

Basketball4ALL Roundtable

the Coaches' Office



“The System”

“The System” is an extreme run-and-gun style of play that actually came to life from the very pure intentions and idealism behind the NCAA Division III Philosophy of the educational benefits from participation and inclusion in co-curricular pursuits at Grinnell University. So rather than playing 8 out of 16 players and having half of the team leave the gym unhappy, this style of play allows all players to play and still "get their moneys worth" in terms of the number of possessions. Players play in "shifts" for :30 seconds to a minute and a half. Then five new subs check in. If it's been longer than that, they sometimes even foul - just to stop the clock and get the subs in. A team using “The System” can play 15-20 players per game. They might use just 3 shifts of 5 and the last 5 players could get sprinkled in based on foul trouble and the like. I have not seen Grinnell play live, however I witnessed the University of Redlands, another “System” team several times – one a 174 pt performance. The common misconception is that rapid-fire subs would not allow a player to "get into the flow" or "develop a rhythm" but it appears to be just the opposite. They are never out of the game long enough to get out of rhythm.

To clear up another common misconception about the "System", at first glance some may think it is an "undisciplined" style of play. If disciplined is defined as "doing what has to be done, doing it as well as you can do it, doing it when it has to be done, doing it that way all the time." (Bob Knight), then “System” teams are as disciplined as any team out there. This (very) Fast Break is extremely structured and flows into a secondary break that is equally disciplined. The sequence of curls, cuts, screens, slips, drives and shots are ALL well thought out, sequenced and yes, disciplined. The offense is far more structured than most teams that run a true "motion offense" as that allows for more freedom of movement than does this offense. But they do have freedom to shoot. Early and often!

The System runs a designated outlet to the point guard, a primary shooter runs the right, and the forwards run the left. They do not really look to throw it ahead to the shooter, although he might, but rather clear him through off of a double screen on the weakside. The center trails. This clears the whole right side for the PG to drive full speed to the hoop, which is his mission. If, by chance, he cannot, then he knows that the shooter will be in the opposite corner and behind the double for a 3pt opportunity. If the shooter does not receive a pass he does not stop, but rather curls the double screen to the basket and a screener pops the stack in that double screen to the corner for his 3pt opportunity. This is a clear cut

offense and is very precise and disciplined. This action of doubles, curls, pops, drive and kicks continues at a breakneck pace. Players never stop moving, all looking for "blow by" layups or kick outs to the 3 point line.

When a shot goes up - all 5 players might crash the boards and do not worry much about defensive balance. A team running the system might get back half of their misses in offensive rebounds. You would think that the emphasis on the break and shooting 3's would negate opportunities to get to the FT Line - a goal that I think is worthwhile. But “System” teams typically shoot more free throws than their opponent.

After a score they get into what amounts to a full court 1-2-2 full court press. They have the center on the ball and normally full front all opponents, daring you to throw over the top. They really might leave anyone deep open, using their two deep guys to come up and intercept anything over the top to the front guards. On misses they jam and double the rebounder with the two closest players and get into a zone press as well, with the same principles. The double teams continue throughout the possession and into the half court, which would resemble a 1-3-1 matchup half court trap. If the opponent scores, 5 inbounders up court quickly and the process starts all over again.

Now, breath deeply!

Monthly Features:

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

Highlights:

- In The Bleachers 1
- Playbook 2
- Video Room 3
- Overtime- 4
- final thoughts
- Catalogue 4
- Road Trip- 4
- useful links
- And One- 4
- ...and another thing!

Subscribe to
ie Coaches' Office
at
www.basketball4all.net

In The Bleachers **by Steve Moore**



Intensity! Excitement! Poise! Composure! These are all words that you will hear basketball coaches yelling at their teams during games. 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. Or being excited and keeping your composure.

Intensity is defined as exceptionally great power, or force. Poise is a state of balance or self-control. Basketball players need to play with the power and force that intensity suggests, but stay within the rules and fundamentals of the game. Many players play so hard that they are out of control and they foul, travel or throw bad passes.

Players should be joyful, excited and passionate about the game. Excitement is activity or agitation but composure is a calm or tranquil state of mind. They cannot be so excited that they forget the game plan, or the appropriate execution of offensive or defensive strategies. Composure is calmness that suggests the exercise of self-control and imperviousness to agitation or turmoil.

This delicate balance of these four qualities will 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.

It's my hope here to bring as much information to readers as possible and I thought I'd dedicate a large portion of this newsletter to bringing some attention to a style of play not familiar to most coaches. Many are enamored with the Dribble-Drive Motion and the Wahlberg Attack, I am intrigued a little with many aspects of "The System" and feel they're more than worth discussing in many situations. It takes the other approaches and revs up the RPM's well beyond the old LMU break. This newsletter gives a general summary of how "System" teams approach the game.

