IMPROVEMENT OF PLAYER'S DECISION MAKING IN YOUTH BASKETBALL PROGRAM

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"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."
Albert Einstein

When we talk about learning basketball skills of young players it is clear that there is a technical and tactical training. The problem is a connecting the two segments of preparing young players. My opinion is that when coach teaches players the technical element, he must give the information when and how use it in the game situations. In this way, from the first practice we should provide the basis of individual tactics, which in my opinion fundamental for a successful playing basketball. This means that the technical and tactical training are two inseparable processes that occur simultaneously. Proper execution of basic basketball skills, such as passing and catching the ball, passing, stopping, dribble, moving without the ball, pivoting, shooting are the foundation for all levels of basketball. For this reason, today I'll talk about creating a habit of players to recognize certain situations in the game and have ready answers. Practically, it is about learning to read the position of defensive players and choice reaction over them.

What is a tactic in basketball?
Proper use of technical skills.
There are three levels of learning basketball skills:
1. COGNITIVE STAGE: The players form a mental picture of the skill, usually by using a demonstration or explanation from the coach.
2. PRACTICE STAGE: The player imitates the demonstrations.
3. AUTOMATIC STAGE: Players can perform skills without thinking. The movements have become habit and can be used as game moves at game speed.

1. **WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT SKILLS IN MODERN BASKETBALL?**
2. **IN WICH SITUATIONS SHOULD A CERTAIN SKILL BE USED IN THE GAME?**
3. **TEACHING THESE SKILLS IN PRACTICE?**

Teaching the "why" and "when" as well as the "how" is essential for player development.

What is necessary to looking for in all drills?
One-second advantage.
Offensively, we want to create an advantage where the offensive player can take a high percentage shot. The defense is working to prevent this advantage and to force the offence to turn the ball over or take low percentage shots.
In technical teaching the offence sees, finds, uses and CREATES a one-second advantage. The offensive player can use various ways to break down their defender and establish an advantage. This can happen via:
- Positioning
- Cutting
- Screening Action
- Pick (Ball Screen) Action
- Dribble Moves
- Dribble Attacks (Speed)
- Use of Fakes /Shot, Foot, Pass/.

Once the advantage has been created, the player must use the advantage. If the defense helps, see and find the open player and pass your one-second advantage on to the next player.

Decision Making (Game Sense)

Players need to be able to think for themselves on the floor. In training, the coach must provide to players problems and allow them to come up with the solution. Too often coaches TELL the players the solutions without allowing the players the valuable experience of learning. There is no depth of understanding developed. With this in mind coaches need to go through the phases of teaching:
Phases of Teaching:
1. **Phases A: Initiation and Acquisition**:
   - In this phase, players require a good demonstration of what the skill looks like.
   - They also need to understand where it fits into the overall scheme of the game.
   - When first introduced, players should be given plenty of time to wobble; they need to figure it out for themselves.
   - The drills are done 1on 0 (on air).
   - As the player progresses, the coach will add more technical teaching.
   - The final component is speed.

2. **Phase B: Acquisition and Consolidation**:
   - During this phase the coach guides the offence by acting as a guided defender.
   - This builds the player's decision making capacity. The coach is able to give the players an exaggerated look that makes it easier for the player to make the right decision.
   - If players are used, too often the read given by the defence is incorrect or too subtle for the player to correctly read. For example, when guarding a player cutting to get open, the coach denies the player, this gives the player a clear indication to cut back-door.

3. **Phase C: Consolidation and Refinement**:
   - The player now needs to be able to use the skills against live defence, usually in a 1on1 situation.
   - It is sometimes best to give the same player multiple repetitions before switching roles.
4. **Phase D: Refinement and Consolidation**:
   - In the final phase the players must now be able to demonstrate competence in using the skill in a game-like situation.
   - A coach knows a player has achieved mastery when they perform the practiced skill in a game-like situation without being consciously aware. For example, a player drives and scores using a left hand layup. It is not until the coach brings it to the player's attention that he/she is aware of using this skill.

IN ORDER TO DEVELOP PLAYER'S DECISION MAKING COACHES MUST COMBINE DIFFERENT TYPE OF PRESSURE:
   - **TECHNICAL OR COORDINATION (multiple skills made by more fundamentals, space limit, number of dribble, way of finishing…).**
   - **PHYSICAL (under physical pressure:speed, high heart rate…).**
   - **PSYCHOLOGICAL (number of effectivelly made skills without mistake: shots, defensess, offense, dribbles, passes…).**
   - **TACTICAL (to make right choise of technical skills in game like situations)**
   - **COMPLEX (combination of at least 2 from 4 mentioned type of pressure).**

Methodology:
1. Explanation.
2. Demonstration.
3. Improvement through intensive drills.

