

the Coaches' Office



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Volume 1, Issue 3

Basketball4ALL Roundtable

Monthly Features:

- **Locker Room** - Philosophy & Team Culture
- **Pre-Game** - Preparation & Scouting
- **Half Time** - Motivation & Quotes
- **Between the Lines** - Execution, Strategy & Technique

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INTENSITY, EXCITEMENT, POISE & COMPOSURE

Intensity! Excitement! Poise! Composure! These are all words that you will hear basketball coaches yelling at their teams during games, timeouts, or pre-game talks. These are all qualities that players need to possess, during competition, especially at playoff time. However, players must also have the correct LEVEL of each quality to be as effective as they can be.

There is a delicate balance between having maximum intensity and maintaining your poise. There is also a fine line between being excited and keeping your composure.

Intensity can be defined as exceptionally great power, force, or extreme emotion and seriousness. Poise is a state of balance or self-control and ready to perform. Basketball players need to play with the power and force that intensity suggests, but have enough poise to stay within the rules and play with the fundamentals that have been practiced and the game plan that the coach has provided. Many players play so hard and so intense that they are out of control and they foul, travel or throw bad passes. Many players are so intent on their individual effort that they neglect the necessities of team play.

Players should be joyful, excited and passionate about the game. I love players that are having fun and would much rather see a player with a smile than a scowl. Players like Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan come to mind and in the game today we have Dwight Howard and Dwayne Wade. If players aren't careful, that

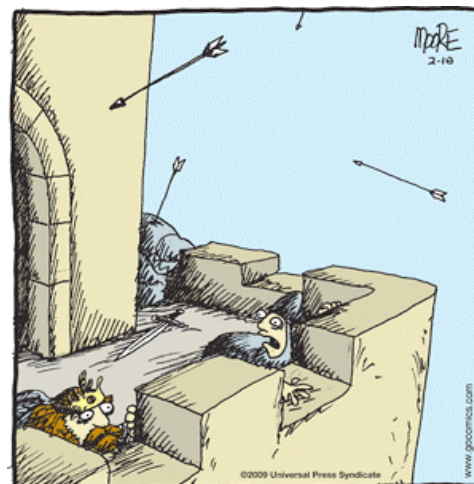
unabashed joyfulness can lead to uncontrolled excitement that creates an agitation that could effect performance negatively.

Players cannot be so excited that they forget the game plan, or the appropriate execution of offensive or defensive strategies. On the other hand, composure is a calm, tranquil state of mind that suggests the exercise of self-control and is imperviousness to agitation or turmoil caused by the pressure of the contest.

Finding the delicate balance of these four qualities can ensure that players do not play too emotional, impulsive and frantic but rather under control, focused, and with the maximum effort necessary. Teams that find the balance are the truly great ones.

In The Bleachers

by Steve Moore



"It looks bad, sire. The Huns broke through the front line, attacked our flank, scaled the west wall ... And we just used our last timeout."

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Rewarding Unsuccessful Effort

Trying to focus on effort in order to get results is important, yet how the coach, and player, reacts to a mistake or an unsuccessful effort may be more important than how we react after a good play. When a player tries really hard and makes the play, it's natural for a coach to reward that effort. What about when a player gives it his all but doesn't make the play. If you say effort is important to you – then reward it. Recognize your players when they give effort – regardless of the outcome. This is likely to cause the player to make continued and greater efforts in the future. We do want results, but people tend to get reinforcement for only good results. We want players to try hard, so give positive reinforcement no matter what the outcome.

In an early season game, one of our better players was struggling with his shooting touch. The shot would leave his hand, I'd say from the bench, "Nice Shot", and then it would miss horribly. Assistant coaches pleaded to take him out of the game, to which I finally responded that, "he's going to have to make a big shot for us someday and I want him to have the confidence to take it!". He never found his shooting touch that night and we lost the early season game. However, fast forward to March and that same player scored our final 7 pts in the sectional semifinals against the top seed and was our leading scorer in the 4th quarter as we won the first title in school history.

If we can create an environment where it is fun to try without the fear of failure, kids will begin to give us a little better effort every day.

