## Contents

ABOUT THE AUTHORS ............................................................................................................ 3
INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................................... 5
OUR IDENTITY/ OUR GOAL ...................................................................................................... 7
ATTITUDE / BEHAVIOUR ....................................................................................................... 8
DEFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY ....................................................................................................... 10
HOW A BASKETBALL CLUB SHOULD FUNCTION .............................................................. 11
PRACTICE STRUCTURE/ SAMPLE ............................................................................................. 12
ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF COACH FOR PLAYERS OF DEVELOPING AGE ...................... 14
  ERROR CONFRONTATION ....................................................................................................... 15
  DEVELOPING TEAM’S COHESION ....................................................................................... 16
  CLEAR BEHAVIORAL RULES ............................................................................................... 16
  DEVELOPMENT OF COACH’S BEHAVIORAL PERCEPTION ............................................. 16
  COACH’S INDIVIDUAL QUALITIES ..................................................................................... 17
  COACH’S GOALS INSIDE THE TEAM ................................................................................. 17
  WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER ................................................................................................. 17
PART B’ – WORKOUT PLAN ..................................................................................................... 19
ENDURANCE EXERCISES BY AGE GROUP .............................................................................. 20
  ENDURANCE (AGES 5 TO 7) ................................................................................................. 20
  ENDURANCE (AGES 7 TO 9) ................................................................................................. 21
  ENDURANCE (AGES 9 TO 11) ............................................................................................... 23
  ENDURANCE (AGES 11 TO 13) ............................................................................................ 24
  ENDURANCE (AGES 13 TO 15) ............................................................................................ 25
BALL HANDLING ...................................................................................................................... 26
BALL HANDLING DRILLS ......................................................................................................... 27
FOOTWORK ............................................................................................................................. 30
FINISHING .............................................................................................................................. 31
FOOTWORK+FINISHING DRILLS ............................................................................................. 32
SHOOTING ............................................................................................................................... 36
SHOOTING OFF PASS + FOOTWORK ....................................................................................... 38
SHOOTING OFF DRIBBLE & FOOTWORK ............................................................................... 40
SHOOTING OFF PASS + FOOTWORK ....................................................................................... 44
ONE ON ONE DRILLS ................................................................. 46
  OFFENSE 1 on 1 ........................................................................ 46
  DEFENSE 1 on 1 ......................................................................... 46
2 ON 2 DRILLS ........................................................................... 58
TOUGHNESS.............................................................................. 67
  TOUGHNESS DRILLS ............................................................... 68
OFFENSE: TRANSITION ............................................................ 80
SAMPLES .................................................................................. 89
  DAILY WOKROUT ..................................................................... 89
  COACH REPORT/ EVALUATION ................................................ 91
  Monthly programming ............................................................ 92
  MONTHLY REVIEW ................................................................. 93
  TRAINING ATTENDANCE ....................................................... 94
ABOUT THE AUTHORS.

Dragan Raca was born in 1961 in Yugoslavia; he is a former basketball player of Yugoslavian and Cypriot teams. During his career as a basketball player he has been a three times best scorer of former Yugoslavia A1, four times best scorer of Cyprus A1 and the best scorer in the history of Cyprus basketball. Dragan Raca works for professional basketball teams in Cyprus, Lebanon, Greece, China and Bahrain. He is also head Coach of the men’s national team of Former Republic of Macedonia. In addition he has written basketball books that are now used in Sports Universities. During his Coaching career he has achieved to win many tournaments and champions and be awarded as China’s best Coach of New Year International Tournament twice (2011-2013). He was also nominated for three consecutive years (2003-2004-2005) for the Coach of the year in all sports in Cyprus. Among his many achievements as a basketball Coach Dragan Raca was also Coach and supervisor in many summer camps all around Europe and Asia, supervisor and organizer of the FREMA international camp 2004 (Europe - Cyprus, Asia -Lebanon, S. America -Brazil),author of the program for the first FIBA summer basketball camp in Bulgaria 2004, instructor of the national program for sport infrastructure support (E.S.Y.A.A. Greece, Cyprus) for four consecutive years and instructor of the Coaches School China National Basketball Federation
Manos Manouselis was born in 1965 in Athens. His second greatest love after his family is basketball coaching, where he has been actively involved for more than three decades. Manos Manouselis began his career in his early 20’s and since then he has been coaching professionally, working both for clubs and since 2004 for the Greek National Basketball Team. Some of his most memorable achievements as a basketball Coach are the win of the silver medal at the Men U21 2005 World Championship (Argentina) and the bronze medal at the Men U16 2013 European Championship (Kiev, Ukraine) as Head Coach of the respective Greek NTs. During his tenure, at Olympiakos B.C, Olympiakos reached the Euroleague Final Four twice, the Euroleague Final once and won the 2010 Greek Cup. As Head Coach for the Greek National Basketball Federation he has an instrumental role in the development of some of the best European basketball talents which he helps to move on to the highest professional level. From 2010 he is also the Director of the PROTEAS Basketball Academy, one of the premier Greek basketball schools, where more than 600 kids from 5 to 18 years old learn the game’s secrets. Is the Euroleague’s technical commentator for the Greek Cable TV “NOVA SPORTS”. Is renowned in Greek professional basketball circles for his ability to turn teams around to qualify for the next higher division (or level) of competition within the league, as is underscored by being honoured as an 11-Time League Coach of the Year Award winner.

