

THUNDERBIRDS BASKETBALL

2008 COACHING MANUAL

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POSITIVE COACHING

Kids should come away from sports with a heightened sense of themselves as people who can strive for great things, who learn they can get up and try again...who are less afraid, and more willing to take the risk that achievement and excellence require in all of us...who are willing to set goals for themselves and then make the commitment to achieve those goals.

Every kid can develop a stronger sense of herself through participation as a member of a team. Every child can learn important lessons about life by making great efforts, enjoying the taste of victory, and returning to try again after a loss.

MORE-BETTER-LONGER: *More* kids having a *better* time and staying with it *longer*.

1. RELENTLESS POSITIVITY

- Ø A relentless commitment to positive coaching brings the biggest successes and has the most impact. And it's when things go wrong that positive coaching has the most impact.
- Ø Punishment leaves bad feelings that eat away at motivation. Excelling requires emotional energy; when kids are yelled at and criticized, their emotional energy is used up being angry, feeling sorry for themselves, thinking up reasons why the coach is wrong, etc.
- Ø When a kid is secure in knowing she will be valued and accepted by her coach, *no matter how she performs*, more of her energy can go to responding to the challenge.
- Ø Take note of players who do things you want to reinforce, and take time to share with them the things noted. Try to have things noted for everybody, and give equal (if not more) recognition for "character" items (attendance, punctuality, never giving up, etc). This helps motivate the kid to continue her efforts because she knows any improvement will be given attention.
- Ø Ask kids to help observe good things that other kids are doing. They love to feel appreciated by their peers as well as by their coaches.
- Ø Note negative things but don't share them with the team. *Praise in public, criticize in private.*

2. IDEAS & INSPIRATION

- Ø Three effective ways to communicate ideas that motivate:
 - a. **Stories** – Collect and catalog stories to tell.
 - b. **Metaphors** – Create metaphors to bring to life what you're trying to get across to your easily distracted players.
 - c. **Vision** – When the opportunity is articulated clearly to a group of people it has the ability to generate enthusiasm that can lead to great efforts and surprising successes.
- Ø Human energy can be created. It comes from emotions, and emotions are released by ideas. Ideas in the form of stories, metaphors, and vision will help players become motivated to make more effort than they think is possible.

3. ENGAGEMENT

- Ø Three ways to increase player's engagement in their own development and learning:
 - a. **Ask rather than tell** - Look for opportunities to ask the players what they should be doing in the course of a practice or game. Kids will be forced to think, and if they are not punished for making poor choices, they will improve their decision-making over time.
 - b. **Get kids teaching each other** – If kids can't explain or demonstrate a skill to someone else, they may not understand it enough to retain it. Expect them to teach each other at times.

- c. **Goal-setting** – Suggest a goal and then work to get the player to enthusiastically endorse the goal as her own. Get their buy-in so that they are not just going through the motions doing what they think some adults think they should be doing.

SELF-ESTEEM

- Ø The language of self-esteem is encompassed in two phrases: *I can do this* and *I can learn to do this*. A coach who builds in his players the tendency to use this vocabulary, by showing them that they can do and learn to do, is giving a great and lasting gift to them: the belief that they are strong enough and smart enough to handle whatever life throws at them.
- Ø *Endorsement* is the key to self-worth. The youth coach's first job is to like his players and show that he does; to endorse them and let them know he supports them.
- Ø How to increase self-esteem in your players:
 - a. **Names** – Know names & know them quickly. Players should hear their names spoken in a friendly tone often.
 - b. **Smiling** – Coaches communicate that they like a player more easily by smiling than any other way.
 - c. **Appropriate touching** - Pats on the back, handshakes, and high fives after good efforts communicate that you like and value your players.
 - d. **Influence-ability** – A coach who can be influenced by his players is communicating that he values their opinions.
 - e. **Listening** – Listening without interruption can communicate caring to the player, that you take them seriously.
 - f. **Express appreciation and recognition** – Kids feel great and are more inclined to make additional efforts when you notice the efforts they make. Remember to be honest (a “happy talk” coach loses credibility), be specific (“nice block-out,” is better than “nice job”), and tie their efforts to the overall success of the team.

5. BUILDING CHARACTER

- Ø In adversity lies the potential for development of mental toughness and other positive character traits. As time passes, the stressful nature of the challenges fades but the character lessons live on.
- Ø Positive character traits:
 - a. **Mental toughness** – Empathize when a player gets in a tough spot but also remind her that this is an opportunity to develop mental toughness. Help the player learn that winning is not the only criterion of success; that it is by trying new and challenging things that one gets mentally tougher.
 - b. **Having fun** – The ability to enjoy challenges is a character trait that makes for happier, more successful people. Because they are having fun, they put more of their energy into trying to figure out how to solve a problem and less into unproductive worrying.
 - c. **Winning and losing with class** – Take delight in seeing a player respond to a bad call or a tough loss with class. Point out examples of classy behavior to your players (helping opponent's up, etc).
 - d. **Courage** – You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face.
 - e. **Commitment to goals** – Help your players determine what their goals are. Ask them to think about what they want to accomplish, and to come back to the next practice with a clear idea that they can share with you.
- Ø The only thing we bring to our life is the amount of effort we put into it. Our talent, our personality, the amount of wealth of the family into which we are born – all are given to us. But what is up to us is how hard we are going to try. If you can communicate to your players that it is the amount of effort they are willing to put into fielding or hitting, shooting and rebounding, and blocking and tackling that will determine how good they can become, you will be giving them an invaluable gift.

Teaching positive character traits:

- 1) Introduce and define the character trait.
- 2) Look for opportunities to illustrate the concept as the season progresses.
- 3) Reinforce, model, and intervene when appropriate.
- 4) Look for stories to share with the players.

6. MISTAKES

- Ø A coach who makes it okay for his players to make mistakes will, over time, get more effort toward the goals of trying to win, developing skills, and having fun than a coach who reacts to each mistake like it was the end of the world. Give the kids the chance to experiment with making gigantic efforts without horrible consequences when they fail.
- Ø *Mistakes and substitutions* – Don't remove a player immediately after an obvious mistake. By removing a player after an obvious error, a coach is saying that it is *not* okay to make the error. Dunderhead mistakes in front of the whole world are great opportunities to communicate that you care about a player independent of ability.
- Ø Fear of making a mistake is a paralyzing force that robs athletes of spontaneity, love of the game, and a willingness to try new things. It's the mistakes-are-okay approach that gives the sense of freedom that can unlock the learning process and occasionally release truly inspired athletic performance.

7. PRACTICES

- Ø The only way to truly acquire a skill is to overlearn it. In the heat of an athletic contest, what most determines the outcome is the habitual responses of the athletes.
- Ø Develop a core of activities, centered on fundamental skills that need constant reinforcement. Building around a core practice schedule:
 - 1) Helps you to remember to focus on fundamentals as the season progresses.
 - 2) Cuts down on wasted energy. Players know they will be doing certain things at certain times.
 - 3) Allows everyone to focus most of the creative energy on learning the new things that are introduced in any particular practice session.
- Ø Pace practices by using pauses to serve as punctuation marks to emphasize lessons you're trying to teach.
- Ø Organize practices in a pattern of teach-drill-scrimmage:
 - 1) **Introduce a skill.** Describe it, demonstrate it, explain why it is important. Be brief!
 - 2) **Send them off to practice it.** Give them time to struggle with it without breathing down their necks.
 - 3) **Practice it in a game-like setting.** Stop the scrimmage at times to remind them to incorporate the new skills.
- Ø The ideal practice session allows players to work hard, run off energy, try new things, have some choice about what they do, and converse with their teammates – all while operating within a structure that allows the coach to have a significant measure of control when you need it.

8. GAME COACHING

- Ø Athletes are most vulnerable at this time. They are on public display for everyone to see. If they fail at something that is important to their self-image, the last thing they need is for someone who supposedly cares about them as a person (not just an athlete) to get down on them. When a coach lets his players know that he is for them no matter what, they can turn their inner energies toward doing their best in a game.
- Ø When an athlete is performing an action she knows how to do very well, her performance may well improve when performing before a crowd. When performing a skill that she is not totally secure in performing, the performance level is likely to decrease with a crowd present.