In an interview last year with Washington State basketball teams point guard, Derrick Lowe he was asked why they were having such a great season after being picked last in the Pac 10 preseason poll. The legendary coach Dick Bennett had just retired and the job was passed to his son, Tony. Both are GREAT coaches. Lowe said, "Last year we tried to play hard because we were afraid of what would happen if we didn't. This year we are playing hard because it's a little more fun and we are not as afraid of making a mistake."

Pre-Game

In practice we like to "PLAY 5 ON 4". **TEACHING POINTS:** The team with 4 must run zone offense and play M2M defense. On **offense**, they should be encouraged to look for offensive transition opportunities before the zone defense is set, drive gaps to draw two defenders, move the ball in the zone offense, and play with an increased effort to make up for being a "man down". On **defense**- they must play a "true" m2m defense, not guard 4 & leave 1 player open or a play a glorified matchup. A defensive player must: first **get the ball**, second **protect the basket** and the other two players must **get to the level of the ball** and find the next two most dangerous players. This would simulate any situation where a teammate gets "beat" and puts the defense in a constant help situation

TEACHING POINTS: The team with 5: must play zone defense and run M2M offense. On **offense** they have a numbered advantage so they should be encouraged to look to move the ball and find the open man **within the m2m offense** (they may not simply play "keep away" looking for the open man.), **look for mismatches** created by the defenses "scrambling" **find the precise defender to screen** (this is much more difficult, as the defense should be rotating, switching, and scrambling). This really helps the team execute their M2M offense and "see" what they are trying to accomplish, as opposed to just running to spots and passing the ball around. On defense they must play a straight 1/2 court zone using the correct zone coverage slides and not double team to take advantage of the extra player.

Soon you'll be setting better screens, finding mismatches, moving the ball better against man or zone defenses, running the break and playing the hustling brand of help defense that you've always wanted to play!



Winning is **FUN!!**

Playbook



ATHLEON PUBLISHER Publishers | For Coaches

Post Defense: Protect the Red Zone

Low post play is a constant battle for position. During this battle sometimes you may end up in a position where the post may catch the BALL. It is important at those times to be in a position to prevent him from making a good post move and getting a BASKET. And sometimes, when trying to deny the ball, the offense will simply make a good play and execute that perfect pass at just the right time and they may get a BASKET. That happens. But it better not be for lack of trying to deny them the BALL!

The defensive key during this battle is to keep from getting "pinned" in a position where the defense gives up "BALL & BASKET".

This month's Playbook animates post defense from the initial offensive pass through a post entry – showing a dig/double and into the rotations out of that help. To cover a complete ball-reversal.

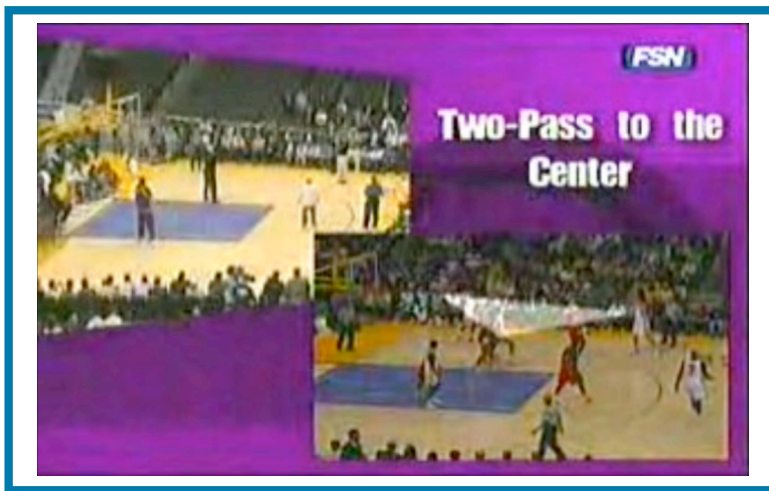
Too often players do not trust their teammates and instead try to do more than they are capable of doing. This obviously is impossible because all they can do, is all they can do. One cannot do more than one is capable of. This in turn hurts the team and diminishes its capacity for success.