Pre-Game

To implement "The System" of play described in the feature article there are some Formula Goals that coaches implement to get "The System" really going. When coaches stick to the pursuit of these goals it keeps the players focused and greatly increases its effectiveness.

Goals: (based on a 40 min. game)

90 Shots a game

Half of total shots need to be 3s

Rebound 35% of all of our misses

Force 35 turnovers

Plus 25 shot differential

When Grinnell hits all 5 goals they win at a 95% clip. Olivet Nazarene women win at an 88% rate when they hit just the Forced Turnover and Offensive Rebound goals, although the increased number of 3's may lead to longer rebounds and more offensive rebounding opportunities. BY focusing on the goals (process) it enables teams to "win" by achieving some goals – even when it might not work out on the scoreboard.



Winning is FUN!!

Playbook



Here's a break from for the more "traditionalists" that might be reading this newsletter. This is a set that has been run by Roy Williams at Kansas and at UNC over the years out of a box set. The upstart Portland Pilots, under Coach Eric Reveno use it a bit too. I've put it in as an option out of our 1-4 Lok-a-Motion Offense, which is what is diagrammed here. It serves as a great pressure release because it allows the posts to step out for the initial pass to enter the offense. As with my most favorite offenses, it has a built in ball reversal with a cutter headed to the block for a potential lay-up. If that is covered there are perimeter shot opportunities off screens for defenses that may want to sag. It's continuous and resets into the 1-4 after each ball reversal so there could be something here for

"It encouraged more positive reinforcement than traditional basketball where it seemed that being on them constantly was more effective."

Gary Smith,
University of Redlands
on why he enjoys coaching
"The System"



TEACHING is rewarding!!!

Believing that the human body is an amazing thing, in my opinion the eyes and the brain have as much, or more, to do with the result of the shot as do proper fundamentals.

I think the most successful shooters are those who are truly able to focus on one small target spot to shoot for. Some say they do, but who can really tell what the eyes and mind are doing? If the eyes can focus on a spot and effectively send the message to the brain to tell the body what it needs to do to propel the ball toward the target, the shot has a pretty good chance of hitting that target.

One of the points I make when speaking about the positive aspects of the system is the "positive teaching / learning environment" that it promotes. I have long believe that avoiding much talk about "winning" was beneficial -- maybe because John Wooden influenced me in my early career. But, to get out of a team what you need in the half court game, particularly on the defensive end I found myself being more and more negative (hopefully negative with specifics but nonetheless lots of negative critique). I think the simplicity of the system "less is more" concept and the emphasis on just plain all-out effort with less emphasis on detail promotes a positive atmosphere. That is not to say that detail is not important because it is but there is just less of it, at least the way we did it.

"I used to think that you weren't a true 'System' coach unless you adhered to the statistical goals we try to meet each game. I think I've shifted away from such a myopic viewpoint over time- in part because I've found there are lots of ways to achieve these numbers. I now believe that the link between us is that we all all searching for a better way to coach. We value maximal participation, positivism, entertaining fans and letting the players play. Finally, I believe we all like the idea that we are scratching the surface on the sport psychology front as we unlock our players minds and let them play without inhibition. I must tell you all how honored I am to be a part of this fraternity."



Video Room

Here is a little video on Grinnell University describing "The System" in one of their better years. At this point in the year they haven't had a very good start from a W-L perspective but it gives you an idea about the attack – and understand that it's not all about W's & L's in every situation. This might be for some coaches – maybe not for others.

Between the Lines

Two North Carolina State University engineers published some research that shows the best way to shoot a free throw. The engineers say you should aim for the back of the rim, leaving about 2 inches between the ball and the back of the rim. According to the simulations, aiming for the center of the basket decreases the probabilities of a successful shot by almost 3 percent. They say that the ball should be launched at 52 degrees to the horizontal, which means that the shot should, at the highest point in its arc to the basket, be less than 2 inches below the top of the backboard. Drs. Chau Tran and Larry Silverberg, mechanical and aerospace engineers at NC State say the ball should be launched with three hertz of back spin. For us non-engineers that means it should make three complete backspins before reaching the hoop to create that "soft touch" that deadens the ball when it bounces off the rim or backboard.

There are three aspects of shooting that I emphasize most with shooters. They are:

- 1) **See the Rim:** No - really see the rim. Pick that spot and focus. Allow the eyes and the brain to assist to the fullest extent. I think the front is easier to find – but the back is more effective.
- 2) **Sixty degree arc:** I've said sixty degrees for a long time. Not really sixty degrees. But close, give or take a few degrees in either direction. Sixty seemed easy to find. Players understand 45° and 90°. So - somewhere between the two. The point is - get the shot up in the air and give the ball a better mathematical chance of going in.
- 3) **Hold your follow thru:** This may only be the exclamation point of the shot, but a focus on that important aspect may actually encourage the shooter to use the fluid aspect of the entire shooting process. In turn, this will give the ball better rotation and a softer bounce on the rim, further increasing the mathematical chance of a made basket.