Preparing for the game:

- 1) **Have a game plan** – Even a flawed plan gives you a reference point on which to make adjustments.
 - 2) **Make adjustments** – Recognize patterns in the game and anticipate when to adjust.
 - 3) **Anticipate the opposition** – Ask yourself, “What would I do against my team?”
 - 4) **Adjust for officiating** – Complaining to officials will get the players to also complain. When officials make calls tighter or looser than expected, alert the players and encourage them to adjust their play.
- Ø Encourage players to welcome any nervousness they feel as a way to help them get up for the game. If you feel a player may be too nervous before a contest, give the player specific tasks to perform early in the game. They will focus on that instead of the anxiety.
- Ø The most important support a coach can give his players in a tense, pressure-filled game is to remind them to relax and simply have fun. In the moment of truth in a hard-fought game, it really won’t matter all that much who won or lost many years later. What does and will continue to matter are the values that those athletes take away with them from those contests.

9. PARENTS

- Ø What parents want from a coach:
- 1) **To be in the information loop** – Advance information on games, start and end times for practices, etc.
 - 2) **To hear good things about their kids** – Speak to every parent often about their kids.
 - 3) **To see their kids play** – Look for every chance to play your less-skilled players more often.
 - 4) **To be among friends** – Adults appreciate when a coach learns their names, expresses appreciation for what they do, etc. And they, in turn, will want you to succeed and will be willing to help you.
- Ø Guidelines for a coach-parent relationship:
- 5) **Don’t put the player in the middle** – Ask parents to talk directly to you if they have a problem.
 - 6) **No instructions during a game** – Ask parents if they have a suggestion to improve their child’s play so that you can tell the player, if appropriate. That way, the player won’t be confused by conflicting instructions.
 - 7) **Don’t disparage the other team** – Ask parents to be careful to avoid inadvertent comments in the stands.

10. WINNING & LOSING

- Ø The danger with “too-high” standards:
- 1) **Whining** – Failure to win may cause players to blame someone else (refs, teammates, other team cheated).
 - 2) **Cheating** – Cheating is rarely accompanied by increased efforts, and it is increased effort in response to struggling or losing that make a person an ultimate winner.
 - 3) **Dropping out** – Mentally as well as physically. Either kind is often where too-high standards lead.
- Ø Coaching is rife with double standards & hypocrisy. By trying to hold yourself to the same standards that you expect your players to meet, you may find yourself with more reasonable & encouraging standards for you & your players.
- Ø One tragedy from overemphasizing winning is that we overlook important lessons to be learned from losing. It’s hard to develop the positive character trait of persistence in the face of adversity without the adversity.
- Ø The real test of character is not how many times we get knocked down, but how many times we get back up. A knockdown can be a big advantage that can help kids learn to become the kind of person who gets back up, which is as good a definition of a winner as can be imagined.

11. BUILDING OUTSTANDING COMPETITORS

Ø Characteristics of the outstanding competitor:

- 1) **Internal Motivation** – It is internal passion for the sport that unleashes super performance. You simply don't get to the highest level without an incredible amount of practice. And most people aren't willing to put in the significant amount of practice time needed to develop high-level skills unless they enjoy the activity itself.
- 2) **Energized by challenges** – Outstanding competitors want to compete at a level that will push them to be at their best, not at a level where they can succeed without risk.
- 3) **Seeing development as a process under their control** – If they cannot perform a certain skill, they know that they could learn it if they worked harder and longer at it.
- 4) **Decision-makers rather than order-takers** – Outstanding competitors tend to be independent and willing to challenge conventional wisdom.
- 5) **Accepts success and failure** – Fear of failure does not paralyze them.

Ø What coaches can do:

- 1) **Educate them about internal motivation:**
 - a. Ask her how good she wants to become by season's end.
 - b. Tell her you will work her hard during practices but to become really good they will need to motivate themselves outside of practice.
 - c. Avoid contingent rewards; they undermine an athlete's internal motivation.
- 2) **Encourage them to see skills as acquirable.** Many kids don't believe they are. Stories of other players acquiring their skills through hard work and practice can motivate them to do the same.
- 3) **Encourage personal goal-setting and charting.** A written record provides feedback and helps keep a player's focus. Charting of goals that are clear and measurable is a critical part of providing athletes with a program of mastery experiences.
- 4) **Focus on the do-able parts of any challenge.** Emphasize areas of competition that your players are able to control (conditioning, blocking out, etc).
- 5) **Desensitize them to pressure** – Introduce pressure situations in practice. Downplay the importance of winning relative to doing one's best. When an athlete focuses on doing her best, she experiences less pressure and is more likely to win than if she rigidly focuses on winning as the only thing of value.

12. COACHING SPECIAL KIDS

Ø **The superstar:**

- a. Push her to develop skills beyond what she needs to excel at the level she is on now. Work with her on thinking about what she needs to do to succeed at the next level.
- b. Nearly everyone eventually reaches their level of mediocrity. The superstar who has been treated like royalty will have a difficult time putting out their great efforts when the royalty treatment ends.

Ø **The weak athlete** – More than anything, make sure she has fun. And any person who can enjoy playing a sport even when she is not very good at it is something special.

Ø **The child with behavior problems** – Be patient. A problem child is a discouraged child. If you can act as if you aren't really upset with her behavior, she will correct the behavior soon.

13. BECOMING A TEAM

- Ø The requirements of a successful team:
 - 1) **Acceptance** – Each player must feel that she is accepted her coaches and teammates before she can devote anything close to 100% of her energies to improving as an athlete and helping the team win.
 - 2) **Influence** – Once a player knows she can exert an adequate amount of influence, she then can throw herself wholeheartedly into helping the team win.
 - 3) **Identity** – Am I an important member of this team? Do I have a role that will help the team achieve its goals? Look for ways to help each player feel like an important part of the team.
 - 4) **Goal-matching** – Each player needs to feel that she wins if the team wins.
- Ø “*The Portable Home Court Advantage*” – Tell your players that they can take their home court advantage with them by supporting themselves in visible, audible ways.
- Ø “JUST CARING ABOUT EACH OTHER AND WANTING EACH OTHER TO DO WELL.” If you can help your players achieve that state of mind, you have helped them become something rare and wonderful – a true team.

14. YOUR GOALS AS A COACH

- Ø **Create an environment in which kids and adults have fun with basketball.**
 - a. Encourage players often; for effort as well as results.
 - b. Show by behavior that each is an important member of the team, regardless of how they perform.
 - c. Give players comparable playing time.
 - d. Show your enjoyment of the game to the players.
- Ø **Teach skills, rules, and strategy to your players.**
 - a. Provide adequate repetition of teaching. Lessons often need repeating before they are understood.
 - b. Organize practices to maximize learning and minimize standing around.
 - c. Encourage players to set individual and team goals corresponding to their ability level.
 - d. Minimize negative emphasis on mistakes, which are required for learning to take place.
- Ø **Model and teach competitiveness with an emphasis on good sportsmanship.**
 - a. Teach players aggressiveness and sportsmanship at the same time.
 - b. Obey the rules and show respect for the referees even when you disagree.
 - c. Acknowledge good plays by the opposition to your players.
 - d. Always treat players on other teams as members of the community first and as opponents second. Refrain from words or actions that undercut the self-esteem of players on other teams.
- Ø **Promote increased self-esteem among children and adults.**
 - a. Encourage players whenever possible. Kids can’t read your mind, and they often determine whether they are liked and accepted by adults by what the adult says and does.
 - b. Spend comparable instruction time with all players, regardless of ability.
 - c. Show appreciation for parents involved with the team.