After aquiring all the techniques you can start to use them. Then you can reached your individual tactic. When you have individual tactic you become a player.

Individual practice depends on:
   - Why and how drills are used.
   - Choosing the method; drills selection for each player and groups of players.
   - Choosing adequate technical elements (skills); shot, passing, dribbling, stance, defensive technique...

ONLY CORRECT PRACTICE WILL BRING PROGRES.

Mistakes correction; most common causes of mistakes are:
   - Mis application.
   - Mis understanding of movements.
   - No new moments should be practiced, if the previous are not been learn completely.

Correction:
   - Aplication of the skill.
   - Comparing good and weak execution.
   - Demonstration of mistakes.
   - Recognise the causes of mistaces (body position, ball position...).
   - Practicing in game like situations.

PLAYER'S DECISION MAKING IMPROVEMENT WORKOUT

- Change position on coach's sign (diagrams 1, 2).
- Speed reaction, passing and precision drill (diagrams 3, 4).

DIAGRAM 1
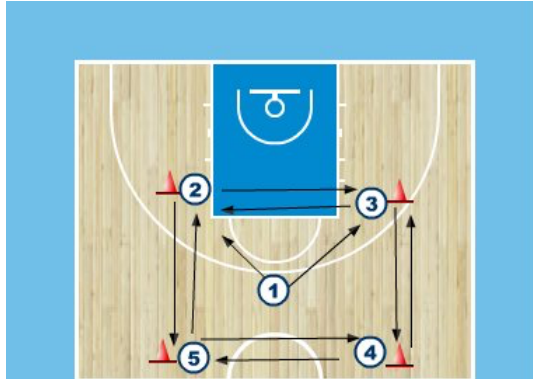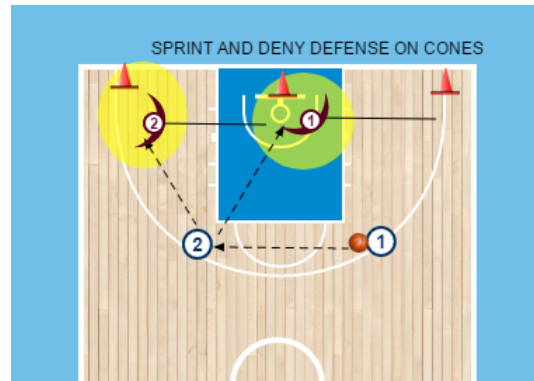

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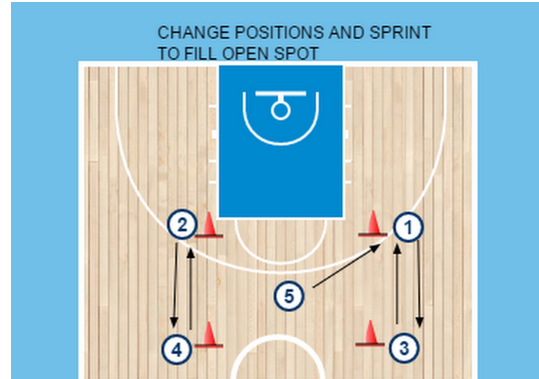
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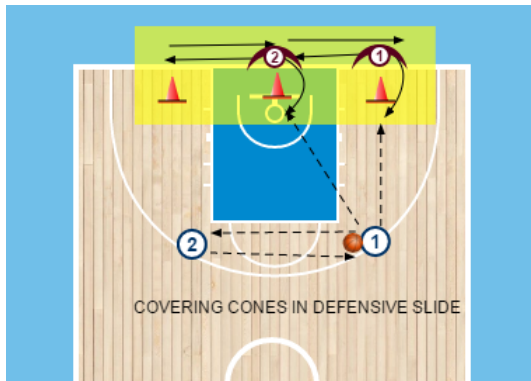
DIAGRAM 4