I think those three points of emphasis are just an easier way to get to the engineers findings.

Basketball4ALL

**Basketball for Athletes
Looking to Learn**



RAY LOKAR
POSITIVE COACHING ALLIANCE

DIRECTOR:

Ray Lokar

ADDRESS:

127 Waterbury
Covina, Ca 91722
USA

PHONE:

(626) 789-6214

E-MAIL:

ray@basketball4all.net

VISIT US AT:

www.basketball4all.net

OR BLOG AT:

<http://www.basketball4all.blogspot.com>

Coaches do their players a favor by running an offensive set to help players get shots in crucial situations. If I had a nickel for every time I see a coach, "put the ball in my best players hands" and whatever happens, happens I'd be a rich man. Well, how about the coach doing some work and helping out just a bit by putting the **team** in the best place to achieve instead of just banking on his best player? I think too many teams rely on going "1-4 flat" at the end of a quarter or game, and it often does a disservice to the team. In those situations it seems the team has to work so hard to get a shot. Maybe they should run something to help players get the ball in a position to score first.

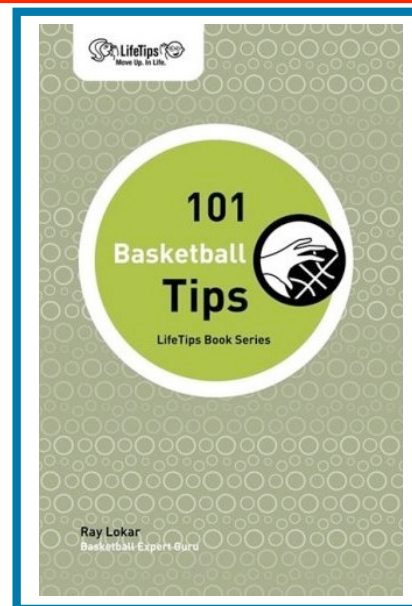
Kansas coach Bill Self, says, "The way we play, the whole thing about scoring from the post is scoring before you catch by positioning." Self went on to say, "Same with perimeter players. Before you catch it, you know if you're open or not. You shoot it, you drive it, you pass it, but ball doesn't stick. I agree with him there, we really work on this a lot. He finishes by saying, "Ball has to move, so the defender is at a disadvantage. Every time you pass a ball to somebody and it sticks, it allows defenders to adjust." To me, when you go 1-4 flat the defense doesn't have to move at all and are right where they want to be. In those cases— your guy better be better than the other guy.

I think that's what an offense should do. Put guys in positions to score so they don't have to "create their own shot. If your offense is working, outside of any end-of-the-clock situations, players shouldn't have to "create their own shot." In fact there have been many a times where I've said, If you have to "create " it... maybe you shouldn't shoot it!

Coaches' Catalogue

Tom Norland uncovers some of "The Myths of Shooting." And seems to simplify shooting fundamentals. What he coaches works and makes sense. Players learn quickly how to control the "Flight of a Ball!" He breaks down the shot into simple, easily-learned pieces and then shows how to put it back together. He teaches self awareness and self-coaching, and teaches coaches how to guide their players into this powerful and simple approach. I highly recommend this for younger players and female basketball players. His emphasis on creating power through a smooth stroke and the "UpForce" is just what they need!

Click this link for more: <http://www.swish22.com>



About Basketball4ALL

Ray Lokar is the Southern California Area Coordinator and Lead Trainer for the Positive Coaching Alliance. Coach "Lók" 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

Since we spent some time talking about the extreme fast break basketball check out the "Extreme Run and Gun Basketball" website. There is info, a message board, and an email group to join. A great place to "lurk & learn" or dive in and contribute if you are sold.

<http://www.angelfire.com/hi5/runandgun/>

And One

When coaches feel the need to get up and have a "conversation" with the referees they need to be responsible for their own actions. I don't like it when assistant coaches also get up to try to "hold back" the Head Coach. It gives the impression that the coach has really lost it and, at times, makes it appear much worse than it actually is.

I remember a time when I was having a "discussion" with an official and an assistant, who obviously saw the tactic on TV got up and tried that same tactic .In mid-rant I turned around and calmly said, "touch me again and you're fired!" Then returned to my "discussion" without missing a beat.

The point is the coach must remain in control – then the assistants assistance isn't needed!