is the Vice President of Marketing and ticket sales.

What other business can motivate a person to jump up, cheer and yell at their television set? What other business can bring communities together to develop a strong passionate bond between their customers? There is only one business that can do this, and it's the sports business!

Fans attending or watching a sporting event are making an emotional connection and bond that other businesses would love to have with their consumers. The greater the emotional connection to your sports team or game experience, the greater revenue you will generate. We all have to remember it's a sports business and need to treat it as one. At the Orlando Magic we aim to create the best experience for our fans, both on and off the court. Our core product is basketball; nevertheless, we cannot control how the team plays. It is our job in the marketing and sales department to make sure the fans have a fantastic experience, whether we win or lose the game.

The first thing that you must remember is that when you sell a ticket to a sporting event you are only selling a memory for the fan attending the event. It's the emotional connection to our fans that, in





essence, we are selling. We are tapping into the human need and hopefully supplying our fans with life long memories. In the business of sports, we have the ability, like no other business, to create connection with our consumers and fans. We also need to continue to develop sales strategies around these emotional connections.

Today you have to be creative in how and what you sell, creating opportunities to generate a closer connection

between your customer and the business will create avid fans! Avid fans come to more games which generates more revenue for your team. In Orlando we allow our fans the chance to play on the court pre-game, high five our players during introductions, be a ball kid for the night, be a Junior Magic Dancer, deliver our game ball to the referees and even attend the players' captain meeting! All these opportunities will create these life long memories that will keep the fans com-

ing back again and again to our games. And, more importantly, all these opportunities are tied to ticket sales. In order to participate in any one of these experiences it requires a ticket purchase which has helped us generate thousands of dollars in ticket revenue for our team.

Being around the team and the game on a daily basis, you forget how special it may be for a fan to come in close contact with your team. You



need to build around the emotion of connecting to your core product, the basketball team. Watch children when they come in contact with a player, but more importantly watch how special it is for a parent. The pictures and memories of coming in contact with the players last a lifetime. And it is important for the players to understand this concept during these moments of contact. It only takes one fan's bad experience with a player to ruin their reputation. That's why it is so important to always

make sure you are giving the best experience possible.

You need to manage your brand as best you can and make sure you are effectively controlling your message. A major part of a sports team message is the experience that fans receive at your events. We have created events that do just that, the Magic Select a Seat event and the Influencer Parties. The Magic Select a Seat event is an event that we hold prior to the season which is open

to the public. It allows the fans the opportunity to pick and purchase seats for the upcoming season and participate in interactive activities. Fans are treated to games, clinics, a full team autograph session and much more. You are up front and close to your potential season ticket holders and by doing this, an emotional connection is created with our team that we hope will be the catalyst to purchase seats. We have been conducting these events for the past five seasons and each year we

generate thousands of dollars of ticket and retail revenue.

The influencer parties were a concept that we learned from the New Jersey Nets, which helped us reach out to the most influential business leaders in our community. We would reach out to one of our most passionate season ticket holders, and ask them to host a party at their house for their friends, who they think would buy Magic season tickets. The Orlando Magic purchases the food and beverages, bring ticket sales representatives to set up a sales display, the dance team, a Magic coach, and two Magic players. These parties usually have fewer than 50 attendees, which make the emotional connection exclusive. The format includes a short presentation from our a member of our broadcast team or the Magic COO, Alex Martins, that stresses our "Commitment" to the community as well as a sales pitch. The tickets that are purchased at these events are traditionally the highest priced inventory and the party guests leave with memories that last a lifetime.

Bringing your brand to the community will increase your fan base which, in turn, will increase your revenue. Remember you cannot underestimate the power that sports have on a community and need to make sure that you are utilizing that connection for both increasing your revenue and adding value to the community you live in. We, as sports teams, have the unique opportunity to bring attention to important issues on a global scale and need to remember how important sports are to the fabric of a community.

So the next time you sit down and watch a game, notice how fast your emotions are drawn to the event, see how much anxiety you feel if your home team is losing or how much pride you feel when they win an important game or tournament. That's the emotional connection that sports can offer its fans, sponsors and the community, which allows these groups to extend these experiences further and create that emotional bond. This emotional bond will be the catalyst to both grow your revenue and make your community a better place to live.



EUROPE OR ASIA HOW ABOUT BOTH?

*Classical culture or oriental mystique?
Turkey, crossroads of civilizations, bridge between
West and East, has it all: Roman mosaics and
Ottoman mosques, marble temples and
gilded palaces, outstanding cuisine and a wealth
of natural beauty. Why settle for less?
Turkey: the time has come.*



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BOUNCES ON HARDWOOD

For starters, the game of basketball is played with a well-inflated basketball. But what happens once a player makes a move to the basket and the ball down goes to the floor with that first dribble? Let's take a close look at the hardwood that FIBA Study Centre partners have installed at the top basketball arenas around the world.