Vasileios Chrysalas was born in 1988 in Greece; he acquired his BS.C degree in Physical Education and Sport Science in 2011 from Aristotle University of Thessalonica. He holds a Professional Working license of Basketball Trainers from the Greek Ministry of Education. He has been attending the seminars of the Hellenic Basketball Coaches Association and the International Basketball seminars for more than 10 consecutive years. Vasileios Chrysalas has worked as a basketball Coach at National Bank Children’s camp from 2006 to 2014. In addition he has worked as basketball Coach for ‘Egaleo’ B.C, assistant Coach of the Hellenic National Under -20 men’s basketball team and since 2015 he is Assistant Coach of ‘Proteas Voulas’ men’s team and Coach of ‘Proteas’ basketball academy, one of the premier Greek Basketball schools, located in Athens.
INTRODUCTION

Coaching young players requires a high level of responsibility and hard work to teach the game in the proper way. The goal of this book is to give coaches a complete guide on how to work with young boys and girls in order to make them learn, play and love the great game of basketball.

Coaching is a commitment of your time to the development of players both on and off the court. You need to organize and execute practices, provide fundamental skill instruction, decide on playing time, communicate frequently with players and parents and much more. You also have to evaluate team’s level of play, set attainable goals, and then assess results based on development rather than on wins or losses.

Coaches must remember all the time that they are working with kids. They must love their mistakes and help them to learn from whatever they are doing wrong. Be patient and do not forget that development of a player is a process.

The first step is to find how you will bring the kids in the court. Why parents will choose your program? What do you have to offer? You need to know the answers to all these questions.

It is important to realize that in the introductory levels of game it is basic to have fun and make kids come back the next day.

Then you have to make them love the game and to teach fundamentals. Thirdly is to learn to train, fourth training to train, fifth training to compete and last is training to win not only in basketball, but also in life.

In this book we focus on fundamental and basic basketball-related skills, establish building blocks for overall basketball skills. Our proposal is that in development ages 70% of time is spent on individual fundamental training and only 30% of the time is spent on actual game competition.

At the next level, 60% of the time is spent on individual training and 40% is spent on competition including 5 on 5 play, starting from 1 on 1, or 2 on 2 and 3 on 3 situations.

At the last development level, (from 16 until 18 years old) depending on mastery of skills, the switch can be made to a 50:50 training to competition ratio and positions can be assigned.

Until then we teach position concepts, but we don’t assign player positions at any point until 14 or 15-year-old.

In this teaching process we emphasize from day one on attitude issues. Basketball is an unselfish game that is often played by selfish people. Coaches must not forget that winning can be a healthy goal, but striving to win is where lessons are learned regardless of the final score.

Also – as coaches - don’t personalize criticism. “We” not “You”. It’s a team thing! And make sure that in the first 15 minutes of practice you say something to every player.
Working hard is an acquired skill. Teach that to your players every day. You can’t focus on prior accomplishments and you don’t have the luxury to cry for failures. You must only focus on the present and doing your best the next moment.

It is also coach job to make sure that every player on the court realizes how important conditioning is for surviving on the floor. The plan must be to improve the aerobic base, build strength towards and further develop overall basketball skills. Build the machine and then consolidate basketball skills.