YOU KNOW YOU ARE A TEAM PLAYER WHEN... •You don't care if you are the one who sets the screen or the one who hits the winning three, because fulfilling your role, whatever that role is, is most the important thing. •You have a desire to excel for the benefit of those relying on you. •You have an unquenchable need to exceed your past limitations •You play without the option of defeat •You play and know, without a doubt, that you competed like a champion. •You understand your commitment to your teammates. •You understand that basketball is a team sport. •You finish playing and only your body leaves the floor your heart and soul are captured within the game. •You will exchange your blood, sweat, and tears for the benefit of the team. •You understand the irrelevance of individual awards. •You would rather encourage a teammate to success than benefit personally from his mistakes. •Your respect for the game outweighs your personal pride. •You make mistakes and use them to improve instead of using them as excuses. •Your ability to make your teammates better increases each time you play. •You do the little things right when nobody is watching. •You serve your teammates with unselfish motives. •You understand your role and strive to perform it better. •You have done all you can and still feel you haven't done enough. •You play with pain without creating a scene. •You give more than what is asked and take less than what is deserved. •Your effort is constant and your play is consistent regardless of the situation. •**You think you can, and you do.**

TEACHING is rewarding!!!

The precise timing and synchronization of a team's execution is essential for maximum success. Whether it is a basketball offense or defense, a football running back hitting the correct hole, or a baseball double play, **TIMING IS EVERYTHING.** In the Olympics we see synchronized diving or swimming, as well as figure skating in pairs during the Winter Olympics. These athletes are able to do precise moves in unison under extreme duress during world class competition. However, some basketball teams struggle to pass to an open cutter at the correct time, getting players to wait to use a screen until the screener is set, or getting proper defensive rotations when a player goes to help. Are we asking enough of our players?



Video Room

Phil Jackson and Tex Winter walk-thru the Triangle Offense. This is the first clip in a very thorough 5-part series. Make sure that you click on the "Basketball Coaching and Fundamentals" Playlist for Parts 2-5. The Triangle is what I call a "Track Offense". In a track offense, players must stay on one "track" until the need for a counter to the defense switches "tracks"(much like a train on a track) and sends the play into a different set.

Between the Lines

SETTING SCREENS

A screen may be a method of helping a teammate get open, but a good screen forces the screener's defender to "help" and also becomes one of the best ways to free yourself for a shot. Setting screens allows you to pass the ball around in your offense to try and get the best shot possible. When setting a screen for a player, the screener should "**Head Hunt**" and find the defender guarding the player that is being screened for. The screener should go directly to the defensive man to set the screen. The screener should then **come to a stop** with a wide base and knees flexed, immediately before contact with the defense, to avoid a moving screen. When setting a screen, the screener should have their shoulder blades **pointing to the "shot-spot"** (destination of the users cut where they want to get the shot). **The user of the screen is usually open wherever the screener's back is facing.**

USING SCREENS

Using screens properly is as important as setting them. Without both aspects being executed correctly, the screen becomes ineffective and the defense will easily get through them to remain in good defensive position. Freeing your offensive players with screens will allow the team to move the ball into position to get a good shot. Here we will discuss using screens away from the ball. **Set your defender up** before using the screen. Simply walk the defender away from the shot-spot and make the defender easy to screen by **bringing the defense to a stop**. Wait for the screener to be set Timing is very important. **It is better to be a little late than a little early.** If you move too soon, your defender may make contact with the screener before the screen is set. This could be a foul on the screener, but it would really be the "user's" fault. **Plant your foot and cut off of the screen at the exact time that the screener hop-stops to set the screen.** Come off the screen **tight** enough to touch the screener. You can rub shoulders, "swim" off the screen, or "sandwich" the screener and the defender using both hands. Always cut off of the screen directly to the shot-spot and prepare your feet to catch and shoot.

Basketball4ALL

Basketball for Athletes
Looking to Learn



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"Power of a Big But" (Yes, it's spelled right and NO... this isn't about Rebounding!)

Players compete with that little voice in their head. We all have one—it's that inner critic that goes on all the time and is nearly impossible to turn off! Unfortunately, most of the messages it sends are critical or negative. It is almost impossible to eliminate the negative self-talk. But it is possible to **replace it**. There's a powerful three-step process players can use to transform that negative self-talk and figure out how they can accomplish!

Many times players think, "I can't do that"... whatever "that" is. But we know they may be completely capable of doing it if they use the proper technique. What really is happening is they *may feel* like they can't accomplish the task in the moment. So a more accurate statement might be, "I *feel* like I can't do this." **BUT**, you can teach them to turn that around by using the word "but" to **devalue the negative self-talk**. When you use the word "but" in a sentence, it devalues what comes before it. It might even erase it. Typically we say the positive first and then devalue it with the word "but." I like that outfit, BUT...! You see how THAT could get you in trouble with the significant other FAR too often.)