BASKETBALL:

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ATTACKING MAN-TO-MAN DEFENSES

- 1) Use different entry passes to begin your offense. Entry passes should not be one-sided; enter left, right, and middle. Types of entries:
 - Wing entry.
 - Post entry.
 - Dribble entry.
- 2) Entry passes should be short, crisp, and sharp.
- 3) Offensive movements should not begin until the point guard entering the pass is one or two strides above the circle.
- 4) Upon receiving the entry pass, the player with the ball should:
 - Square to the basket and look to shoot.
 - Next read should be to pass inside or high post or cutters to basket.
 - Pass and move if the first two options are exhausted.
- 5) All offensive sets should have the following qualities:
 - Perimeter shots
 - Special plays
 - Inside or high post options
 - Isolations
 - 3 point opportunities
 - 2-man plays
- 6) The nature of the offensive set should have continuity (the ability to flow from one side to another offering scoring opportunities).
- 7) Various movements should be used to make an offense effective:
 - Horizontal/vertical screening.
 - Curl movements to the basket.
 - Back screens.
 - Backdoors to the basket.
 - Going without the ball.
 - Movement all the time.
- 8) Utilize the strengths and abilities of your players within the offense:
 - Get the ball inside to strong post players.
 - Go to good shooters or scorers more often.
- 9) Stress to your players to work hard, to take good percentage shots; the nature of the offensive movement should free up players for good shots.
- 10) Always stress defensive balance upon shot-taking (at least one player back on defense).
- 11) Include special plays within your offense to take advantage of opponents':
 - Mismatches inside.
 - Player in foul trouble.
 - Poor defensive players.
- 12) Various special plays you can use within your offensive set:
 - Isolations.
 - 3-pt shots.
 - Backdoors.
 - Lobs.
 - 2-man plays.
- 13) You should have a secondary offensive set also:
 - In case your primary offensive set attack is not effective.
 - To give the opponent a different look offensively.
- 14) Include a stall or control offensive set:
 - Late in half or game.
 - To control the tempo of the game.

ATTACKING ZONE DEFENSES

- 1) Have a primary and secondary attack in case of difficulties or just to give the defense a second look.
- 2) Basic objective: To get the ball inside for a high-percentage shot.
- 3) Ask players before the season where they like to shoot the ball from.
- 4) The best way to attack a zone is by outrunning it – beat it down the floor before it has a chance to set up.
- 5) Be confident. They're zoning because they're not comfortable guarding you man-to-man.
- 6) Stress basics: Squaring up, hand targets, accurate passing, fakes, good post position, etc.
- 7) Stress shot discipline. We must get more shots, and we must get better shots.
- 8) Recognize the zone immediately. What is it attempting to accomplish? What are its weaknesses?
- 9) Know the tendencies of all the basic zones: 2-3, 1-3-1, 1-2-2, and any ½ court traps.
- 10) Upon entry into offense, give the following reads: Shoot; pass inside, or pass to perimeter player.
- 11) Pass the ball around the perimeter from one side to another to keep the defense moving. This allows post players to flash from behind the defense, making them more effective.
- 12) Spread the zone: perimeters start high, post men stay low. Create (and take advantage of) gaps.
- 13) Penetrate gaps with a dribble to create better passing lanes. Penetrate and pitch.
- 14) Recognize who is guarding you. Pull her away and have a teammate fill the area vacated.
- 15) Utilize the short corner.
- 16) A good time to penetrate is after a skip pass because the defense is extended, out of shape.
- 17) Use shot and pass fakes to get the defense moving in opposite direction that you want to pass.
- 18) Vary your entries – right, left, high post, dribble. Don't have a one-sided tendency.
- 19) Any time a player receives the ball: Square up and look to get the ball inside.
- 20) Perimeter players should use bounce passes (released low) more frequently for entering the post.
- 21) Screen against a zone. Guards, forwards, and centers all can free up shooters.
- 22) Utilize skip or diagonal pass if opponent overplays near passing lanes.
- 23) Always save your dribble upon receiving the ball; don't waste it.
- 24) Someone must be behind the defense. Look to attack from the rear if back of zone plays high.
- 25) Offensive rebounding is important because of the lack of block-outs. Take advantage:
 - Opposite wing must rebound the weakside boards.
 - #4 and #5 attack the boards.
 - Remaining two players at the elbows, one going back, the other stopping the fast break.
- 26) Have restrictions for your players early in the season, such as:
 - No outside shots.
 - Ball must go inside before a shot can be taken.
 - Certain player must shoot it.



FAST BREAK

Primary Stage

- 1) Before you can fast break, you must secure the rebound on missed shots.
- 2) Every player must rebound, including guards.
- 3) When you secure a rebound:
 - Keep the ball up high; protect it.
 - Give a deep read, initially.
 - Pivot with inside foot.
 - Outlet pass to side or middle.
- 4) Positioning of guards receiving outlets:
 - Guards should go sideline and middle to outlet positions.
 - Guards in outlet positions should keep distance from each other.
 - Side outlet should stay close and not far beyond the time line.
 - Middle outlet should take open area in the middle.
 - Guards should call for outlet pass and raise hand to be more visible.
 - If side outlet is denied, she should go deep to the basket.
 - If rebounder is double-teamed, guard(s) should come to the ball to create a favorable passing angle.

Secondary Stage

- 1) All three lanes must be filled as quickly as possible.
- 2) Player away from the ball should sprint and fill opposite lane.
- 3) Players on outside lanes should stay close to sidelines to create space and spread defense.
- 4) On initial outlet pass, a deep read should be given for a possible free player downcourt.
- 5) Ball has to get to the middle of the floor either through initial outlet pass or pass from side outlet to the middle.
- 6) Anytime an outlet person is overplayed, they should sprint downcourt.
- 7) If outlet is to side and middle outlet is not a ballhandler, she should dribble to middle and continue break.
- 8) If side outlet dribbles to middle, player in the middle should fill side by going behind ball.

Final Stage

- 1) Attack and score.
- 2) Wings stay close to sidelines to create space and spread the defense.
- 3) If wings get downcourt too early before guard with the ball in middle is over the halfcourt line and they are covered, they should cross and go opposite wings.
- 4) On going to the basket wings should take diagonal cut from the foul line area extended.
- 5) When passing ball from middle, do not leave ground on pass (vulnerable to charge).
- 6) If on a 3 x 3 break, get the ball to your stronger 1 x 1 player.
- 7) If you are behind late in the game, wings who can shoot the 3 point shot should spot up outside the arc.
- 8) Guard in middle with the ball should not penetrate too deep and then pass (loss of space).
- 9) Trailers coming downcourt should stay back to help maintain defensive balance in case of quick shot or long rebound.
- 10) Work every day on the break and continue to always look to break in a game; it creates the highest percentage shot in most cases: the lay-up.

ATTACKING ZONE PRESSES

- 1) Always attack pressure and look to score; don't be passive.
- 2) Keep short passing lanes unless looking to pass to offensive basket.
- 3) Give diagonal reads vs. a trapping defense.
- 4) Avoid dribbling unless in frontcourt and you are attacking.
- 5) Stress passing the ball; it will get you down court much faster.
- 6) Once you receive pass always turn and square to the basket.
- 7) Use ball fakes to get the opponent moving away from direction you intend to pass to.
- 8) Always send one player down to the offensive basket so that you have the ability to score quickly and make the defense accountable for a deep player.
- 9) Passing lanes should be in the form of triangles to allow you more options.
- 10) Pass the ball around the perimeter from one side to another; this causes problems for the defense, especially if they are attempting to trap.
- 11) Utilize best ballhandler in middle. This becomes an instant threat because of her ability to penetrate or pass.
- 12) Run the ball out quickly after a basket or free throw is made by the opponent; defense has difficulty in setting up in time and is vulnerable.
- 13) If opponent takes free throw attempt and a big man is deep, anticipate a zone press if free throw is made.
- 14) You should use one attack vs. full, half-court zone presses to simplify it for your players.
- 15) Attack and score in the early stages of the game; this will discourage opponent from using this tactic.
- 16) Practice attacking zone presses every day so that your players are comfortable with it.

THE 3 POINT SHOT

- 1) Some considerations when using the 3 point shot:
 - Take advantage of the player who has the ability to make the 3 pointer.
 - The 3 point shot should always be a threat within your halfcourt set.
 - Run special plays for your 3 point shooters.
- 3) Work on penetration and kick out pass to 3 point shooter spotting up on wing or in corner.
- 4) Work on passing inside to low post and then passing ball out to shooter.
- 5) Upon passing inside, 3 point shooter should move to side of defensive player dropping to help outside arc.
- 6) Utilize screening away vs. zones to free up 3 point shooters.
- 7) On last second 3 point shot attempts, make sure you have secondary options.
- 8) On fast break attempts, 3 point shooters spot up outside line and utilize swing or diagonal passes to get the ball to them.
- 9) On last second missed shots and down by 3 points, kick out ball on rebound beyond 3 point line.
- 10) Work on skip passes, diagonal passes, double screens, and two man plays to free up 3 point shooter.
- 11) Have best post man and 3 point shooter on the same side; this opens up inside by discouraging defensive guards from helping inside.
- 12) If you have two or three good 3 point shooters, keep them away from each other in the offensive attack.
- 13) 3 point shooter should not force shots nor shoot outside their range.