We are strong believers that individual work makes perfect and you don’t need three or four hours per day to have it. If you got the right intensity and 3 or 4 motivated players on the floor, then workouts lasting from 45 minutes or 1 hour. That’s enough. But we’re not leaving the court until the player masters that move. Do things better is just a matter of repetition and working with intensity!

In this book we focus a lot to the basic staff. Footwork, ball handling, finishing, shooting, passing, spacing. As a basketball coach, your players will take on your values. We value passing in our practice, so we value passing in games. This is why we use passing drills every day in our program.

We work individually for every skill but right after the offensive player should go body-to-body with the defender for the same drill. In this way we are working at the same time both offense and defense! We insist that the mark of a great on-the-ball defender is his ability to keep his shoulders squared on the offensive player that he got. It is also important to stay balanced when he is performing defensive slides, to communicate, to stay focused...

Also spacing is today’s the most important aspect of offensive play. When we work 2 on 2 we teach our players what is the optimum distance they can effectively pass. We also remind everybody that players shoot only 25% when challenged. We try to convince our kids how great it is to make one more pass rather than take a challenged shot.

We pay attention to details. Example: Of course we would like every pass to be perfect, but this is not the case. The receiver must go where he needs to go to catch the ball. He covers up for bad throws and by emphasizing the catch, passers will become more confident and receivers more aggressive.

Finally, when we will make it to the performance level, we maximize fitness and competition preparation as well as individual and position-specific skills. Training to competition ratio in this phase shifts to 25:75, understanding that the competition percentage includes team-oriented practices. At the last part of this book we present a simple swing offense that can be used in development ages in order to move the ball from one side to the other and give every player the opportunity to contribute in the offense.

Nothing will teach players more effectively about spacing, passing angles, getting open, and making effective passes than forbidding dribble.

To conclude, there is a small number of players that possess the talent, the physical and mental ability, the dedication to play basketball professionally. An even smaller number of those players will be selected to play for their country’s National Team.

Of course we have to help the special talent to excel, but it is also important to understand that we also have to give everything needed to those who simply continue to participate in
the game for the rest of their life. Some, will continue to play the game, others will become coaches, trainers, administrators, officials, referees and fans. Basketball needs all of them!!!

OUR IDENTITY/ OUR GOAL

Every coach who wants to work with young athletes in any sport, should know, accept and support the special needs of that young athletes have during their development ages and the particular processes of the program that he or she has to follow in order to be successful.

Basketball coaches of every club or organization in particular should all be team players themselves and in this way young athletes they work with, will have a vivid example of a team with strong bonds between each of its members. When we set up a program for an organization with many different age groups we need have to have common ground rules that will make everyone feel proud for being part of this particular team.

Here are two simple examples of basketball teamwork and unity:

a) Players of all levels must be required to enter the basketball court in the same way, cheer the same slogan at the beginning of the training session and in the end of every practice or game.

b) When one athlete is substituted, then all teammates on the bench should stand up to give a hand and the former should greet everyone!

To place things in order, our proposition for any program that is meant to achieve high goals is based on the following important objectives

a) Cultivate the right attitude and behavior among athletes and make sure that supporting ‘WE’ over ‘I’ becomes a true mentality component to everyone. We want to develop players that will give everything for the team (in and out of the basketball court). This is why we enrich our practices with a series of drills that improve basketball skills and toughness,
develop the confidence of our young athletes and stimulate their pride and faith in both themselves and their team.

b) We emphasize on individual technique on three dominant pillars: Footwork, ball handling (proper reception, pass, and dribble) and shooting (stride stop and finishing, dribble pull up and spot shot).

c) We analyze the role of every individual in the team cooperation into smaller parts (2 on 0, 2 on 2, 3 on 0, 3 on 3, 4 on 0, 4 on 4), we demonstrate how we want to move the ball and what we ask from the movement without the ball, the spacing between players and, at the same moment, we teach how to defend both on the ball and away of it.

d) We stress at every drill the importance of defensive and offensive rebound. Players should be pushed to chase every ball with all their effort that keeps up for the full two hours of every practice and 40 minutes of every game.

e) Last but not least, we work with specialized trainers on the specific issues that each age group has on muscle empowerment and how players can acquire proper movement patterns and shapes.