First, players need to state the negative self-talk as a feeling. Now is when they can enlist the "Power of a Big But"—Notice it is the "but" with one "t". Finally they can end the thought by remembering the appropriate coaching technique to be used.

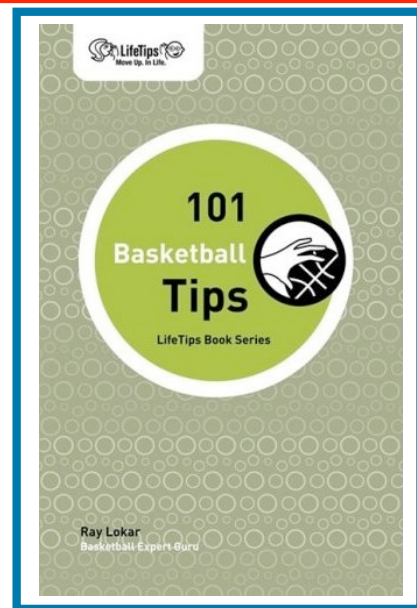
For example, "I feel like I can't (*insert whatever they feel like they can't do*), **BUT**... if I (*insert proper coaching technique here*) then I know can do better."

Coaches' Catalogue

The Basketball IntelliGym™ is the first training program in the world that dramatically improves basketball game-intelligence skills. It is a computer program that looks and plays like a video game, but it is actually a sophisticated training system.

The Basketball IntelliGym™ was tested on players of all levels and age groups. The results: "Playing" with The Basketball IntelliGym™ for just 30 minutes once or twice a week, for only a few weeks, will provide a substantial improvement in skills like real-time decision making, anticipation, concentration, attention-span, team-play, fast response time and court sense.

"After all is said and done, the IntelliGym trains players in making the right choices. The guys that really bought in, it helped. Some guys didn't buy in, and these are the same guys that make bad decisions. It's that simple." John Calipari



About Basketball4ALL

Ray Lokar is the Southern California Area Coordinator and Lead Trainer for the Positive Coaching Alliance. Coach "Lok" has coached basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, football, swimming and track in the San Gabriel Valley for over 25 years at the youth, high school, and college levels and has worked countless camps and clinics during that time for ages 8-18. Ray has been involved in the business development and marketing of the ACE Intelli-Gym(tm) for Applied Cognitive Engineering. The IntelliGym(tm) is a revolutionary training tool that enables basketball players to dramatically improve their game-intelligence skills using computer software.

Coach Lokar was the Head Basketball Coach of the 2002 CIF Champions while at Bishop Amat High School and is a Past-President of the Southern California Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Association. He is now the Director of The Basketball4all Foundation that provides a variety of lessons, camps, clinics, competitions, and events for the benefit of the Southern California basketball community. Ray's book "[101 Basketball Tips](#)", published by Lifetips as part of their Lifetips Book Series, is available at Amazon.com and his second "[101 Basketball Coaching Tips](#)" is scheduled for a March Madness release.

Road Trip

In this space we'll highlight some of my very favorite places to visit...on the web.

<http://thecrossovermovement.wordpress.com>

The Cross Over Movement site accumulates, generates and shares ideas based around Cross Over: The New Model of Youth Basketball Development's basic philosophy: creating a youth-centered basketball system through a long term approach to player development. It contains one of the most thought provoking blogs on the net. Visit often!

And One

Synergy is a group of elements working together to produce an enhanced effect greater than the sum total of the individual parts. Early automobile manufacturers learned that one man trying to build a car would take 10 times as long as a group of five men working together and applying their own specialities. That's synergism. In other words: (1 + 1 = 4). Five men working together accomplish more than twice what one man working ten times as long could. Each man was more than twice as productive when part of an organized team. That is what Teamwork is all about...SYNERGY

Basketball is a game of the fast break, the give and go, the pick and roll, and finding the open man or doubling down on the big man in the low post and rotating out, and team defense. This is a game of teamwork, of coordinated efforts. Obviously these plays can not be performed alone. The better the teamwork, the better the offense or defense. That is synergism.