

the Coaches' Office



February 2008
Volume 1, Issue 2

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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...and another thing!

"DARE TO BE YOUR BEST"

I **dare** any aspiring athlete to read and comprehend the material presented on this page, word for word, immediately before the start of his/her daily practice sessions for the next 21 days. I **dare** you to tape this exercise to the inside of your locker door and to use the columns provided in checking off an honest appraisal at the conclusion of each practice.

It is one of the athlete's illusions that the present hour is not the critical decisive hour, for example: the game is a week or weeks away...ample time to prepare in a gradual type of way. Forget it! **The critical time for accomplishing anything is in the here and now.** Write it on your heart and imprint it on your brain that every day is a day to **dare to do your best.** Each day and every workout provides opportunity for self-improvement, self-renewal. Today's accomplishments, not yesterday's or tomorrow's produce the most satisfaction, as what you accomplish today can give you an immediate feeling of self-confidence and direction. The critical time for accomplishing anything is in the here and now. **Today.** The most important ingredient in future performance is present performance. **The most difficult tasks are consummated, not by a single explosive burst of energy or effort, but by consistent daily application of the best you have within you.**

Whether we call our practice exhausting work or relaxing play depends largely upon our attitudes toward it. Practice is an opportunity to improve our skills. The majority of athletes perform in games and events like they perform in practice. Approach each practice session with enthusiasm, as nothing great has ever been accomplished without it. One spark of enthusiasm is worth more than two hours of uninspired practice. Be aware that it is not simply that certain activities are boring but that the mind has been programmed for.

We program ourselves for boredom or distraction when we think we already know all about something. We learn and perform at our best when the mind is calmly alert, interested and enjoying itself. **Challenge yourself mentally as well as physically and you will start to enjoy the price of success rather than pay for it.**

Best Effort / Above Ave / Average / Below Ave / Poor Effort

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In The Bleachers by Steve Moore



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Shibumi

Shibumi is great refinement underlying commonplace appearances, a statement so correct that it does not have to be bold, so poignant it does not have to be pretty, so true it does not have to be real. Shibumi is understanding rather than knowledge. Eloquent silence. It is modesty without pudency.

In art, it is elegant simplicity, articulate brevity. In philosophy, it is spiritual tranquility that is not passive; it is being without the angst of becoming. In personality, it is authority without domination. To arrive at shibumi, one must pass through knowledge and arrive at simplicity. *by Trevanian*

The Japanese word “Shibumi” is a concept describing a philosophy of living, or playing, that is simple, yet effective. It is a result of distilling behaviors or tactics into those that are honest and consistent with achieving your goals.

Think of some players who play in the spirit of “Shibumi”? Who coaches in that manner?

What if we were to develop our programs and athletes to be “unremarkably dominating”?

Those are the kind of teams I respect!

Pre-Game

Successful teams are prepared for end of the game situations. It is often this five or ten minutes a day which coaches spend on end of the game situations that makes the difference between a district title, a berth in the state tournament or a disappointing trip home. Try to work on special situations every day. Here are some questions all coaches should ask themselves, then share those answers with the team and prepare them in practice to execute when necessary.

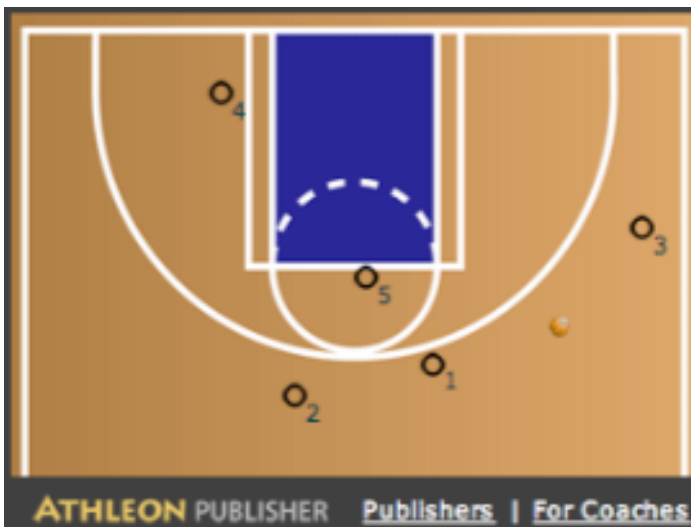
- ~Do you push the ball and play or call a timeout to set up the last shot?
- ~Do you want to try to get 2 possessions for 1 at the end of a quarter, half, or game
- ~Do your players know how to intentionally miss a free throw if needed?
- ~Do you want to foul with a three-point lead, before a three-point shot is taken?
- ~Do you have a delay game and do your players know what to run at the end of the clock?
- ~Do your players know when, how, and who to foul to stop the clock?
- ~Do you have a sign/call so your players know to foul without alerting the opponents/officials?
- ~Do you have a hurry-up offense designed to get you quality shots, or 3's, in less time?
- ~Do you save your timeouts or do you use them early to keep your kids in the game?
- ~Do you have last second sets or inbounds plays for each time and score?
- ~Do ALL players know ALL positions they may play on special plays in crunch time?
- ~Do you have your list of special situation plays on the bench so you can refer to them?