MAN-TO-MAN DEFENSE

- 1) Always apply pressure on the ball as it comes up the court (pick up at half court).
- 2) Push ball to one side of the court to establish ball side and help side.
- 3) Off the ball, player on the ball side should deny all passes.
- 4) The help side should be in a triangular form always seeing the ball and their player.
- 5) The help side players should have their foot closest to the ball forward to ensure that they don't turn their back and lose vision of their player.
- 6) The further the pass away from your player, the deeper the triangle is formed.
- 7) Jump to the ball on ball side on any penetration to the basket to help.
- 8) Cut off any players going to the basket by taking an inside position or spot they are going to.
- 9) On penetration away from the ball be prepared to take a charge or stop the ball.
- 10) Challenge all shots by the opponent; put a hand in her face.
- 11) Avoid switching; it creates lazy defense. Stay with your man.
- 12) Call out all screens to the ball and be ready to hedge.
- 13) Familiarize yourself with the opponent's movement and tendencies and anticipate their movement.
- 14) Anytime a perimeter player stops her dribble, all players should deny their man.
- 15) On post entries, drop to help out. The ball is the main threat.
- 16) On all shots everyone stays in to rebound.
- 17) Good defense creates easy baskets in the form of lay-ups.
- 18) Defense doesn't require skill; all it requires is great desire, determination and aggressiveness with the will to stop your man.
- 19) If the opponent can't score, they can't win.

ZONE DEFENSE

- 1) A zone should be active in that it is moving all the time.
- 2) Ball side of zones should always pressure the ball (match-up) and play passing lanes.
- 3) As ball is released, shift flow of ball; don't go for ball fakes.
- 4) Overplay ball side of the court; force opponent to pass the ball more (potential of turnovers).
- 5) Be aware of screens away from the ball side (3 point shooters).
- 6) Pressure ball at half court and then drop to defensive area; make them work.
- 7) Challenge all perimeter shots; let the opponent know you will always be in her face.
- 8) Any ball in the corner should be treated as man (match-up).
- 9) Any low post player is treated like man defense; deny her, front her.
- 10) If opponent guard(s) are weak perimeter shooters, widen defense to make entry passes more difficult.
- 11) On swing of ball, baseline defense should communicate for flash post movement in back of the defense.
- 12) On shot by opponent, box out or check-block especially on weak side (most vulnerable to rebounds).
- 13) If opponent guards or wings pick up their dribble, match-up with pressure and overplay passing lanes or trap.
- 14) On entry to high post, defensive guards should drop and help; defensive wings should drop and protect baseline or low post area (watch out for high-low plays).
- 15) Anticipate overloads on the baseline and rotate accordingly.

DEFENSING THE FAST BREAK

- 1) If the opponent utilizes the fast break as an integral part of their offense and you take it away from them, it can be very discouraging to them.
- 2) In your man offense, always make sure to have defensive balance upon shot.
- 3) Assign 1 or 2 players to be back of defense (preferably guards) when in man offense.
- 4) In your zone offense, if your alignment has 2 guards on top, they are responsible for defensive balance.
- 5) If your zone offensive alignment has a point guard, the point guard and wing on the shooting side are responsible for dropping back on defense.
- 6) Watch for the opponent sending one player downcourt on your offensive shot (cheat break). Assign a player to be with her if this is the opponent's tendency.
- 7) If opponent runs the ball out on basket or free throw made, cut off outlet lanes of their guards (force them to come to ball and slow down the break).
- 8) If opponent runs ball out, put a player on the opponent player taking the ball out of bounds to slow her up.
- 9) On missed shots, tie up or double team the rebounder. This will slow up her outlet and thus slow up break.
- 10) On free throw attempts by your team, put two players back of foul line-extended toward outlet lanes to have defensive balance and discourage quick outlets.
- 11) If opponent always outlets to a particular guard (# break), anticipate it and deny her. This will force the outlet to a lesser ballhandler.
- 12) Take a charge on outlet pass; anticipate pass and spot opponent is receiving the ball.
- 13) Double-team outlet pass when opponent receives the ball; this gives your teammates opportunity to get back on defense.
- 14) Always sprint back on defense and challenge the ball as soon as possible; don't give them the freedom of the open court to run the ball.
- 15) If opponent runs on free throw made, put in a sub to slow down the action.

DEFENSING THE 3 POINT SHOT

- 1) On penetration, do not help out, but stay with 3 point shooter on the perimeter anticipating a kick-out pass.
- 2) Push 3 point shooter beyond 3 point line to make shot longer.
- 3) Anticipate swing or diagonal pass if 3 point shooter is away from the ball in a zone defense.
- 4) Release and trap the 3 point shooter which will force her to give up the ball.
- 5) Play the 3 point shooter tight; force her to make a move to get off a shot.
- 6) Stay home on inside pass to post player; don't go to dig out.
- 7) Face-guard 3 point shooter, force her inside the 3 point line, and make her work to get the ball and shot off.
- 8) Challenge 3 point shooter; every time she shoots put a hand in her face to discourage her.
- 9) Match-up with shooter if you are in a zone defense.
- 10) In a fast break situation, anticipate 3 point shooter on wings spotting up.
- 11) Weak side guard on post entry away from 3 point shooter: don't drop to help but stay with shooter for kick out pass by post man.
- 12) If opponent is down by a lot of points towards the end of a game, play all perimeter players for 3 point shot.
- 13) Use a box-and-1 if opponent gears their offense to 3 point shooter.
- 14) If opponent has two or three good 3 point shooters, use a triangle-and-2.

FULLCOURT MAN PRESSING

- 1) Pressure the ball all the time. Don't try to steal it, make opponent work.
- 2) On top side of the pressure, use ball-man-me concept. Deny ball side, with triangles on the weak side.
- 3) On the back side of the pressure, take deep elongated triangles.
- 4) Push the ball to the sidelines to enhance trapping situation and cut off one side of the court.
- 5) If the ballhandler beats her man downcourt, rotate to pick her up, stop the ball.
- 6) Anytime the opponent picks up her dribble, there should e total denial by all defensive players.
- 7) Utilize jump-switching, jumping to the ball and trapping to put additional pressure on the ball.
- 8) If opponent beats a trap or is penetrating, there should be recovery to the basket away from the ball side.
- 9) Avoid trapping all the time. Trap in ideal situations and avoid trapping in the middle of the floor.
- 10) Deny the best ballhandler on the inbounds pass and pressure the lesser ballhandler.
- 11) Vary the fullcourt pressure on the opponent to give a different look and to possibly cause confusion.
- 12) If the opponent is beating your pressure get out of it and use it later in the game or special situations.
- 13) If denying the inbounds pass, guards should switch on any cross-screening by the opponent.
- 14) Coach should plot the opponent's attack vs. the pressure his team is applying and make adjustments as to their pattern of attack.

TRAPPING THE BALL

- 1) Proper techniques in trapping the opponent:
 - Ball side should be shut off.
 - Feet of players trapping should lock in the ball.
 - Body should be straight up with hands in the air.
 - No reaching for the ball or attempt to steal the ball.
 - If ballhandler tries to bust through trap, take a charge.
 - Utilize the sideline to cut off one side.
- 2) Proper trapping creates the following:
 - 5 second counts.
 - Bad, erratic passes; forced passes.
 - Walking, traveling violations.
 - Interceptions.
 - Disruption of opponent's offensive attack.
 - Player being trapped will pick of dribble (loss of dribble).
- 3) Situations to trap the ball effectively:
 - Ballhandler has lost her dribble.
 - Ballhandler is forced to sideline and has no vision of player coming over to trap her.
 - Ballhandler has her back to basket.
 - Ballhandler likes to spin-dribble too often.
 - Ballhandler is a weak player
 - Sub coming in who is not fresh.
 - Zone press from full, $\frac{3}{4}$, halfcourt, or regular set.
 - Out of bounds plays when the ball goes into a corner.