- Speed reaction & agility drill (diagram 5)
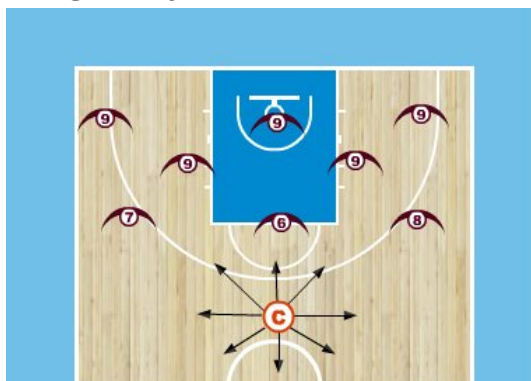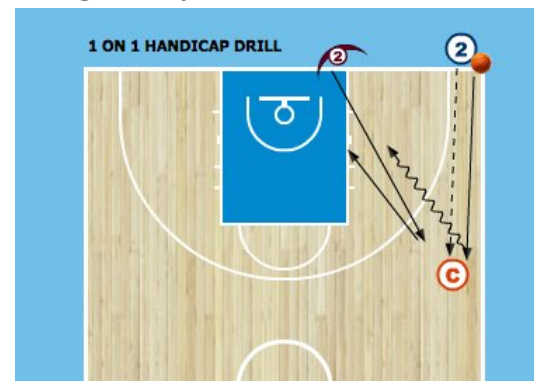- Pass & hand off 1 on 1 drill (diagram 6)

DIAGRAM 5

DIAGRAM 6
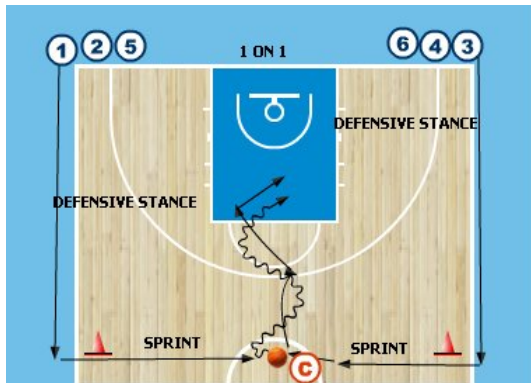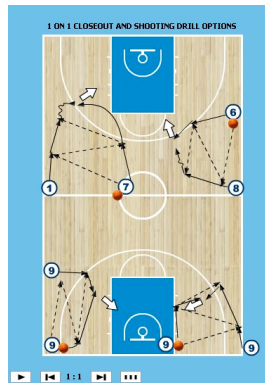
- 1 on 1 drills (diagrams 7, 8)

DIAGRAM 7

DIAGRAM 8

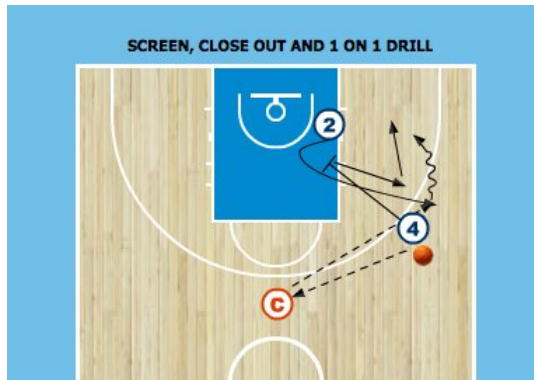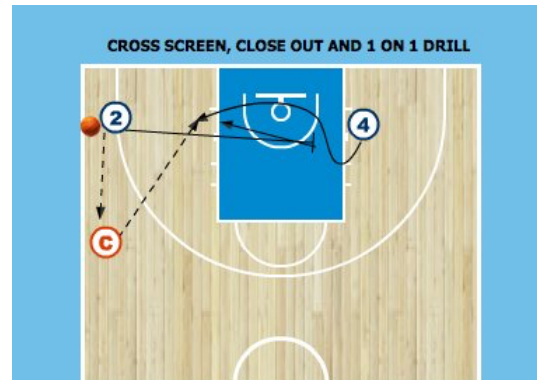- Screen & close out 1 on 1 drills (diagrams 9, 10)

DIAGRAM 9

DIAGRAM 10

- Pass, hand off and 1 on 1 drill (diagram 11)
- Double 1 on 1 recover & close out drill (diagram 12)