HARO SPORTS

HARO Sports is a business unit of Hamberger Industries, one of the biggest hardwood flooring manufacturers in the world.

The sports flooring business unit was founded in 1955, and, since then, it has placed floors in over 65 countries, including sites for the Olympic Games, world and continental championships.

HARO Sports portable and permanent floors offer a fast and easy installation, much lower maintenance cost, exceptional life span, greater safety for the athletes, and superior quality.

Their hardwood floors enjoy a flexible, engineered construction that nearly eliminates the swelling and shrinking, gaps and cracks that are common with conventional strip hardwood floors.

This method features a solid hardwood top layer supported by a premium quality birch plywood core layer.

The hardwood top layer receives a factory applied PERMA-DUR(r) finish for superior performance and surface protection.

Each of the eight layers of PERMA-DUR(r) finish is individually UV cured, which provides a harder and more durable surface so it doesn't require refinishing within the first 10 years.

Every portable and permanent HARO Sports floor meets and exceeds the requirements of the DIN standard 18032, part 2, delivering true force reduction up to 67 % and ball rebound of to 98 %, so reducing risk of injury.



JUNCKERS



Junckers is Europe's leading manufacturer of solid hardwood floors, and, since its founding 75 years ago, more than one hundred million square meters of its floors have been installed all over the world.

Wood is the obvious and natural choice of material for sports flooring, and in order to ensure sustainable forestry, this company uses certified wood from controlled and managed forests. A solid hardwood Junckers sports floor offers area elasticity as opposed to the point elasticity, which is an inherent characteristic of PU, PVC, and linoleum floors.



Area elasticity allows for optimum freedom of movement, while point elasticity impedes rapid movement and to some extent locks the feet to the floor.

A sports floor and its performance are the results of a system comprising three interacting elements: The undercarriage construction, the solid hardwood floor, and the surface treatment.

In order to ensure optimum life span and performance, periodical checks, maintenance, additional surface treatment, and sanding may be required.

PRESTIGE

For Prestige Sports Systems, the long-time affiliation and FIBA Partnership has been an integral part of their success and presence in six continents.



and the durability of the flooring surface. This is achieved through constant research, testing, and development of both the playing surface and its subfloor designs, together with our continuous commitment to the DIN standards.

From the 2006 National Games in India, to the recent Asian Games in Qatar, to the upcoming 2008 Olympics in Beijing, you will find a Prestige floor, whether it be a permanent, portable, wood, or synthetic installation. Prestige is one of the world leaders in the manufacture, supply, and export of quality residential, commercial and sports flooring systems to over 56 countries.

The hardwood and synthetic sports systems have been specially tested and certified by worldwide organizations ensuring the safety of the players, the heightened performance of the game,

Prestige's patented Bi-Power systems have evolved from basketball to other sports, providing a complete solution to architects, designers, schools, and government officials.

The strong alliance with other FIBA equipment suppliers has also ensured that worldwide facilities are getting only the top level products. With the support of our worldwide technical centers, Prestige has also ensured that the flooring systems are installed professionally for maximum benefit and long life.

ROBBINS

Robbins Sports Surfaces spans the globe with installations in over 60 nations around the world.

Their excellence in international sport surfaces is recognized in all continents due to their experience providing floors for the Olympics, international and national championships, and amateur sport venues. Most recently, their flooring systems were used in the 2005 China National Games and in

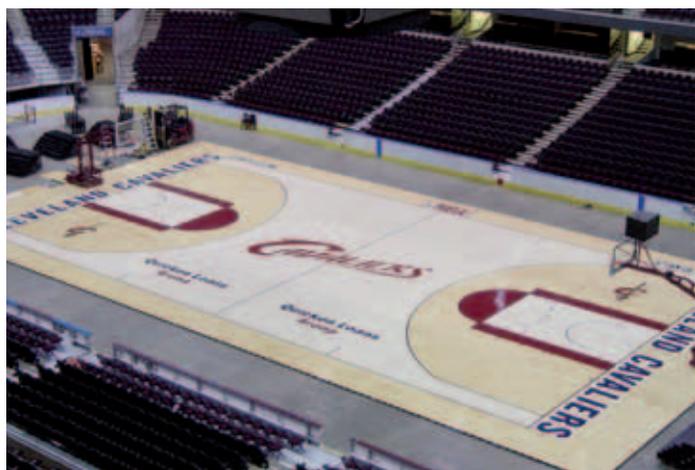


the Euro League Championship Games in 2006. This company is one of the original FIBA partners.

Robbins portable floors dominate the arenas of the NBA and the majority of NBA teams choose Robbins floors for their training facilities as well.