DEFENDING THE SUPER GUARD

- 1) In attempting to hold down the scoring guard of the opponent, there are two concepts to keep in mind:
 - Don't let her get the ball; she can't score if the ball is not in her hands.
 - If she has the ball, make her work hard by attacking her/helping on her.
- 2) Methods to use when the scoring guard has the ball:
 - Play her tight; if her strength is her ability to score from outside. This will force her to drive rather than shoot from outside.
 - Play off her; if her strength is going to the basket. See if she can hit the perimeter shot.
 - Double team her; this will force her to give up the ball. Do this from either a zone or a man defense.
 - Set up a charge if she likes to penetrate. This will discourage her as she picks up fouls.
 - Trap her fullcourt; this will slow her down and force her to give up the ball.
 - Pick up fullcourt; make her work bringing up the ball; it will tire her.
3. Methods to use when the scoring guard is off the ball:
 - Deny scorer the ball fullcourt; after a score front or double team her; force the ball to other players.
 - Front her, face-guard her in the halfcourt offense; anticipate screens and fight through them.
 - Switch on screens and deny.
 - Substitute fresh players in denying the scorer so that they don't tire.
 - Use a box-and-1 to cause confusion for the opponent..
 - If in a zone defense match-up her side to deny her.

DEFENDING THE SUPER POST

- 1) In attempting to defense the big man scorer, it presents a few problems because of the nature of the position:
 - Close proximity to the basket.
 - Ability to get offensive rebounds to score.
- 2) Methods to use to either slow down or stop the big man when she has the ball:
 - Ball in low post: Guard on same side drops & attacks her, forcing the pass back out.
 - Ball in low post: Weak side guard drops and attack her (guard on weak side drops and attacks baseline).
 - Ball in low post: Weak post attacks her, off guard protects basket.
 - Ball in low post: Set up a charge. Anticipate her movement and take a spot.
 - Ball in low post: Take away her favorite move; force her to do something else.
 - Ball in high post: Guard on top drop and help.
 - Ball in high post: Play tight if good perimeter shooter. Play her loose if poor perimeter shooter.
- 3) Methods to use to either slow down the big man when she doesn't have the ball:
 - Front her or deny her tough; don't let her get her position inside.
 - Guard collapse and front; strong side guard drop and front.
 - Off guard collapse and front; do this when offensive guard on strong side is good perimeter shooter.
 - Weak side post help; if defensive post is fronting weak side post comes over to take away lob pass.
 - Weak side post help; take a charge on lob pass or movement toward basket.
 - Run her! Defensive player should sprint when on offense to either end to tire her.

ATTACKING THE BOX-AND-1 DEFENSE

- 1) The opponent's purpose in using the box-and-1 is two fold:
 - Stop your leading scorer.
 - Cause confusion defensively.
- 2) There are three options you can use to combat this defense:
 - Get the ball to your scorer so she can get her points.
 - Go away from your scorer by overloading and having other players pick up the slack in scoring.
 - Have a balanced attack that does not ignore either your scorer or the other 4 players on the court (best option).
- 3) The attack should evolve from one of your regular sets.
- 4) The natural screening of your man offensive set should free up your shooter.
- 5) If you choose to run your zone offensive set, free up your shooter with baseline screens by your big men.
- 6) Vulnerability against the box-and-1 is usually at the high post or low post areas away from the shooter.
- 7) If there is confusion in identifying the box-and-1, either:
 - Send your scorer (guard) through the middle and into a corner and see if the defensive player follows her.
 - Send your scorer from one corner of the court to the other.
- 8) If the box-and-1 is on your post man, run your regular zone attack because it will put the opponent in a 2-1-2 or 2-3 zone and will have no effect on your attack.
- 9) Practice regularly vs. the box-and-1 so your players are familiar with it when they see it in a game.
- 10) Instruct your player being manned not to force her shots; they will come eventually with practice.
- 11) Be positive in attacking the box-and-1 and you will score.

CHANGING DEFENSES

- 1) Concept behind changing defenses is to cause confusion to the offensive team as to what defense they are facing in the course of a game.
- 2) Changing defenses can cause uncertainty in an offensive alignment and loss of time on the clock.
- 3) The team applying the defensive changes can be confused themselves if they do not react as a unit on the keys they use to apply the changes.
- 4) Changing defenses can be applied to the following situations:
 - A particular defense is not effective: Man to zone or go zone to man, box-and-1 or triangle-and-2.
 - If a player on the opposition is difficult to stop go to a trick defense: Match-up, box-and-1 or diamond-and-1.
 - After a timeout by an opponent to discourage a set play against previous defense they have seen.
 - To protect one of your players in foul trouble (man to zone).
 - In the course of the game which is relatively close to see if the opponent reacts to it.
 - If the opponent is an effective perimeter shooting team (go zone to man).
- 5) Keys to use during game to dictate changing the defense:

● Free throw made.	● Field goal missed.
● Free throw missed.	● Sideline out of bounds.
● Field goal made.	● Baseline out of bounds.
- 6) Additional methods to change or reinforce changing defenses:
 - Designate a player to use "call words" for key. *Example:* Red for man, blue for zone, etc.
 - Designate a player to use hand signal for key. *Example:* 1 hand for man, 2 hands for zone, etc.
 - Coach on the bench can utilize signs as a key.

TAKING THE CHARGE

- 1) Proper technique of taking the charge:
 - Anticipate straight line direction of the offensive player going to the basket.
 - Be firm and establish a solid base once you have reached point of contact.
 - Don't play shot; officials have a tendency to call a block rather than a charge.
 - Anticipate contact and absorb it.
 - Upon contact, go down and let out a groan or shout.
 - Don't take spot if opponent is in the air.
- 2) Specific situations to take the charge:
 - Middle penetration charge off the ball; take spot where drive is going to.
 - Baseline defending the ball; take baseline spot before drive gets there.
 - Ball-side baseline charge off the ball; take baseline spot before drive gets there.
 - Backdoor charge off the ball; be in help position and take spot as opponent receives backdoor pass.
 - Lay-up charge off the ball; on breakaway lay-up, sprint and take line of direction spot of the shooter.
 - Outlet pass charge off the ball; take spot in front of the receiver of the outlet pass (give her a stride).
 - Fast break charge; on a 2 x 1 or 3 x 2 break try to take spot of middle player as he passes off the ball.

SUBSTITUTIONS

- 1) Always sub tired players:
 - Players should signal to want out.
 - Coaches should be aware of tired players.
- 2) Sub going out should give the number of player she is guarding.
- 3) First 4 subs to usually enter the game should be sitting close to the coach.
- 4) If a sub is pulled out due to mistakes, coach should talk to her to adjust & explain what she is doing wrong.
- 5) Sub to freeze the opponent free throw shooter late in the game.
- 6) Late in the first half sub starter who has 2-3 fouls if game is close.
- 7) Late in the game if you are killing the clock and opponent is pressing or fouling, sub a third or fourth guard.
- 8) If opponent subs 3 or more players ask for a lineup to avoid problems as to who is guarding who; this is within the rules.
- 9) Tell subs on the bench to watch who their opponent would probably be when they enter the game so that they can anticipate their movements on offense and defense.
- 10) Late in the game, when you are shooting a free throw and wish to press; put a sub at the table after the official puts the ball in the hands of the foul shooter. This will create a momentary lapse in play to summon the sub in and you can set up your press.
- 11) Sub your scorer when on defense to protect her if she is in foul trouble
- 12) Late in the game, sub quickness for defense and scorer for offense.

COACHING REMINDERS

- 1) Never use profanity or vulgarity in front of your players, peers in a game situation, or in the school environment.
- 2) In the course of a game, don't abuse or get on officials too much; your players will react as you do.
- 3) Never degrade a player in front of other players; take her to a side and deal with her on an individual basis.
- 4) In dealing with the media, always be positive with the remarks win or lose.
- 5) Always display good sportsmanship; this shows class and will rub off on the players.
- 6) Don't ever get complacent as a coach:
 - Running short practices. • Giving off extra days.
 - Not being flexible. • Not working at the game.
 - Using the same drill all the time.
- 7) Be consistent and perform at a high coaching level; this will bring out the best in you as a person and most importantly bring out the best in your players.
- 8) Follow all school, league, and state rules; make your players knowledgeable about them.
- 9) As season progresses periodically remind the players of team rules and to watch out for each other; do not jeopardize the team image.
- 10) Be consistent with team rules and follow up on penalties to be imposed and inform administrators if action has to be taken.
- 11) Show interest in other school activities; this is part of your job.
- 12) In a game situation with little time left, do not sub a player who has not played if you are winning or losing by many points.
- 13) If you have nothing good to say to someone, don't say anything.