DIAGRAM 11
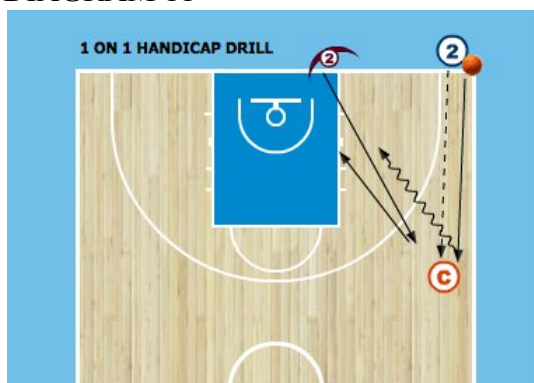
DIAGRAM 12
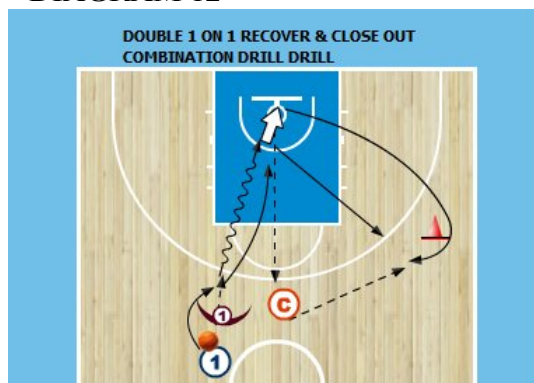
- 1 on 1 combination drill /close out, jump to the ball, close dribble drive, transition from defense to offense/; (diagrams 13, 14)
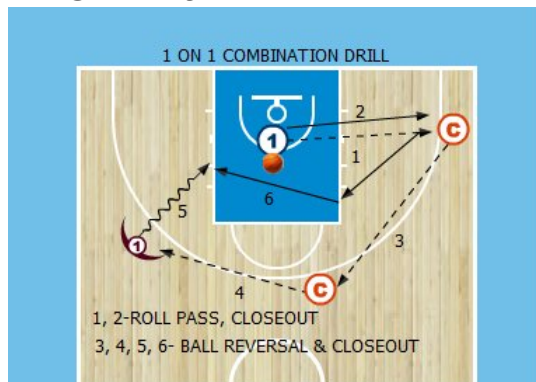
DIAGRAM 13   DIAGRAM 14
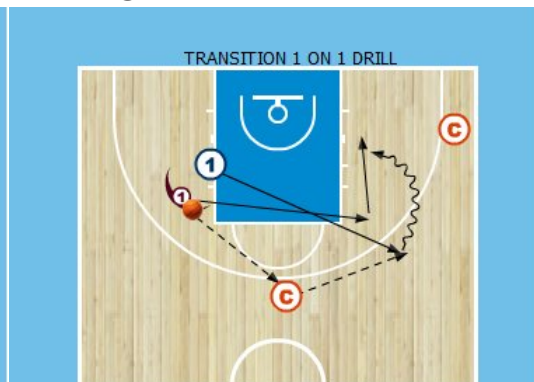
- 1 on 1 contesting recover drill (diagram 15)
- Back door cut and penetration drill (diagram 16)
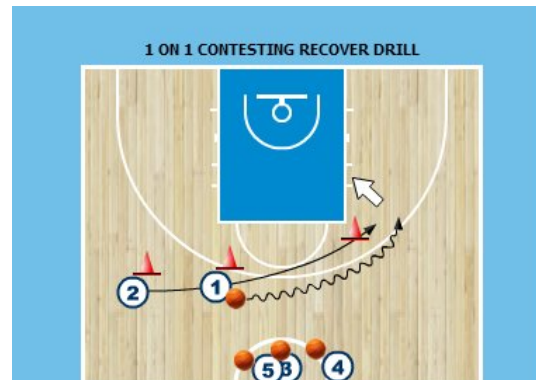
DIAGRAM 15   DIAGRAM 16
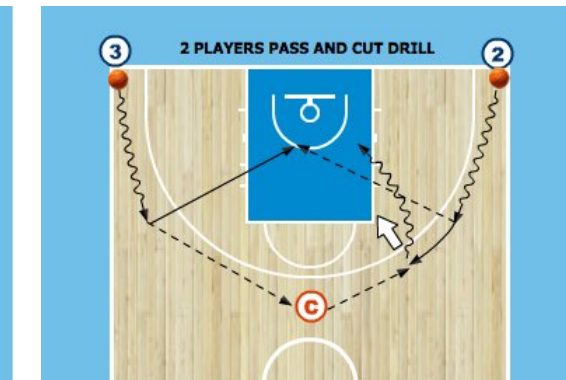
- Fast break and 1 on 2 full court combination drill (diagrams 17,18)
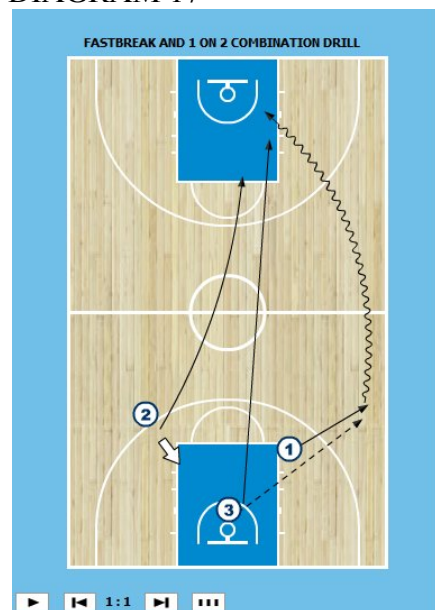
DIAGRAM 17   DIAGRAM 18
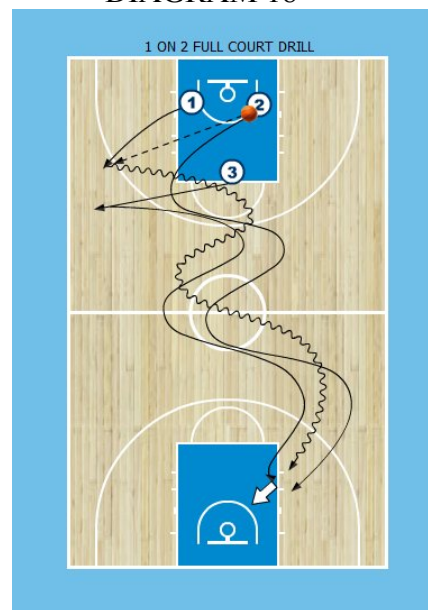
- 2 on 2 or 1 on 1 hand off or plus coach drill (diagram 19)
- 2 on 1 half court decision making drill (diagram 20)
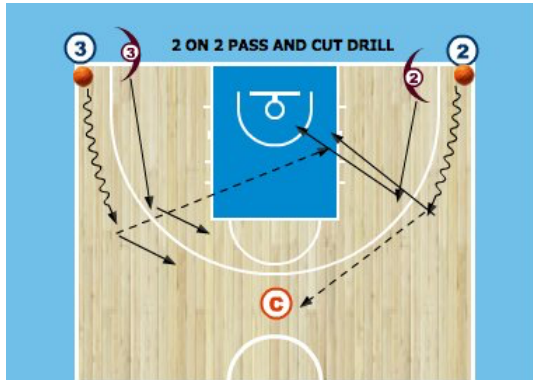
DIAGRAM 19   DIAGRAM 20
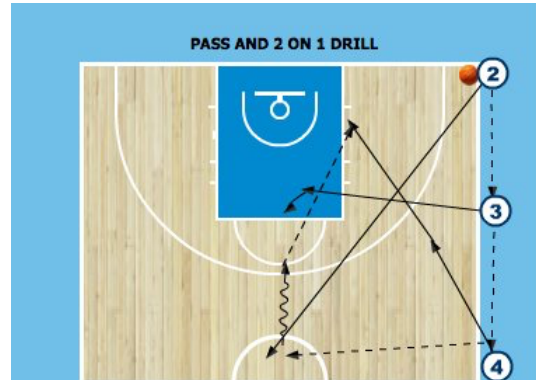
- 2 on 1 half court drill (diagram 21)