ATTITUDE / BEHAVIOUR

We believe that the most important element at the evolving process of a basketball player development is the ‘proper’ attitude. Successful athletes realize early that attitude is a matter of choice. They choose to be positive on and off the court. They view basketball as an opportunity to compete against themselves and learn from both their successes and failures. Our players should work hard and do their best but they also need to realize that, as well as their coaches, teammates, officials, and others around them, they are not perfect. The characters that we want to build, maintain balance and perspective between basketball and
the rest of their lives. In this sense, it is our goal to help them learn what respect for the game, their teammates, opponents, coaches, officials and themselves really means.

In order to develop this kind of mentality we set out some simple rules:

- Players should never walk in the basketball court, they should always move quickly.
- At the beginning of the practice, players have to gather at the center of the court with their hands on their knees, staring at the coach in order to listen carefully the focus points of the particular practice and every guideline that their coach will give them.
- When the speech of the coach finishes, the circle closes with the coach in the center and the players around, having their hands joined up in the air, cheering the team’s name!
- Players, never stand tall while they are on the court, during practice and games. When the coach is talking or when they wait for their turn to perform a drill, they lower and place their hands on their knees.
- Players can talk to each other only during defense. When the drill finishes, teammates congratulate each other if something was done right or they say ‘it’s ok’ if something went wrong. Teammates never criticize one another.
- Players have to give hands to their teammates if they foul them during practice.
- Players always point at the passer if they score from an assist pass.
- Players always sprint to help the teammate who lays on the floor.
- When one player is substituted then all players on the bench stand up to give him their hands and he greets everyone!
- When the practice or the game finishes, the team gathers again at the center of the court in a circle, the coach sets the goals of the next meeting and then the circle closes with the players around the coach and their hands joined up in the air, cheering their team’s name!
- We encourage children to discuss with their coaches, tell them how they feel, what they think, asking for help, however this conversation must be done before or after practice.
- The relationship between the coach and the children is sacred and should be governed by love and mutual respect. This is the reason why inside the court a player will only hear positive comments and the reaction of both coaches and players at each mistake will be supportive. Our main goal is not winning at any cost. Of course we want to win every game but without making discounts on our basic principles.
DEFENSIVE PHILOSOPHY

It is true that offense takes talent and defense takes desire. It is also true that more can be accomplished on defense with hard work over skill. But another undisputable fact is that more time needs to be spend on teaching defense, than offense. Our team and each player individually need to know our defensive philosophy.

A defensive attitude is essential. The opponents need to feel that it is difficult to score against our team and each player must take pride in the defensive aspect of the game.

We want to build an attacking defense that takes away the opponent’s strengths and dictates the tempo of the game. We find out that our individual and team defensive rules are successful when each player concentrates each possession on recognizing, anticipating, and making plays.

We want our players to realize that defense should dictate the offense and not let the offense control their game. Basketball is a "read and react" sport. In most cases, the offense makes a move and the defense responds and tries to stop it. A good defensive team forces the offense to react to them.

There are common questions in all age groups when they play basketball: What our players do when they guard the ball? What should they be doing when they are not guarding the ball? Do they stand and watch? Or, do they attack? Do they help each other? Do they communicate? Do they understand that talking is the key to drawing any group together? Can you imagine sitting in a room with a group of people with a common goal and not talking to one another? How will you accomplish your goal? Players need to know the answers to all these questions well before they stand against their opponents. So, in this case too, we have simple rules that we need to follow:

- Players must communicate during defense and they yell what they are doing: “I got the ball”, “deny”, “I help”, “I am last”, “rotate”, “switch”, “shoot”, “block out” etc...
We explain that 80% of the effort in “man to man” defense should be made in order to prevent our opponent from getting the ball.

At the first half of the basketball court, defense’s goal is to force the ball handler of the offensive team to change direction as many times as possible. We want that player to lose as much time from the 24 seconds clock as possible.

At the second half of the court, we want to force the ball to stay in the sides of the court and we deny the middle spot in order to create a help side.

When an offensive player holds the ball we put pressure and the rest of defenders are denying all entry passes.

When the ball is on the floor, especially when we defend penetration, we stop denying and jump to the ball, we pack the paint, protect the rim and we are ready to perform ‘close out’ defense if the offense kicks the ball to the perimeter.

When we manage to lead the ball at the side line (outside the volleyball court) we won’t allow it to return at the middle of the floor.

We only give help from the weak side and never from ball side defenders.

After every shot we perform a hard box out and go for the defensive rebound.