PREGAME TALK SESSION

- 1) The pre-game session basically should be a shortened version of what you have done in practice in preparation for the opponent.
- 2) The proper atmosphere should exist before going over team play:
 - All players should be in one area.
 - Wait until all players have changed and have your complete attention before talking.
- 3) Blackboard – all diagrams should be on the board before speaking to players.
- 4) Blackboard should contain the following information on opponent:
 - Opponent's offensive sets vs. man and zone defenses.
 - Out of bounds plays of opponent.
 - Press opponent uses and when they use it.
 - Special plays of opponent.
 - Personnel of opponent: strength and weaknesses of starters and subs.
 - How they match-up with your team; include game match-ups.
 - Opponent's general tendencies: fast break, slow down, go to players, etc.
- 5) Blackboard should contain the following information for your team:
 - Review all your attacks.
 - Special strategies vs. opponent:
 - a. Defenses you will use.
 - b. Press situations.
 - c. Strategy vs. good shooters.
 - d. Special plays.
- 6) Create positive atmosphere:
 - Try to speak to players on an individual basis with positive comments.
 - Be positive in your general talk to your team:
 - a. Talk in terms of winning and playing to the best of their abilities.
 - b. Stress your team's positive qualities.

USE OF TIMOUTS

- 1) Never use a timeout unless there is a purpose to it.
- 2) Have constant knowledge of how many timeouts you have in the course of a game.
- 3) Situations in which timeouts should be utilized.
 - If the opponent has made a run of points on your team.
 - The opponent is up 7-9 points and your offense is not effective.
 - If you have difficulty in attacking their defense. Make adjustments; go to a set play.
 - To freeze the opponent free throw shooter late in the game.
 - To stop the clock late in the game.
 - To slow down the tempo of the opponent.
- 4) If the opponent calls a timeout and you are ahead, anticipate what they may do:
 - They may change their defense.
 - They may apply fullcourt pressure.
 - Look for them to go to their best scorers.
- 5) Always confer with your assistants before speaking to your players.
- 6) Make sure you have the attention of your players on court and immediate subs.
- 7) Late in the game always inform players as to how many timeouts are left.
 - When a timeout is called, all players on the bench should greet players with encouragement and enthusiasm.

SCOUTING

- 1) Obtain a game program and observe the warm-up session.
- 2) Scouting report should contain the following information with diagrams:
 - *Personnel:*
 - a. Starting 5 and key subs – how tall they are, any key stats.
 - c. Strengths & weaknesses of personnel. Who are their "go-to" players?
 - *Offenses of the opponent:*
 - a. Primary and any other sets shown, including options and tendencies.
 - b. Any type of man (or zone) attack?
 - *Type of fast break they run:*
 - a. Numbered break: who gets outlet?
 - b. Traditional 3 lane break?
 - c. Do they cheat a player down-court on shot?
 - d. Do they run after a free throw or basket made?
 - *Tendencies of shot selection:*
 - a. Perimeter shooting team? Who are the 3 point shooters?
 - b. Power to go inside?
 - c. Do they have a balanced attack?
 - *Defenses of the opponent:*
 - a. Primary defense – man, zone, match-up.
 - b. The types of presses they run – man, zone, full, ¾, or ½.
 - c. Do they trap the ball? Soft, or hard?
 - d. When do they press? After time out, free throw, basket made?
 - e. Is the press early in the game, in spots, or at the end of the game?
 - f. What defense do they drop back into after pressing?
 - g. On out-of-bounds plays do they man or zone?
 - *Out-of-bounds plays:*
 - a. Side-outs.
 - b. Under the basket.
 - *Overall summary of the opponent:*
 - a. Team overall quickness, strength, size, stamina, etc.
 - b. Are they a strong rebounding team, aggressive, etc.
 - c. Do they get back on defense; can we run on them?
 - d. What was most effective for the offensively? Against what defense?
 - e. How do they match-up with us?

HALFTIME TALK SESSION

- 1) The first thing of importance is to gather stat sheets before going into the locker.
- 2) Confer with assistants before speaking to players as far as strategy is concerned after looking at the stats.
- 3) Give players a few moments to settle themselves before speaking to them.
- 4) The halftime talk is a session to adjust or anticipate what the opponent will do in the second half.
- 5) After looking at the stats and your coaching staff's evaluation of the first half, consider the following:
 - Fouls; for your players and your opponents.
 - Leading shooters and rebounders for your opponents.
 - Adjusting to their offensive and defensive sets.
 - a. Diagram patterns and what they are doing; take it away from them.
 - b. Ask if there are any questions.
 - Diagram their special plays:
 - a. Out of bounds plays.
 - b. Special plays for individual players.
- 6) If you are ahead by many points emphasize that they are going to play hard in the second half; don't be complacent. Tell them the score is 0-0.
- 7) Stress that the first four minutes are crucial in either opening up the score in your favor if ahead or tightening up the game if you are behind.
- 8) Never be negative, but positive and enthusiastic. Remember, they are an extension of you.

POSTGAME TALK SESSION

- 1) It is imperative that the post game talk be a productive time.
- 2) When the game is over all players go directly to the locker room.
- 3) All stats when finished should be given to the head coach.
- 4) When speaking to the team make sure everyone has your attention.
- 5) Only players and coaches should be in the locker room.
- 6) If a team wins or loses, emotions are usually at the extreme and this should be accounted for by the coach in his talk.
- 7) A game, regardless if you win or lose, is a learning experience for both the coach and his players.
- 8) Utilize this experience in your talk to make your team more productive in future games.
- 9) If you win the game, stress the following:
 - Compliment the individuals who excelled.
 - Compliment players off the bench who contributed.
 - Compliment players for individual efforts such as:
 - a. Great defense.
 - b. Clutch free throws.
 - c. Rebounding efforts.
 - d. Passing, screening, and assists.
- 10) If your team loses, stress the positive things they accomplished. Do not do the following:
 - Dress down individuals.
 - Blame the officials.
 - Be overly negative.
- 11) Use a loss as a teachable moment in stressing the areas they have to work on.

GAME STRATEGY AND ADJUSTMENTS

EARLY-GAME STRATEGY

- ◆ Establish the basic offensive and defensive game plan as early as possible, emphasizing the aspects that are successful initially and modifying the rest as the opponents make adjustments.
- ◆ Your first concern is stopping the opponents from what they do best; your second concern is establishing what you do best.
- ◆ Successful game management consists of finding what works best and playing to it until the opponents' adjustments render it ineffective, then either going to other options or making minor adjustments to restore the effectiveness of your original strategy. In either case, it's not wise to show too much, too soon, lest you tip off the opponents to strategies you may want to use later in the game.
- ◆ Don't be too hasty in abandoning your game plan if things start poorly. If you believe in your game plan and believe in your players, things will likely right themselves.
- ◆ It's a good idea to insert first-line substitutes in the latter stages of the first quarter. Give them enough playing time to warm-up and contribute in a meaningful way.

HALFTIME

- ◆ Pre-game talks to the team should be mainly technical in nature; that is, going over the scouting reports and game plan and outlining individual responsibilities.
- ◆ You can save a lot of mental wear and tear by preparing only *one* motivational talk per game and using it at halftime – and if things are going well, saving it for next time.
- ◆ Three things you must do at halftime:
 - 1) Prepare the team for the first five minutes of the third quarter – with the exception of the last three minutes of the game, more games are won and lost during this time than at any other. If you are an up-tempo team, come out pressing and fast breaking.
 - 2) Be prepared to deal with possible changes in your opponents' strategy; for example, they will be well-prepared to deal with any got players you may have.
 - 3) Unveil new offensive or defensive wrinkles you may have; it's always harder to adjust to new tactics after halftime.

LATE-GAME STRATEGY

- ◆ Your goal is to have your five best players ready to go full speed for the last five minutes of the game.
- ◆ Players learn how to function effectively under game pressure by being placed in pressure situations in daily practice. If the drills you use are both game-related and more demanding than your players will face under actual game conditions, they will learn to respond quickly and automatically without having to think about their movements.