With the athlete in mind, their flooring systems are designed with the latest technology for the practice of all sports and recreational activities, at professional and amateur levels. Rigorous testing standards are incorporated through every stage of product development.

This guarantees long lasting, innovative, safe, and high-performance surfaces to ensure championship performance for years to come.



SEICOM

This Italian company has vast experience in manufacturing and supplying high-level sports parquet floors for sport halls around the globe.

Seicom invests in the research and development of sports floorings. However, at Seicom, it is not only the quality of the product, but also the safety and performance of the players, who run and jump on their floors, that matters most.

Seicom's range of products includes both permanent and portable elastic floors that utilize a new hydraulic connection system. All flooring keeps within the elasticity requirements provided for by DIN18032.2.

In addition, their floors have received the Certificate of Approval issued by FIBA for both portable and permanent



floors for large sport halls. Seicom flooring was used at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games basketball court and at the Palalido of Milan, where the Armani Jeans team plays their games.



FIBA

We Are Basketball



by Keith D'Amelio

CONDITIONING AT THE NBA LEVEL

Keith D'Amelio is on his second year as the Strength and Conditioning Coach of the Toronto Raptors. Previously, he had the same role with the Asheville Altitude of the NBDL, the NBA developmental league. He was also assistant of the Strength and Conditioning Coach of the Boston Celtics for four years.

The primary goal of any Strength and Conditioning Coach is to help prevent injury both on the game field and in the weight room, from there the next goal is to enhance performance, and this was the exact approach that we took with Andrea Bargnani, the last NBA draft's top pick.

When we drafted Andrea, everyone thought that he was too frail and light to play in the NBA and that at 113 kg (250 lbs.) he would get pushed around. As a result, many said that for him to be successful he needed to gain significant weight. This was never intention, as we began his training we knew that with his skills and athleticism he would be more than ready for the NBA. The one aspect that he did need significant work on was in his overall strength we also wanted to help improve his movement deficiencies so that we would limit his potential from unnecessary injuries.

Andrea had some very minor issues that needed to be corrected before any true gains in both strength and athleticism could be reached.

He had some movement deficiencies and muscle imbalances mostly due to his overall size and his age, at 20 years old and 2.13 mt. (7-0 ft.) tall not everything grows in unison. As a result certain muscles get both overlooked and underused, potential creating problems by altering the body's mechanics. We knew that if we did not take care of these minor problems first that they could become bigger problems down the road and would also limit the gains that Andrea would get from further training.

Basketball is a sport in which the athlete

must run, jump, cut, dribble and shoot from a variety of body positions and in all planes of motion. Due to the variety of movements needed, basketball players must have the proper flexibility to get into these positions and the strength to control their body in the positions. If one of these aspects is missing, or has a weak link, then injuries occur. As with Andrea, if there is an imbalance in strength or flexibility some where within the kinetic chain then there is a potential for injury. One of the major aspects of this is to have a strong foundation of core stability and strength so that there is a strong base from which to move the extremities. In our strength program there is also a heavy emphasis on single leg training as most of the movements listed earlier (running, jumping, cutting) are performed with only one leg in contact with the ground.

This places tremendous force on the ankle, knee and hip complexes requiring high levels of both stability and strength. While we utilize many different movements to enhance lower body strength (front squat, split squat, modified deadlifts, slide board leg curls and many others), the exercises that I place a greater emphasis on are the single leg squat and single leg deadlift.

SINGLE LEG SQUAT

The single leg squat is one of the best measurements of not only lower body strength but of lower body neuromuscular control. You can quickly determine someone's deficiencies with this movement as well. In the single leg squat, I do not place the emphasis on how much weight one can do, I place the measure on to what depth one can go. If you can single leg squat with great form to 28 cm (12 inches), then I know you have tremendous strength and stability.

When Andrea first arrived he was unable to perform a single leg squat to 56 cm (24 inches), he was able to squat to 60 cm (28 inches), although without great form. This



was due to the movement deficiencies and lack of neuromuscular control. Once we were able to correct some of his imbalances he quickly gained range of motion and is currently able to single leg squat to 42 cm (18 inches), a gain of 30 cm (10 inches) which is quite impressive.

PULL-UPS

Upper body strength is an area that most European players struggle with when they first arrive here to play in the NBA, it is not something that is focused on through out Europe. In dealing with the US collegiate players it is almost the opposite where upper body strength is focused on, although not always properly, lower body strength and movement is under trained. I have one major focus for our athletes in dealing with upper body strength, pull-ups, pull-up, and more pull-ups. This is one exercise that is severely overlooked for one simple reason it is hard for people to do. When Andrea arrived here, he was unable to perform one body weight pull up he is now able to do 6.