Know the answers to these questions before you play. Making them at gametime is too late !



Winning is FUN!!

Playbook



2-Guard is a continuity offense designed to allow four perimeter players equal opportunity to be in all spots at sometime during the continuity. This is the initial cut and the basic ball reversal. Four players need to be able to function on the perimeter and it helps if the high post is a decent passer, as you will see later. 2-Guard is a bit of a hybrid between the flex and the UCLA High Post. When running the 2-Guard continuity diagrammed at the left, there are a variety of looks, options, and specials that can be run during the continuity, making this a pretty comprehensive offense that you can build on and use from the youth level on up. Many of these can be found diagrammed throughout the [Basketball4ALL Roundtable](#) blog.



Half Time

Players who understand the "mathematics" of basketball display the most court sense because they are aware of the geometry of spacing, angles, arc, etc. What I do know is that the most important basketball math equation you want to solve is:
your points > opponent points



TEACHING is rewarding!!!

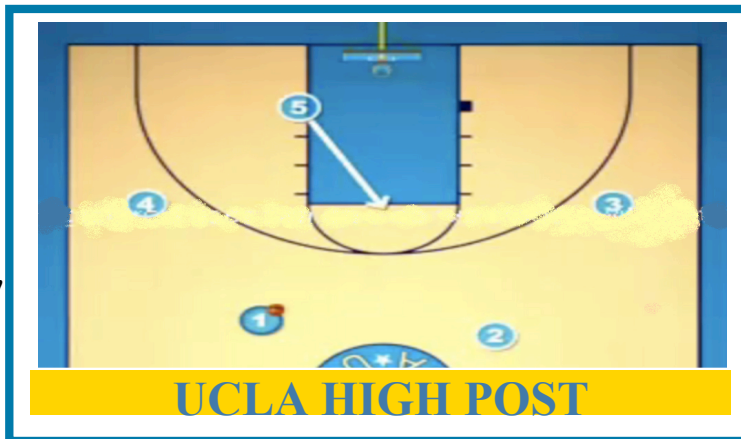
Last Issue we listed
"5 STEPS TO BEING BETTER NOW !!!"
To the right are some Offensive and Defensive "Extras". The better you do these "extras" the better the team will be.
The bottom line is there are a couple Offensive and Defensive *musts* that I could live with when the going got tough.
At worst... every single possession on offense just **get a shot**...
and
On defense... get in position to **contest every shot** the other team takes.
A team that, at least, does those two things is on its way to doing OK.

BETTER PASSING ANGLES

I think that there is a spatial relationship that must be kept to create a good passing angle. For example, if the player wants to enter a pass to the wing the passer needs to be on the "Entry Line". If you were to draw a line from the basket through the corner of the key at the free throw line, and extend it to half court, I call that the "Entry Line". The passer should be as close to that line as possible to make an effective pass to the wing. The closer he gets to the basket, the closer to the middle of the floor he can be. The further from the basket, the wider towards the sidelines he can be. Too far off that line creates a risky passing angle. Draw it up and take a look.

If a player wants to enter a pass to the post, the passer, the ball, and the basket should all be in a STRAIGHT LINE. This will create the most difficulty for the defensive post player to determine a "side" to play defense on. Whatever side he chooses, the offense can make a simple move to feed the post from the other side.

When determining passing angles, I believe that there is a mathematical relationship between the passer, the receiver, and the defender, and maybe the basket. Being a basketball coach and not a mathematician, I'm not exactly sure what the relationship is, but I know that there is one. Ideas?