LAST SECOND STRATEGY—OFFENSE

- 1) Make sure to have a designated play and option in taking the last shot.
- 2) Keep the ball in the hands of your best ball handler in initiating your last shot.
- 3) Allow 8-10 seconds left in the game to initiate your offensive movement (when score is tied).
- 4) If the score is tied and you miss your last shot with some time left on the clock, make sure you:
 - Do not foul foolishly.
 - Keep defensive balance so as not to give up an easy basket.
- 5) Your last shot should be a high percentage shot, either:
 - Going to the basket for a lay-up, or...
 - Getting the ball inside to the post.
- 6) The high percentage shot compared to the perimeter shot will allow for:
 - Possibility of being fouled.
 - Create a soft rebound for a second shot.
- 7) If you are behind by 1 or 2 points, initiate your offense earlier, with 12-15 seconds left so you can:
 - Possibly get a 2nd or 3rd rebound attempt.
 - Foul the opponent quickly to kill the clock.
- 8) If you have lost your dribble and/or are being trapped or the possibility of a 5 second count exists, call time.
- 9) If you are behind 1 or 2 points with 10 seconds left having secured a defensive rebound, don't call a time-out:
 - A time-out will allow the opponent to set up their defense.
 - Push the ball down the court to score; opponent will have a tendency to play soft not wanting to foul.

STALLING THE BALL

- 1) Spread floor against opponent to create space.
- 2) Always have two players in back court (guards).
- 3) Passing lanes should be relatively close.
- 4) If defense is denying you off the ball, cut through to basket.
- 5) Once you have the ball, do not dribble until defense comes up to play you.
- 6) Avoid dribbling toward one of your players (to eliminate easy double-team).
- 7) Use your dribble only to:
 - Get a favorable passing lane.
 - Penetrate to the basket.
- 8) Always look to the basket for players who are free.
- 9) Be cautious of charge set-up if you are going to the basket.
- 10) With 8-10 seconds left, begin your attack to attempt to score.
- 11) If opponent is definitely going to foul, keep the ball in the hands of best foul shooter.
- 12) Keep the ball out of the hands of big people, poor ball handlers or passers.
- 13) Keep the ball moving so that the defense does not get the opportunity to foul.
- 14) If scoring opportunity presents itself, try to score.
- 15) All scoring attempts should be of high percentage:
 - Backdoor pass. • Penetration into middle (watch out for charges).
 - Inside to post.
- 16) Be aware of 5-second count; others players or bench should be calling it out.
- 17) If double-teamed call a timeout (know how many you have).
- 18) If you have lost your dribble or are double-teamed, purposely get tied up (if possession arrow is in your favor) to avoid 5 second count or loss of ball.

LAST SECOND STRATEGY—DEFENSE

- 1) Play man to man solid defense staying with your man only.
- 2) Put pressure on the ball; pick up the ball at half-court. Make her work!
- 3) Do not try to steal the ball, but make your opponent work hard. Avoid fouls.
- 4) Try to force your opponent toward the sidelines to limit passing options.
- 5) In defending your player without the ball on the ball side, deny her the ball.
- 6) For more quickness on defense, insert another guard in place of a slow defender.
- 7) If you are behind at the end of the game:
 - Foul to stop the clock.
 - Take a charge on penetration to the basket.
- 8) If you are going to foul the opponent:
 - Foul a weak free throw shooter.
 - Foul a fresh player into the game.
- 9) If you are going to foul intentionally, use a term or expression rather than yell "foul!" Officials are then not put on the spot to call an intentional foul.
- 10) If opponent is down by three points toward the end of the game anticipate a three point shot.
- 11) Play perimeter shooter tight on weak side as well as ball side late in game if opponent is down by three points.
- 12) Do not foul a three point shot attempt at the end of the game; it can cost you 4 points.
- 13) In general keep in mind the following:
 - The number of time-outs you and your opponents have left.
 - If you or the opponent is in the bonus.
 - The direction of the possession clock.

LAST MINUTE CONSIDERATIONS

Your team is ahead:

- ◆ Spread half court offense and run some clock off to make it a shorter game.
- ◆ Keep the ball in hands of good free throw shooters.
- ◆ Look to score if the opportunity is there.
- ◆ Restrict shooting to high percentage shots or lay-ups.
- ◆ Anticipate double teaming and fouling by the opponent.
- ◆ Don't play as though you are losing; opponent must score to catch you.
- ◆ Get ball out of bounds quickly after opponent scores to avoid their setting up of a press, a quick foul, or calling of a time out.
- ◆ Know the direction of possession arrow and how many time outs you and the opponent have left.
- ◆ Play with confidence, don't play scared.

Your team is behind:

- ◆ When fouling, foul weakest free throw shooter.
- ◆ Make it a longer game by fouling to stop the clock.
- ◆ Use full court pressure, deny, take a charge, trap, make something happen on defense.
- ◆ Keep ball out of the hands of opponent's best ball handler.
- ◆ Know how many time outs you and your opponent have left and the direction of the possession arrow.
- ◆ Utilize the 3 point shot by your 3 point shooter only.
- ◆ Go to the basket more to draw fouls and stop clock.
- ◆ Don't force shots or have non-shooter take shots; be patient for good shots.

TIME AND SCORE SITUATIONS

TIME AND SCORE:	The game is tied and you have the ball with 10 to 20 seconds left in the game.
STRATEGY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Begin your movement to score with 8 to 10 seconds left on the clock. b. Try to get the ball into the post or use a set play for your best player. c. Go to the basket to draw a foul or get a soft rebound on a miss. d. Don't foul foolishly by going over the back of an opponent on offensive rebound.
TIME AND SCORE:	Your team is behind 8 points or more with 2 minutes left in the game.
STRATEGY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Make it a longer game by fouling opponent to stop the clock. b. Use your time outs to stop the clock. c. Get into the offense more quickly. d. Utilize the three point shot.
TIME AND SCORE:	It is late in the game and you want a time out to stop the clock on your next field goal.
STRATEGY:	As an offensive shot is being taken, coach and players yell for a time out as ball approaches basket.
TIME AND SCORE:	You are down with 1-2 seconds left in the game and have the ball under your basket.
STRATEGY:	Chances of scoring are almost none. Set up a block play on the defensive player guarding the ball out of bounds. Set up a player slightly behind and to the side of the defensive player guarding the ball out of bounds. Player out of bounds runs baseline drawing his man into blocking your player to the side standing still.
TIME AND SCORE:	The possession arrow is in your favor late in the game and the score is close (2 or 3 points either way). You have possession of the ball but your player has lost her dribble. She is being pressured or double teamed by the opponent. To avoid a five second call or force a turnover:
STRATEGY:	Purposely get tied up by the opponent. Your team will get possession of the ball because the arrow is in your favor. Also, you or one of your players off the ball can call a time out.
TIME AND SCORE:	The opponent has just scored or you have obtained a defensive rebound. You are behind 1-3 points with 7-12 seconds left in the game.
STRATEGY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Don't call a time out; this will allow opponent to set up their defense and strategy. b. Push the ball down the court quickly and go to the basket or inside to your post players (if down 1 or 2 points). Shoot the 3 if down by three points. c. On the shot, all 5 players hit the boards for offensive rebound. d. If opponent rebounds missed shot, foul immediately.
TIME AND SCORE:	You are ahead 1-5 points in the last minute of play and have fouls to give before the opponent is shooting the 1 and 1. To slow up their offensive attempts:
STRATEGY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Foul the ball in the back court but let some time run off. b. Do not foul shot attempts. c. Make sure you are attempting to steal the ball while fouling.
TIME AND SCORE:	You have just scored a basket and are down 1-3 points. You have no time outs left and there is 1-5 seconds left in the game.
STRATEGY:	Rather than let the opponent run the clock out, call a time out. Although you get hit with a technical foul; free throw and possession of the ball to the opponent, there is the possibility of a missed free throw and steal or violation of inbounds pass which still gives you the opportunity to win the game.
TIME AND SCORE:	You are behind toward the end of the game; the opponent is not in a 1 and 1 situation yet and you need possession to score:
STRATEGY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Foul the ball quickly making an attempt to steal the ball. b. When ball is out of bounds, foul someone on the court before ball is inbounded. c. Continue to foul until opponent is in the 1 and 1 situation.
TIME AND SCORE:	You are ahead by 2-3 points with 3 seconds or less left in the game. The opponent is taking their last free throw; the opponent must miss free throw to get an offensive rebound and attempt a field goal or 3 point shot.
STRATEGY:	Substitute bigger players into the game for rebounding. Make sure all 5 players are on the lane. Cut off the free throw shooter on release of ball for long rebound.
TIME AND SCORE:	You are behind and it is late in the game. You must attempt to steal the ball or foul the ball.
STRATEGY:	Substitute more guards or quicker players on defense in dead ball situations.
TIME AND SCORE:	You are ahead by 4 points in the last minute of the game and the opponent has ball.
STRATEGY:	Instruct your players to hit the boards for rebound on opponent's shot. Don't allow opponent offensive rebounds. Don't make bad fouls to stop clock. Remember, they need points to catch you, you don't necessarily need points.
TIME AND SCORE:	It is late in the game and you are ahead; the opponent is in a situation where they must foul to stop the clock.
STRATEGY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Spread the floor with your offense. b. Put in additional ball handlers. c. Move ball around quickly. d. Keep ball in hands of best free throw shooters.