As with the lower body, there are a multitude of exercises that we perform to improve upper body strength, but the pull-up with all of its variations is the cornerstone of our upper body work. Andrea has also greatly improved in his upper body pushing strength, in looking at his dumbbell bench press when he arrived he could perform 18 kg (40 lbs.) x 10. He is now able to perform 36 kg (80 lbs.) x 10. This is a tremendous improvement as he has doubled his strength in this movement.

One aspect of his training that we have not focused on is his aerobic conditioning. Andrea came into the season having played for nearly a year straight making rest and corrective training his most important goals for the pre-season.

He has also has had the opportunity to play significant minutes for our team, which allows him to maintain his aerobic conditioning. When most rookies come into the NBA they rarely get the opportunity to play making it very important that they maintain a high level of aerobic conditioning, which they do by way of extra work both on and off the court.

With Andrea, I do not have him perform extra conditioning work as with games almost every other night, he needs to rest his body when the opportunity is given. I have provided below a sample of two workouts that Andrea is likely to follow in a typical week during the season. As Andrea continues to improve not only his abilities on the court but also his physical abilities he will be a talent in the NBA for years to come.



ANDREA'S IN SEASON SAMPLE TRAINING DAY ROUTINE 1

Foam Roll	5 min
Stretch	5 min
Dynamic Warm up	5 min
Dumbbell Chest Press	12, 6, 4
Oblique Hold	30s x 3
SL Deadlift	15, 10, 10
Pull Up's	Max x 3
MB Rotation Toss	8 x 3
Split Squat w/DB	12, 6, 4



ANDREA'S IN SEASON SAMPLE TRAINING DAY ROUTINE 2

Foam Roll	5 min
Stretch	5 min
Dynamic Warm up	5 min
Reverse Pull up	Max x 3
Standing Chops	12 x 3
Slide board Leg Curl	12 x 3
Slide board Chest Fly / Push	15 / 15, 12 / 12, 10 / 10
Bird Dog	15 ea. x 3
SL Squat (18")	12 x 3


FIBA

We Are Basketball


ONE-ON-ONE

DIUMASSI: DISCOVERING IRANIAN CIVILIZATION THROUGH BASKETBALL

The start of the millennium opened a new era in the world of Iranian basketball with the arrival of foreign players into the Iranian teams. Makan Dioumassi is one. The French national basketball team player turned down offers from his former club, the ASVEL Villeurbanne of Lyon and other major European teams to come to Iran and join Saba Battery. The 35-year old law graduate and Olympic silver medalist wanted to discover life beyond basketball.

Makan Dioumassi took a timeout to talk to FIBA correspondent Houman Bagheri, about his life, basketball and his experience of Iran.

FIBA: *What brought you over to Iran despite very good offers from top European teams like Bologna?*

DIUMASSI: Yes, I did receive good offers from Italian, Spanish and Russian clubs. My own club offered me the position of their Sports Director. I had been playing basketball for 15 years and I knew I still wanted to continue, but not just for the money. I was interested in doing something completely different. I had always been fascinated by history and ancient civilizations. I was really interested in discovering more about them. So when I got the offer from Iran I thought "Well, why not?"

FIBA: *Among your offers were there any from other countries in this region?*

DIUMASSI: Yes, there were offers from Qatar and Saudi Arabia. I told you about my interest in ancient history and old empires, so it was important for me to come to Iran and see it for myself.

FIBA: *Do you find that your social life is limited over here?*

DIUMASSI: No, not at all. I am discovering new things and new people everyday and as I said Iranians are very open and welcoming and at the same time traditionalists, because they are proud of their country. I am receiving an enormous amount of hos-



pitality from my Iranian teammates. They are always very kind and nice to me, inviting me over to eat with them in their homes.

FIBA: *Has any new experience you gained here changed you or your life?*

DIUMASSI: I feel like a message bearer now. My friends call me from all over the world and worry about my security in Iran. It's because of the news they see and hear about Iran. But I reassure them that it's not like that and ask them to come here and see it for themselves.

FIBA: *Have you found any similarities between the Iranian and French cultures?*

DIUMASSI: They are very close and I know there are a lot of ties between the two nations. The Iranians think well of the French. People here also live very similar to people in France. In France we have a large immigrant community. I have a white French mother and a Black African father. So we have a lot of mixtures and Iran also has a lot

of different communities, with Kurds, Turks, Armenians, Jews, Arabs and Persians making a very good mixture.

FIBA: *What is your opinion of the Iranian Basketball?*

DIUMASSI: The positive point is that the Iranian basketball really has the potential to improve and become one of the leaders in the region. But the negative point is the lack of infrastructure and a wide gap between the first top four teams and the rest. There is also a shortcoming with the marketing of the sport. Even though tickets are free, there are not many people who come to watch the games. But, for football there are thousands who pay to go and watch a match.