Video Room

Here's a great clip from YouTube explaining the UCLA High Post offense with Coach Wooden and Swen Nater. Make sure to look in the "Related Videos" to see Parts 2 & 3 (Click the photo to start the video)

Between the Lines

DEFENSIVE EXTRAS

Pressure on the Basketball: Always try to put defensive pressure on the player with the basketball. Pressure makes the offense worry more about the defense than what they are supposed to do in their offense. If the defense is within 6 feet, the offense can only hold or dribble the ball for 5 seconds each. Play close enough to the ball to try to get a "5 count"

Jump to the pass: When you are on defense, every time someone passes the basketball, take a few steps in the direction that it is thrown. This will put you in a position to stop your man if he tries to cut to the basket. You also will be in the right spot to help your teammates, if their man dribbles by them.

See your man and the basketball: Always be able to see your man & the man with the basketball. You need to be able stop your man AND help your teammates if they get beat on the dribble.

Stop the basketball: When on defense, react to the basketball and help your teammates. The only man that can score is the man with the ball. If he's open - go guard him. If he passes the ball back to your man, sprint back and recover to pressure him again.

OFFENSIVE EXTRAS

Establish a pivot foot: On the catch, plant one foot and establish a pivot foot. This will allow you to use the other foot for a "rocker move" to fake a defender, or to set up another move.

Face the basket When you catch the basketball, turn & face the basket and make a move if one's available. If you can't, get into "triple threat position" so you will be able to shoot, pass, or dribble.

Dribble for a reason: If you dribble the basketball, dribble for a reason. Good reasons to dribble are: to advance the ball up the floor, drive to the basket, get in better position to make a pass, or relieve some defensive pressure.

Good shot or Bad shot? Don't ever surprise anyone with a shot. If teammates and the coach expect a shot, it's probably a shot that they think you can make. They also will be ready for an offensive rebound or to get back on defense. Think about this. It might define whether it's a good or a bad shot.

Basketball4ALL

Basketball for Athletes
Looking to Learn



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In "The Legend of Baggar Vance" the movie was in a golf setting but was a tremendous analogy for coaching, life, or the game of basketball. At one critical point in the movie Bagger says,

"...it's time...time for you to see the field...feel that focus. Alotta shots to choose from...duffs `n` tops `n` skulls. But only ONE shot is in perfect harmony with the field. An "authentic shot". And that shot chooses YOU. There's a perfect shot out there trying to find each and every one of us - and all we got to do is get ourselves outta it's way and let it choose us." He continues with, "Can't look at that flag like some dragon you gotta slay. You gotta look with soft eyes. See the field. Find that place where the tides, the seasons, the turning of the earth comes together and becomes one. You gotta seek that place with your soul. Seek it with your hands. Don't think about it. Feel it. Your hands is wiser than your head ever gonna be."

(see the video clip here)

In a well designed offense, there are shot opportunities for all players, and a progression of options that players need to be able to follow. They should not try to force the ball into places, but rather use counter attacks to the defense's strategies to their advantage. The space on the floor should tell players where to go. The opponents positioning tells a player what is open. Eventually, with proper execution, a shot opportunity will present itself to a player. And that is the right shot to take. But the player did not choose the shot - The shot chose him.

Coaches' Catalogue

SCOUTING MADE SIMPLE provides a thorough, yet simple, system of scouting an opponents tendencies, offensive patterns, defensive strategies and individual strengths and weaknesses. Includes a usable 4-page report that is a simple and efficient checklist for the coach to use with enough diagrams to cover even the most complex teams. A complete explanation of each page and suggestions for its' use is highlighted by a simple method to chart each player's offensive tendencies, categorize their individual style of play and assist in developing a game plan to stop them. Order SCOUTING MADE SIMPLE here.



Road Trip

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

Eric Musselman's Basketball Notebook

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

Coach Musselman's blog has become daily reading with topics regarding basketball, coaching, leadership, team culture and more. He uses an eclectic variety of sources to illustrate the point and does a great job linking to the origin.

And One

One of your most difficult challenges as coach is to manage a game when you have a huge lead: trying not to embarrass your opponent, while still helping your team improve and learn from the game. Create a new approach to the game, such as practicing specific situations you will face in future, more competitive contests.

For example, instead of scoring quickly, work on plays or tactics that will help you protect a small lead when that situation arises. Or prepare for a scenario when you are tied near the end of a game and you want the last scoring opportunity. Try new combinations of players and positions, getting subs in to play with your starters.

The key is to EXPLAIN this to your players so they understand they are not letting up, but are continuing to work toward season-long goals. These strategies will help your team get better and get some valuable practice, and you Honor the Game by Respecting Your Opponent.

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 first book "101 Basketball Tips", published by Lifetips as part of their Lifetips Book Series, is available on Amazon and his second "101 Basketball Coaching Tips" is coming soon.