**HOW A BASKETBALL CLUB SHOULD FUNCTION**

Every organization needs to have a structure and a strategy to achieve its goals. Building a basketball program means that everyone who is working for this must follow the general philosophy of the club. Every coach must bring in his own ideas and it is important to discuss them with his colleagues, but when the work with the players starts everyone must stay in the same page of the agreed general plan!

In case the club lacks an adequate information system, then it is the responsibility of the Head coaches of all age groups, in cooperation with their assistants, to create and maintain
individual digital files for every player. Acquired information should include contact details and personal player information as a starting basis and go in adequate depth to record improvement in the level of the basketball skills, attitude evaluation, basketball anticipation, possible injuries etc.

On specific time intervals, coaches should update these files and make comments on the athletes’ performance and development. Recipients of the records kept and progress achieved should definitely include the young players’ parents.

As suggested in the following chapters of this drill book, coaches can create a monthly program to record what they want to teach and, at the end of each month, fill each specific document under their review.

Structure and strategy at the training level, requires Coaches to prepare and always bring in the basketball court a printed copy of the practice program. This should include one particular focus point to be worked during the session from the warm up until the scrimmage at the end.

The daily practice program should always include conditioning drills to be performed after the warm up, introduced by the athletic trainer who prepares them in line with the needs of each age group.

Coaches should arrive at least 15 minutes before the practice begins. We also ask from the players to arrive 10 minutes ahead, be mentally ready and have their basketball shoes tied when entering the court, ready to begin working out.
In further details, every practice session should be divided in 6 equal parts (of 10-15 minutes each, depending on the overall duration of the practice, i.e. 60-90 minutes) plus a seventh part which will include endurance exercises, stretching and recovery. A short description of each section is given below:

Part 1 /1st to 10th min or 1st to 15th min
The first ten minutes of each practice session will be devoted to footwork in combination with finishing (emphasis given at stride stop and the right technique). Movement can start from baseline, elbow, close out offense from corner, close out offense from 45, close out from the top with the use of low blocks, ladders, balance and medicine ball.

Part 2 /11th to 20th min or 16th to 30th
Focus in the second section minutes is on the development of ball handling in combination with footwork drills and finishing moves with lay up or shot after dribble. To facilitate each drill we can use cones, barriers, chairs, two or three tennis or basket balls and move to combinational exercises with separation drills and half spin moves.

Part 3 /21st to 30th min or 31st to 45th
The third part of our practice session, focuses on the development of the correct shooting technique of each player. At this part we can also combine footwork and ball handling drills, while procuring small rims, which will be placed above the rims and oblige the players to perform curvy shots.

Part 4 /31st to 40th min or 46th to 60th
In the fourth part of the practice session players practice one on one game with their faces on or their backs towards the basket. These drills can be practiced at full basketball court, at the half, at the sidelines, at the high post or at the low post area. It is important to emphasize that drills are both offensive and defensive and both players (offender and defender) should act according to the principles and goals that each coach has previously set.

Part 5 /41st to 50th min or 61st to 75th
The fifth part of our practice session is devoted in working on whole part whole (defensive and offensive) 2 on 0 to 4 on 4. At this point players should work on situations such as penetration and extra pass, spacing, pass and cut, backdoor play, screen away from the ball, screens on the ball, hand off and low post action. Drills are both defensive and offensive.

Part 6 /51st to 60th min or 76th to 90th
At the last part of our practice session, players work 5 on 0 and 5 on 5 games. The work goes over the same situations as in the part 5 (penetration and extra pass, spacing, pass and cut,
backdoor play, screen away from the ball, screens on the ball, hand off and low post action. All drills are both offensive and defensive and can be performed using full court, half court, depending on how much the coach wants players to run.

After the end of the practice session, at least 10 to 15 minutes, depending from the players’ age, have to be dedicated on conditioning and recovery exercises such as sit-ups, pushups and stretching. These drills can be performed at the sidelines.

**ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF COACH FOR PLAYERS OF DEVELOPING AGE**

The Coach is one of the most important figures that can affect not only the players’ performance in the basketball court but also their overall mental and physical health.

Especially the development age players’ coach determines to a substantial extent the acquisition of sporting and basketball skills (dribbling, passing etc.) and participates in the development of psychological skills (self-esteem, sense of competence, etc.), determines whether the young athlete reaps positive or negative experiences from organized sports activities and obtains the motivation to try to become better (not just in sports, but generally in life)!