DIAGRAM 21
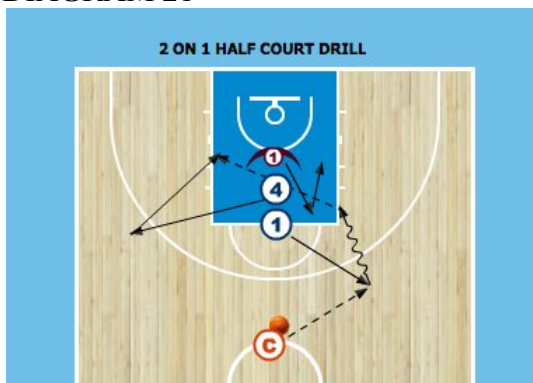
- 2 on 2 defensive complex drills /diagrams 22, 23/
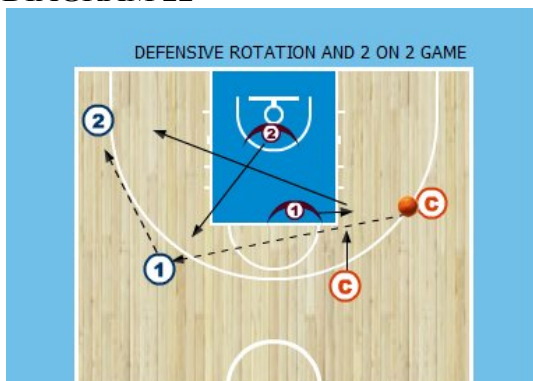
DIAGRAM 22   DIAGRAM 23
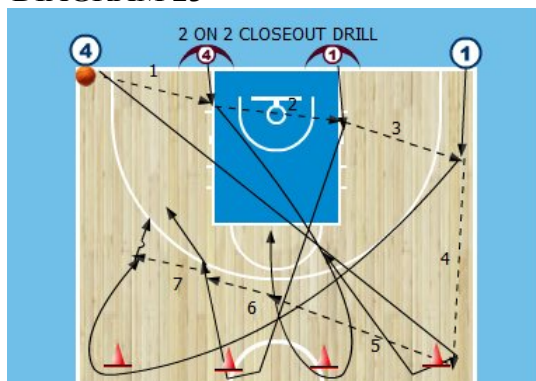
- 2 on 2 handicap transition drills (diagrams 24, 25)
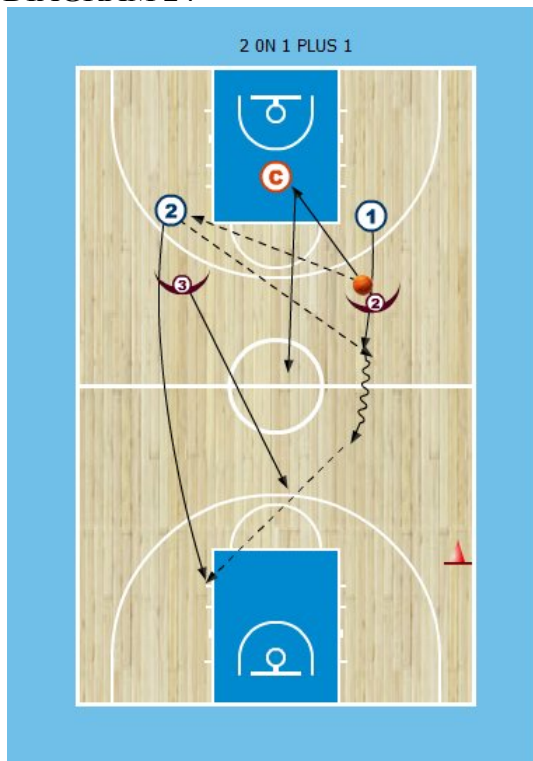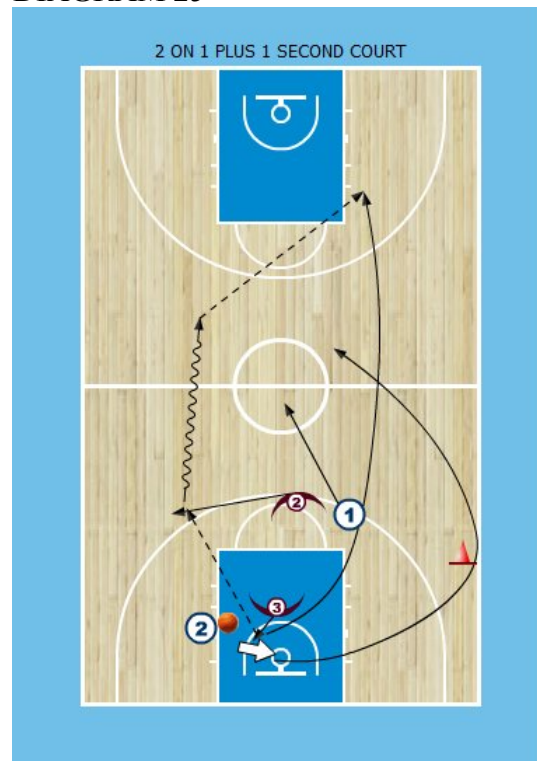
DIAGRAM 24