<p>TIME AND SCORE: STRATEGY:</p>	<p>It is the last two minutes of the game and the opponent is behind but has made a run of points by crashing 5 players to the boards and getting offensive rebounds. Designate a player, or a player defending the shooter to take off downcourt on the shot. Your rebounder or out let out of bounds player should give a deep read down court for an easy lay-up.</p>
<p>TIME AND SCORE: STRATEGY:</p>	<p>In the latter stages of the game, your scorer has 4 fouls and you wish to protect her from fouling out. On dead ball situations substitute her when you are on offense or substitute out if playing defense. Caution player on offense not to get into a charge situation.</p>
<p>TIME AND SCORE: STRATEGY:</p>	<p>You are ahead or behind by 3 points with 5-10 seconds left and a timeout has been called by either you or the opponent with possession.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Break out of your huddle before the opponent does and set up a zone or zone press break look for them to see. b. During your time out make man to man assignments. c. Just prior to the official handing the ball to the opponent, your players will match up with their pre-assigned players and apply pressure.
<p>TIME AND SCORE: STRATEGY:</p>	<p>You are ahead 1-3 points with 7 seconds or less left and a time out has been called. Your opponent has to go the full length of the court and has ball under their basket.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Let opponent break from the huddle first so that you can see their alignment. b. Call a quick time out and chart their alignment, instructing players or their attack. c. Make sure you protect against a deep pass.
<p>TIME AND SCORE: STRATEGY:</p>	<p>You are behind 1-3 points with 3 seconds or less left. Opponent has the ball under their basket. Time will not allow a quick foul.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Double team the ball out of bounds to get a five second violation. b. Encourage a deep pass to your basket by not covering their deep player. c. Front their guards and try to take a charge as they move.
<p>TIME AND SCORE: STRATEGY:</p>	<p>Your team is ahead by 4 points or more with 10 seconds or less left in game. The opponent has no time outs and has to go the length of the floor to score.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Put a token ¾ man or zone pressure protecting deep. b. Do not foul, especially if attempting a 3 point shot. c. If opponent does score do not take ball out of bounds quickly; walk over, pick up the ball, and let time run out.
<p>TIME AND SCORE: STRATEGY:</p>	<p>Your team is ahead by 3 points with 1-5 seconds left in the game. The ball is side out of bounds on your defensive half.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Anticipate the 3 point shot. b. Play man defense and defend opponent players outside 3 point line forcing them to receive pass inside 3 point line. c. On any screen switch protecting 3 point range area.

WHILE ON THE BENCH

- 1) Substitutes should be prepared to go into the game knowing what is going on and be able to contribute.
- 2) While on the bench the sub should be evaluating the following:
 - Defense:
 - a. Strengths and weaknesses of the opponent.
 - b. Area you are guarding if in a zone defense.
 - c. Offensive pattern the opponent is running and movement of your player.
 - d. Be aware of their out of bounds plays and special plays.
 - Offense:
 - a. Knowing your position in the offensive set your team is running.
 - b. The strengths and weaknesses of opponent who may be guarding you.
 - c. Anticipating the defense the opponent will be using.
 - d. Know your position if being zone pressed.
- 3) On timeout situations, although you may not be in the game, pay attention to what your coach is saying; do not daydream, gossip, check out the crowd.
- 4) Anticipate the players you will probably sub for and the players you will guard.
- 5) Upon entering the game, double-check with the player you are subbing for as to who you will be guarding.

BENCH DECORUM

- 1) Remember that the bench before, during, and after the game is a reflection of the team.
- 2) During national anthem, all players should be at attention, not talking or moving around (fans notice this).
- 3) During introductions of starting 5, all players should applaud them and the opponents also. Show class.
- 4) Keep in mind that a team never won a game or championship with 5 players on the court; that's why there is a bench—players that are part of a total team effort.
- 5) In the course of a game, players (the bench included) should not criticize or make remarks to officials, opposing players, or their own teammates.
- 6) The bench should encourage ingoing subs and compliment subs coming out of the game.
- 7) In the course of the game, encourage players to work hard; compliment good plays, hustle and aggressiveness as you wish they would do for you when you are playing.
- 8) Bench players should have their heads into the game so that when they get into the game they can contribute as their teammates have.
- 9) After the game, all players including the bench should congratulate their teammates and shake hands with opponents.
- 10) Keep the bench area neat; water bottles, warm-ups, chairs etc. in place.

PRACTICE PLANNING

PRINCIPLES

1. **Have A Plan.** A coach without a plan will invariably miss teaching points. It is important that the players know that their coach is invested in maximizing their potential.
2. **Set the Tone.** The first 15 minutes of practice are the most important because it sets the tone for the entire day. Do not “ease into” practice; make sure they hit the floor on time, focused on basketball, and ready to learn.
3. **Keep Practices Quick-Paced.** Keep your practices in constant motion. Basketball is a game of quick transitions and changes; a fast-moving practice can help condition not only physically but mentally as well.
4. **Include as Many Competitive Situations as Possible.** Turn as many drills as possible into mini-games with consequences for the losers. This is fun for the kids and develops the competitor’s drive that is necessary to be a winner.
5. **Don’t Be Afraid to Critique.** Though there are certain times to just let the kids play, try to address every correctible mistake you see. Though this at times become tiresome to both coaches and players, it is necessary to the development of good habits.
6. **Use the “Whole-Part-Whole” Technique.** For example, team offense should be shown in its entirety so that the players can get a sense of its purpose. You can then break down the offense into 2 or 3-man games or drills in order to perfect different parts of the offense before putting it all back together again. This method of teaching allows kids to see how their skills fit into the big picture.
7. **Repetition is the Mother of Learning.** Basketball is a game of habits, and the only way to develop the correct habits is to practice them over and over again. And once a skill is learned, it must be practiced at game speed.
8. **Treat Players as Individuals.** Different players have different needs, and it is important for the coach to tune into a player’s needs and respond appropriately. “Being fair” doesn’t necessarily mean treating everyone the same way.
9. **You Will Be Successful at What You Emphasize.** The coach who allows sloppy play in practice will get exactly that in games; the coach who demands maximum effort and execution during practice will eventually see the those results at game time.
10. **Condition with the Basketball.** Basketball requires excellent conditioning, but the game is played with the ball. Use one of the countless drills that incorporate running while teaching the skills of the game.
11. **Incorporate Transition.** The team that wins the transition game usually wins the game, period. Therefore it is imperative that teams condition themselves to convert quickly from offense to defense and vice versa. Incorporate transition into every possible facet of practice.
12. **Scrimmage.** Many coaches are afraid to scrimmage because of the sloppy play, but it is absolutely necessary because it is the best way to simulate game conditions. A coach can put restrictions on aspects of play in order to maintain a measure of control.

SAMPLE PRACTICE PLAN

ACTIVITY	Length	NOTES
Pre-Practice	5-10	• A light warm-up that focuses on shooting, passing, and ballhandling
Warm-Up	5-10	• Stretching and light running that emphasize cutting, passing, and shooting.
Transition	15-20	• Break down your transition; make it a strength in both directions. Include a competitive game.
Defense	15-20	• The defensive portion has to be intense and requires great hustle and effort. Where most practices falter so a difference-maker!
Offense	15-20	• Break the offense down into its parts and build to the point where it becomes instinctive. Include 5x0 shell.
Scrimmage	15-20	• Put it all together. Continue to teach but let them play. Include 3x3 or 4x4 games to keep things fresh.
Conditioning	5-10	• A fun drill or game to end practice on a high note.