The ability of a coach to create proper conditions in order to develop the right psychology for his players in practices and games is a foundation for achieving high performance. Moreover it has been proved that a coaches’ behavior during both practice and games, is an extremely important factor of successful performance.
The frequency and quality of feedback has a strong impact on young players.

Behavior that emphasizes on encouraging players in combination with the use of instructions and correction of errors, are more preferable by players and assist them in order to give their best and succeed.

From the other side of the spectrum, there is the use of negative criticism, usually combined with neglecting towards the players. All these behaviors lead to opposite results and discourage players.

But the most crucial factor, in order to achieve the best possible practice for the young players, is the ability of the coach to be aware of the impact that his behavior has on children.

It is noteworthy, the fact that many coaches do not remember their behavior during practice or game.

Sports psychologists in their research record reduced ability of coaches to understand the psychological state of players. They emphasize the fact that the coaches only remember part of their own behaviors and also said that they tend to believe that their behavior towards their players is more encouraging and supporting than it actually happens.

In other words, according to research data, many coaches behave differently during practice and game, than they believe. Self-criticism and desire to become better is the only way to overcome such problems.

We should also refer to some basic rules which govern the relationship between coaches with their young players, regarding the team’s daily operation:

**ERROR CONFRONTATION**

The rules for the correction of a mistake made by a young basketball player are

- Correct the mistake as soon as it happens
- Explain what exactly was wrong
- Provide short and clear instruction on what we consider right

When coaches resort to yelling and punishments after mistakes, especially those that are often repeated, they should be aware that:

Children have no clear understanding of the mistakes they make. The fact that the coach has detected the error, does not mean that the athlete has perceived it with equal clarity.
Not all children have the same capabilities, so from our side as coaches we should personalize our behavior towards each athlete.

By punishing an athlete we may achieve immediate results, but in the long term the consequences of this tactic are negative. We increase our players’ anxiety, we reduce their self-esteem, limit their confidence about their abilities and we produce players whose main goal is not to make mistakes rather than improving their performance.

DEVELOPING TEAM’S COHESION

Solidarity and support among the members of team on a daily basis both inside and outside the basketball court are basic ingredients in order to build team spirit and what a team needs to succeed. Coaches should be the first to set an example for such behavior.

CLEAR BEHAVIORAL RULES

Setting clear behavioral and operational rules is necessary, because players should be aware of what they are allowed to do and what not.

We have to bear in mind that young players are willing to obey to rules when they:

- took part when they were first put in place, and
- Commit publicly to comply.

DEVELOPMENT OF COACH’S BEHAVIORAL PERCEPTION

An important limiting factor of a coach’s success in the work is the difficulty of having a precise perception of the kind, type and quality of the feedback he/she offers to his/her players. In addition, it is much more difficult for a coach to understand the effect that he has to young players’ psychology and performance.

Receiving feedback regarding our own behavior inside the court from our players or the assistant coaches could be a very useful source of information.

Furthermore, self-evaluation of our coaching behavior (e.g. with video recordings and analysis of our workout) could prove very useful to improve our effectiveness as coaches of players in the developmental stages.
COACH’S INDIVIDUAL QUALITIES

If we want to put in order the goals that a coach should have given his/her individual characteristics, the following six elements are essential:

- encouraging players
- strengthening the cohesion of the team
- boosting players’ self-esteem and perception of ability
- reducing anxiety during practice and game
- minimizing the percentage of young players’ quitting the sport
- Improving the perception of coaching behavior both during practice, and games.

COACH’S GOALS INSIDE THE TEAM

- Create a pleasant atmosphere during practice
- Positive approach, behavior and attitude towards anything that happens
- Confront individuals and situations with a humorous way and not ironically
- Show an understanding for players and the problems they may encounter
- Create a motivational environment so that everyone gives their best
- Support players when they need it.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER

Focus on the effort and not winning

Teach our young players that fun and pleasure in sports comes from giving their best at each practice and game.

In conclusion we have to learn, care and pay attention on how players perceive our own behavior. Obviously the goal of all coaches is to create better players, but in order to achieve that we have to be aware of the effect that the way we behave has on them. We should not forget that researches have shown that young players prefer to play for coaches who give regular instructions about their performance in practice, correct their mistakes and encourage their efforts at the same time.