DIAGRAM 25

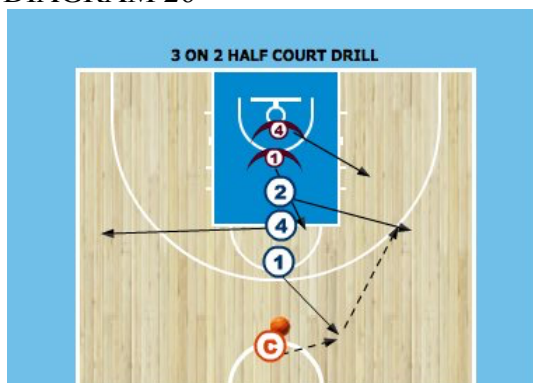- 3 on 2 half court drill (diagram 26)
- 3 on 2 full court drill (diagram 27)
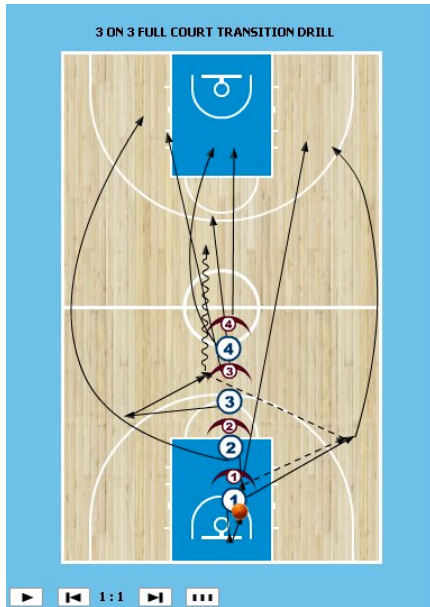
DIAGRAM 26