FIBA: *So what is your view of the Iranian spectators who do come to see the matches?*





DIOMASSI: They are very enthusiastic. Most of them are younger generation, but there are those who have been fans for long, too. However, it is not like in the West, where going to basketball matches is treated as a family outing. And this is something the Iranian Basketball Federation must work on.

FIBA: *How has the Iranian basketball or playing here been a challenge for you?*

DIOMASSI: I had to adapt myself to the Iranian style of playing the game.

FIBA: *So why didn't you try to adapt others to your style?*

DIOMASSI: Well, I am just one single person, even though I do transfer my experience to the coaches and the other players.

FIBA: *Did you encounter any obstacles while communicating or cooperating with your team mates?*

DIOMASSI: No, never. We are lucky in this respect. Players usually speak English so we never had any communication barriers. We never had any problems with cooperation either.

FIBA: *You were born a Muslim. Have you learned anything more about Islam since living here?*

DIOMASSI: For me religion is something inside the heart. Muslims may vary their religious routines in different parts of the world. But what is important is that they are praying to the same God. And that is what one should keep in mind. Since I came to Iran I have begun reading different books and learning about the different ways Muslim denominations carry out their religious routines.

FIBA: *How can sports bring countries with conflicts together? Can we have dialogue through sports?*

DIOMASSI: Yes, sports can create very strong links between people. When you play a sport you do not need to talk. You just pass the ball, you exchange it. Only in sports you can do this.

FIBA: *Will you consider staying in Iran if you get new offers or do you prefer to go back to Europe?*

DIOMASSI: I will definitely stay more, because I feel good here. I am discovering the people and the country. I have been to Shiraz, but there are still many places left to see.

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**PLANET
BASKETBALL**

THE WORLD IN BRIEF



ARGENTINA U19 SET FOR CHILE WARM-UPS

Argentina Under 19 coach Eduardo Pinto hopes his team's series with Chile will stand them in good stead for the FIBA U19 World Championship for Women.

The two sides will face up five times in preparation for the tournament, which will be held between July 26th and August 5th in Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

He said: "The goal of this tour was to watch the team, especially some players, who have almost no experience of competing at international level against an adult team.

We are in a warm-up period in several aspects, such as physical, technical and tactical, and we are missing some important players like (Sthefany) Thomas and (Romina) Pesante."

AUSTRALIA ROSTERS ANNOUNCED

Basketball Australia has announced a 17-man Australia Post Boomers squad, whose players will vie for a place on the national team to compete at the 2007 FIBA Oceania Qualifying Series in August.

The men's team must defeat the New Zealand Tall Blacks in that series to qualify

for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

"Forget Beijing and forget medalling: we've got to qualify first," Boomers head coach Brian Goorjian said. "Only the World Champions Spain and the host nation China are guaranteed a spot in Beijing, so I can confidently say that all the other nations are thinking like we are. At this point, qualifying is the goal."

The Australia Post Boomers 17-man squad is as follows:

David Andersen - CSKA (Russia), Chris Anstey - Melbourne Tigers, Stephen Black - Angelico Biella (Italy), Andrew Bogut - Milwaukee Bucks (USA), CJ Bruton - Brisbane Bullets, Aaron Bruce - Baylor University (USA), Wade Helliwell - Sebastiani Rieti (Italy), Joe Ingles - South Dragons, Sam Mackinnon - Brisbane Bullets, Darnell Mee - Cairns Taipans, Patrick Mills - Australian Institute of Sports, Brad Newley - Townsville Crocodiles, Matthew Nielsen - Lietuvos Rytas (Lithuania), Glen Saville - Wollongong Hawks, Luke Schenscher - Fort Worth (USA), Jason Smith - Sydney Kings, Mark Worthington - Sydney Kings.



Basketball Australia has also announced a 26-woman defencejobs Opals squad for its campaign to follow World Championship Gold with Olympic Gold.

All 12 World Champion defencejobs Opals have been retained, including Adelaide Lightning guard Erin Phillips, who is recovering from a knee reconstruction.

"This is the squad, but certainly we can add and delete players at any given time," defencejobs Opals head coach Jan Stirling said. "That has always been the case with shadow teams, when they're announced 18 months out from an Olympic Games. A number players named in the squad will be subject to stringent fitness and physiological testing in April in advance of the Opals' June camp."

Tours to China, Russia and the United States are scheduled for 2007.

The squad is as follows: Eva Afeaki, Suzy Batkovic, Tully Bevilaqua, Michelle Brogan, Renae Camino, Rohanee Cox, Hollie Grima, Jacinta Hamilton, Kristy Harrower, Lauren Jackson, Kathleen Macleod, Sharin Milner, Emily Mcinerny, Jenna O'Hea, Erin Phillips, Natalie Porter, Alicia Poto, Emma Randall, Samantha Richards, Jenni Screen, Deanna Smith, Belinda Snell, Laura Summerton, Penny Taylor, Jenny Whittle, Carly Wilson.

2007 WORLD SELECT TEAM FINALIZED FOR 10TH NIKE HOOP SUMMIT

Selecting 11 players from 10 different countries, the 2007 World Select Team that will compete in the 10th annual Nike Hoop Summit on April 7 at the FedExForum in Memphis, Tenn., was recently announced.

The Nike Hoop Summit, the premier annual basketball game featuring many of the world's leading basketball players aged 19 years or younger, sees top senior high school players from the USA taking on a World Select Team comprising the world's top players. The World roster features four guards Nihad Djedovic (1.98 mt., 6'6", Bosna Sarajevo/Bosnia), Chen Jianghua (1.88 mt., 6'2", Guangdong Tigers/China), Aleksandar



Ugrinoski (1.88 mt., 6'2", Arkadia Traiskirchen, Austria/Croatia) and Petteri Koponen (1.92 mt., 6'3", Honka Espoo/Finland). The World Team has forwards Omri Caspi (2.04 mt., 6'8", Hapoel Galil Elyon/Israel), Alexis Wangmene Mang-Ikri (2.06 mt., 6'9", Blair Academy, N.J./Cameroon), Nicholas Batum (2.04 mt., 6'8", Le Mans/France), Emir Preldzic (2.06 mt., 6'9", Ljubljana/Slovenia) and Nemanja Aleksandrov (2.08 mt., 6'10", Crvena Zvezda/Serbia). The roster is rounded off with center Giorgi Shermadini (2.16 mt., 7'1", Maccabi Tbilisi/Georgia) and forward/center Alexis Ajinca (2.16 mt., 7'1", Pau-Orthez/France).

21 PLAYERS SELECTED FOR WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM

With an eye towards continued adaptability to the changing women's basketball environment and building upon the success of the USA Basketball Women's Senior National Team program, USA Basketball announced the 21-member 2007-08 USA Women's Senior National Team. This group of seasoned veterans and rising stars, headlined by three-time Olympic gold medalist Sheryl Swoopes (Houston Comets) and two-time Olympic gold medalist Katie Smith (Detroit Shock), will train together over the next two years as the U.S. attempts at the 2007 FIBA Americas Championship to qualify for the 2008 Olympic Games and then defend its three consecutive Olympic gold medal winning streak. It is expected that players selected to compete on USA Senior National teams in the 2007 and 2008 international competitions will come from the USA Basketball Senior National Team pool.

In addition to Smith and Swoopes, included on the USA's deep and talent-stocked roster are: Seimone Augustus (Minnesota Lynx),

Alana Beard (Washington Mystics), Sue Bird (Seattle Storm), Swin Cash (Detroit Shock), Tamika Catchings (Indiana Fever), Jessica Davenport (Ohio State University), Katie Douglas (Connecticut Sun), Cheryl Ford (Detroit Shock), Sylvia Fowles (Louisiana State University), Taj McWilliams-Franklin (Los Angeles Sparks), DeLisha Milton-Jones (Washington Mystics), Deanna Nolan (Detroit Shock), Courtney Paris (University of Oklahoma), Candace Parker (University of Tennessee), Cappie Pondexter (Phoenix Mercury), Michelle Snow (Houston Comets), Diana Taurasi (Phoenix Mercury), Tina Thompson (Houston Comets) and Lindsay Whalen (Connecticut Sun). The USA's next chance to qualify for the 2008 Olympics will be at the 2007 FIBA Americas Championship, slated for Sept. 25-29 in Valdivia, Chile. The gold medalist at that tournament will earn a berth to the Beijing Olympic 12-nation field. In addition to the USA, teams participating in the 2007 FIBA Americas Championship will be Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cuba, Jamaica and Mexico. Should the United States not return home from Chile with the gold medal, there will be one final chance to qualify for the Olympics at the 2008 FIBA World Olympic Qualifying Tournament slated for June 9-15 at a site to be determined. "I think continuity is so important in the development of the USA Senior National Team," said US head coach Anne Donovan. "Although we don't have the benefits of extensive training as in the past, we are looking to maximize the time that we are together. By identifying a pool of players we'll be able to train extensively and evaluate the best fit for our National Team. The more that our staff and our players are able to train and play together, the better our USA National Team will be, come competition time."



KING JAMES MULLS OVER SUMMER OPTIONS

LeBron James is undecided if he will represent the United States at the FIBA Americas Championship this year in Las Vegas as the team tries to qualify for the Olympics.

The 22-year-old is considering taking a break after a hectic schedule over the past two seasons which saw him help the Cleveland Cavaliers reach the second round of the 2006 NBA play-offs before helping the United States capture a bronze medal at the FIBA World Championship in Japan.

A two-time All Star, James is third in the league in minutes per game (40.9) and



wants a break, but the lure of Las Vegas is also tempting.