DIAGRAM 27
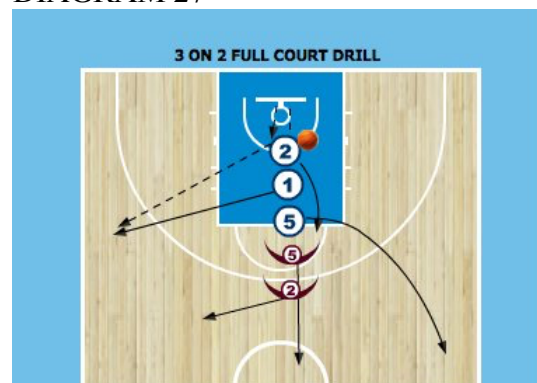
- 3 on 3 transition drill (diagram 28)
  DIAGRAM 28

- 3 on 3 half court drill (diagram 29)
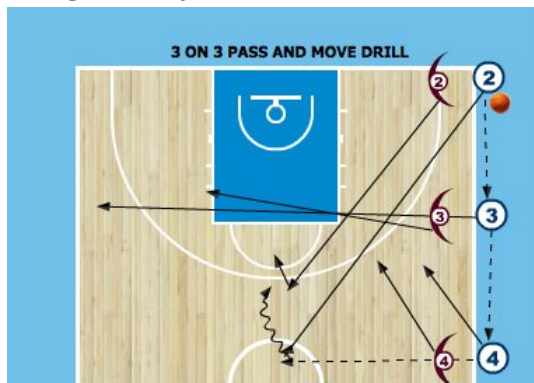- 3 on 3 flying P&R drill (diagram 30)
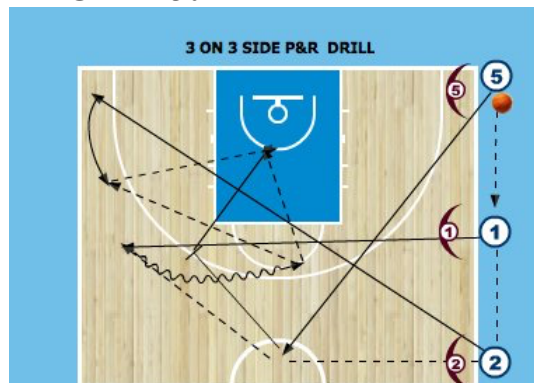 DIAGRAM 29   DIAGRAM 30