He told the Cleveland Plain Dealer: "Anyone needs time off. Being in this country is more persuasive. Playing in Vegas would be a big reason why I would play, but I still have to think about getting some rest." James' absence would be a blow to Team USA, who already look set to be without Dwyane Wade after the Miami Heat star suffered a dislocated shoulder.

That would leave Carmelo Anthony as America's only captain for the tournament.

DRAW OF THE 2007 FIBA U19 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FOR MEN AND WOMEN

FIBA, in cooperation with the Slovak Basketball Association, hosted in Bratislava the draw for the 2007 FIBA U19 World Championship for Women that will be played from 26th July to 5th August 2007

corners of the planet and made basketball one of the most popular sports in the world." Here is the complete list of the initial posthumous inductees into the FIBA Hall of Fame:

PLAYERS: Alexander Belov (RUS), Kresimir Cosic (CRO), Teófilo Cruz (PUR), Mirza Delibasic (BIH), Radivoj Korac (SRB), Fernando Martin (ESP), Drazen Petrovic (CRO), Liliana Ronchetti (ITA), Vanya Voynova (BUL).

COACHES: Antonio Diaz-Miguel (ESP), Alexander Gomelsky (RUS), Henry "Hank" Iba (USA), Vladimir Kondrashin (RUS), Aleksandar Nikolic (SRB), Giancarlo Primo (ITA).

REFEREES: Obrad Belosevic (SRB), Vladimir Kostin (RUS), Pietro Reverberi (ITA), Renato Righetto (BRA).

CONTRIBUTORS "GOLD": Léon Bouffard (SUI), R. William Jones (GBR), James Naismith (CAN), 8 Founding Federations Of Fiba: Argentina, Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland.

CONTRIBUTORS: Eduardo Airdi Rivarola (PER), Abdel Azim Ashry (EGY), Turgut Atakol (TUR), Robert Busnel (FRA), Dionisio Calvo (PHI), Antonio Dos Reis Carneiro (BRA), José Claudio Dos Reis (BRA), Yoon Duk-Joo (KOR), Willard N. Greim (USA), Ferenc Hepp (HUN), Marian Kozlowski (POL), Anselmo Lopez (ESP), August Pitzl (AUT), Nebojsa Popovic (SRB), Raimundo Saporta (ESP), Decio Scuri (ITA), Nikolai Semashko (RUS), Radomir Shaper (SRB), Edward S. Steitz (USA), Yoshimi Ueda (JPN), Abdel Moneim Wahby (EGY).

In the summer of 2007, in a date yet to be determined, the intake of the 2007 Class of Inductees (composed by a maximum number of 20 persons) will take place in order to mark the 75th Anniversary of FIBA. After that date, enshrinement ceremonies into the FIBA Hall of Fame will take place every two years and will be limited to a maximum of six inductees per year.

ANGOLA PREPARATIONS ON TRACK FOR FIBA AFRICA CHAMPIONSHIP

The draw for the FIBA Africa Championship is to take place at the start of April.

Gustavo da Conceição, Chairman of host nation Angola's Federation of Basketball (FAB), made the announcement at a press conference in Luanda, adding that he was counting on the presence of some as yet unnamed "stars" of the basketball world.

He also confirmed that the inaugural match for August's tournament would be played in Luanda's Cidadela stadium before taking the competition to the provinces.

Angola, who are also the reigning champions, will begin their preparations in Huila before departing for Europe to train. It is the first time that Afrobasket will be played across five



cities, and has also been expanded from 12 teams to 16. Meanwhile, it has been confirmed that the four additional stadia designated to host the games will be completed in time. Fernanda Pereira, architect for the Finance Ministry, explained that work, carried out by a Chinese construction firm, would start in April, and that the completed grounds would be handed over on July 31. The courts are being built in the provinces of Huila, Cabinda, Benguela and Huambo and will cost around \$45.5million (£23.3million) in total.

FIBA LIFTS BAN ON THE PHILIPPINES

FIBA has lifted the suspension of the national basketball Federation of the Philippines. This will allow the national teams from the Philippines to compete again in FIBA competitions. In a letter faxed to President Manuel V. Pangilinan of the newly founded BAP-Samahang Basketball ng Pilipina Inc, FIBA's Secretary General Patrick Baumann has stated: "Thank you for your correspondence dated 16th February 2007 attesting the obtained accreditation from the Philippine Olympic Committee. It is therefore my pleasure to confirm to you that the Tokyo Agreement has now been complied with and, as a consequence, the suspension on the Philippines is lifted. At the same time, the BAP-Samahang Basketball ng Pilipinas Inc. replaces the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) as a duly affiliated member of FIBA taking over all of its rights and obligations." The lift of the suspension concluded a two and a half years long struggle over the control of the national basketball federation in the Philippines, where basketball is the most popular sport. In the summer of 2006 the controversy reached a turning