- 3 on 3 P&R and lift drill (diagram 31)
- 3 on 3 half court handicap drill /P&R, DHO, mismatch.../ (diagram 32)
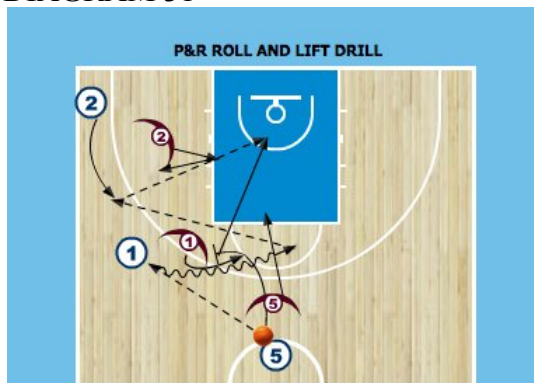 DIAGRAM 31   DIAGRAM 32
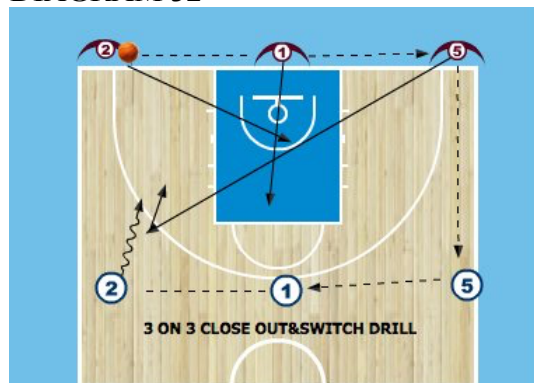
- 3 on 3 half court handicap drill /P&R, DHO, mismatch.../ (diagram 33)
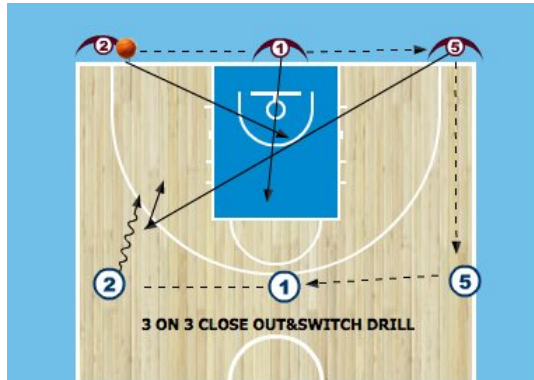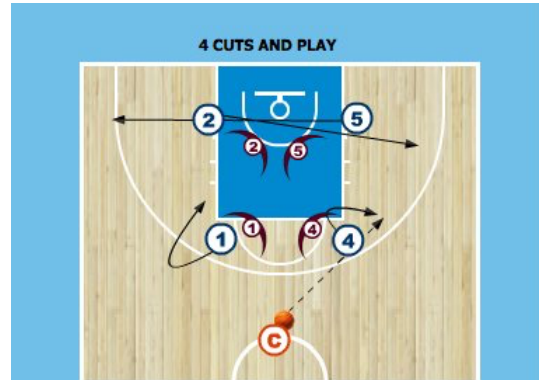- 4 on 4 cuts and play half court drill (diagram 34)

DIAGRAM 33   DIAGRAM 34

3 ON 3 CLOSE OUT&SWITCH DRILL

4 CUTS AND PLAY

- 4 on 4 defensive rotation half court drills (diagrams 35, 36, 37)
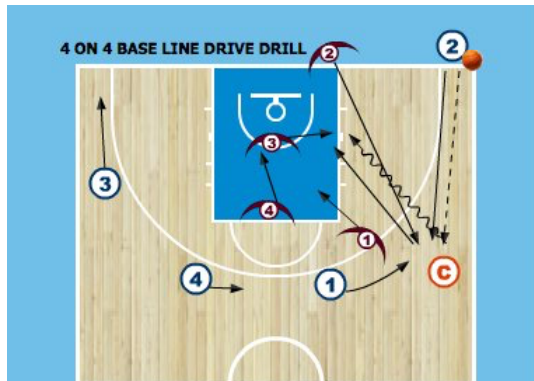- 4 on 4 half court handicap drill (diagram 38)
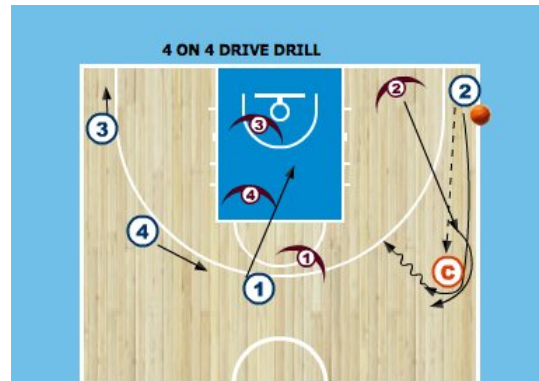
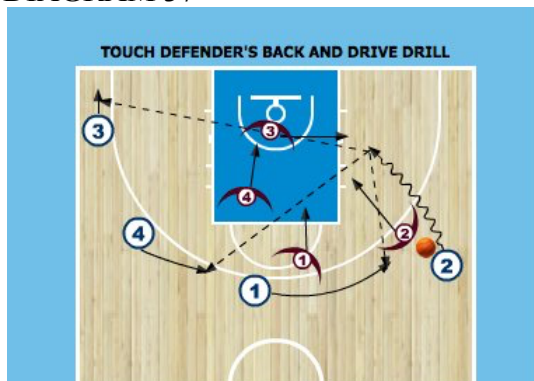DIAGRAM 35   DIAGRAM 36

4 ON 4 BASE LINE DRIVE DRILL

4 ON 4 DRIVE DRILL

DIAGRAM 37   DIAGRAM 38

TOUCH DEFENDER'S BACK AND DRIVE DRILL

HALF COURT SPRINT HANDICAP DRILL

- 4 on 4 trapping half court drills (diagrams 39, 40)

DIAGRAM 39

DIAGRAM 40

TRAPPING DRILL

DIAGONAL PASS DOUBLE TEAM DRILL