point when all parties agreed with the so-called "Tokyo Communiqué", approved by the FIBA Central Board. Beginning of February 2007 a solution was finally on its way. Under the leadership of Mr. Pangilinan, Chairman, the Three-Men Panel met in Bangkok to sort out the latest differences between Philipinas Basketball (PB) and Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP), under the supervision of FIBA Secretary General Patrick Baumann, FIBA Asia President Sheik Saoud Bin Al Thani and FIBA Asia Secretary General Dato Yeoh Choo Hock. The Three-Men Panel agreed on all major outstanding issues and agreed to proceed with the Unity Congress in Manila. PB and BAP called on all their stakeholders to attend the Unity Congress. FIBA and FIBA Asia approved the agreement and fully supported the holding of the Unity Congress. FIBA and FIBA Asia therefore encouraged all basketball stakeholders, in particular all members of BAP and PB, to unite by attending the meeting in Manila.

The Unity Congress was held on 5th February 2007, in the presence of FIBA Secretary General Patrick Baumann and delegates from the Philippine Olympic Committee. With the successful staging of the Unity Congress the role of the Three-Men Panel had successfully completed in accordance with the Tokyo Communiqué and the merger between BAP and PB consummated, resulting into a new national federation for basketball with new structures, by-laws and leaders.

That paved the way for the official Philippines Olympic Committee and FIBA accreditations and for the lifting of the suspension of the Philippines from international competitions.



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THE ODD - THE FUNNY - THE UNUSUAL



LUGO HELPS BASKETBALL DEVELOPMENT IN VENEZUELA

Venezuelan veteran Richard Lugo normally makes a big impact for the national side in the low post as a powerful center.

He is now making waves off the court with the Richard Lugo Foundation to help with the development of basketball schools in the Carabobo region.

"I come from a family that wasn't well off, and I also lived the stage in my life in which I used to practice sports without proper resources," he said.

"I want to contribute in this new project, in which I can collect resources with my image and give it to others."

Lugo is offering a helping hand, and not just to improve basketball skills.

"We will bring also mobile clinics to do dental tests and checks, and provide educational stuff and hold discussions about drugs, responsible sex and whatever helps them to grow up as responsible sportsmen and people," Lugo said.



INCREDIBLE HULK GOES ORANGE

Bruce Pearl is one of the most colourful characters in college basketball. And you can take that literally, after the Tennessee coach daubed himself in orange body paint to cheer on the Lady Vols.

The antics of Pearl, who revitalised the men's basketball program in Knoxville since taking charge last season, became famous when a locker room video of his "incredible Hulk" impersonation surfaced last season. The video showed Pearl celebrating a win over Kentucky by ripping off his jacket and shirt and flexing his muscles before being swamped by his players. Then, he was at it in public, painted orange with a huge blue V on his chest together with several of his players: Pearl helped spell out "Go Vols" in the crowd. Lady Vols coach Pat Summitt, who has an NCAA record 930 wins to her name, enthusiastically acknowledged Pearl's efforts, although ultimately they did not help her team in a 74-70 loss to top-ranked Duke. Tennessee rallied from 21 points down to make a fight of it in the closing stages, but the Blue Devils hung on to remain unbeaten. Despite the loss, the Lady Vols appreciated the efforts of Pearl and his players. "Ever since Bruce Pearl got here, we have been friends with the guys," forward Sidney Spencer told ESPN.com. "They have supported us, and we have supported them". The Duke players were equally impressed. "I'm going to go suggest it to [Duke men's coach Mike Krzyzewski]," Duke's Abby Waner said, leaving us to imagine a bizarre vision of the man who doubles as the Team USA coach.



NO HORSEING AROUND AT CSKA FOR MESSINA

It took just one year for Ettore Messina to lead CSKA Moscow to an impressive Russian Cup, Superleague and Euroleague treble. And the club is so grateful that it can't seem to do enough for the Italian coach. Messina was lost for words recently when he was handed a replica Kalashnikov by CSKA president Sergey Kushchenko as a present for having achieved so much with CSKA. "It's not a weapon but an award," said Messina. "It's like if you go to (Ferrari's headquarters) Maranello and they give me the latest small model of a Ferrari. "Certainly, it's something that I hold dearly. The only problem is, how will I take it home, what will I say in customs? Will they let me take it with me?" Messina is such a big name that the Russian club has commissioned two paintings feature him and players inside the CSKA palasport. In one painting, Messina and all of his players are on horseback and the only horse with its front legs up and guiding the group is the one carrying Messina. "I found it already done when we returned to Moscow after our pre-season in Italy," said Messina. "It's embarrassing, I cannot deny it, but I would never consider disputing any decisions made by the club."

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