Nobody should forget that children between the ages of 8 to 17 prefer to be part of a team in which they play and lose rather than being at the bench of a winning team.
PART B’ – WORKOUT PLAN
Basketball is one of the most dynamic sports games. From the player, it requires the ability to oppose, gain better speed, explosive strength, agility, balance, vertical jump, good movement with the ball and without, throwing the ball into the basket with precision, performance of technical and tactical tasks, and above all intelligence. According to Gabrijelic 1977th, basketball is a complex sport that consists of complex and simple motions in terms of cooperation, collaboration, performed by members of the team in the game. The main goal of basketball is to throw the ball in the opponent's basket, and prevent the opposing player from winning or throwing the ball in the basket. In their essence and structure of the game favored by players of certain anthropological characteristics and motor abilities, especially situational motoric (Tocigl, 1998). Basketball is, therefore, (Trninić, 1996) a game of bases, game of movements, habits, mistakes, balance, reflex, a game of reaction, the cooperation and communication, timing, the triangle plays, support, opening and closing holes. It is also individual and collective game, game details and finesse, arranged in a series of tasks.

In different ages we try to improve strength using body weight and light gear. The main objective is aerobic condition which we improve indoors with various running drills. Below are some drills to help young players mobilize their bodies.

**ENDURANCE (AGES 5 TO 7)**

In these ages it is important to make the young players feel comfortable. Many young players don’t apply mobility in those ages and they can’t perform exercises of high intensity. Therefore we care so they just perform the exercises any way they can.
ABS
1 Sit ups + tennis balls
2 Pairs, block legs, ball exchange
3. Sitting running

LOWER BACK
1 Low back raise + tennis ball roll under
2 Low back raise + extended hands + tennis ball
3 lay down position + dribble away by 10, 5, 2, 1 + switch hands

STEP UP
1 by one on the step
2 by one, side step, up and down
3 by one, side step, up and exit from opposite side

JUMPS
1 16 cm stride stop
2 frog jumps front from baseline to baseline
3 By two legs, jump on the step, exit from opposite side

OVER BODY (bands A)
1 Flies/ biceps
2 Flies/ triceps
3 Basket Ball throws (wall ball, slam ball)

SPEEDING
1 ball relay
2 ball relay diagonally
3 two triangles + box on the middle (change of pace, change direction)

ENDURANCE (AGES 7 TO 9)
In that age the mobility is much higher and the capability of performing much harder exercises. The objective is still the aerobic capability but now we can start loading the system with higher tension exercises.
ABS

1 Sit ups + tennis balls
2 V abs + raise legs + tennis balls
3 Sitting running

LOWER BACK

1 Low back raise + basketball roll under
2 Low back raise + extended hands + basketball
3 Lay down position + dribble away by 10, 5, 2, 1 + switch hands

STEP UP

1 By one on the step + light medicine ball
2 Step up jump (by one leg)
3 By one, side step, up and down

JUMPS

1 16/25 cm two legs jump
2 Frog jumps front from baseline to baseline
3 Step, by one, side step, up and exit from opposite side

OVER BODY (bands A)

1 Flies/ biceps
2 Flies/ triceps
3 Basket Ball throws (wall ball, slam ball)

SPEEDING

1 Ball  2 Ball relay diagonally
3 Two triangles + box on the middle (change of pace, change direction)
ENDURANCE (AGES 9 TO 11)

In these ages the young players can perform a lot more difficult exercises and with significant higher tension. We load more the legs for strength and we use small intervals.

ABS
1 Sit ups + basket balls
2 V abs + raise legs + basket balls
3 Sitting running

LOWER BACK
1 Low back raise + basketball roll under
2 Low back raise + block legs, extended hands + basketball
3 Lay down position + dribble away by 10, 5, 2, 1 + switch hands

STEP UP
1 by one on the step + medicine ball
2 Step, by one, side step, up and exit from opposite side
3 Jump down from box 40, then jump up to box 60, two legs

JUMPS
1 Stairs frogs (two legs)
2 Front frog jumps from baseline to baseline
3 Stairs, by one leg

OVER BODY (bands)
1 Flies/ biceps, flies /triceps
2 Basketball pushups
3 Basket Ball throws (wall ball, slam ball)

SPEEDING
1 Ball relay diagonally
2 Speed with resistance bands
3 two triangles + box on the middle (change of pace, change direction)

ENDURANCE (AGES 11 TO 13)
In these ages players compete in teams and we start having contact drills. Players must be able to resist opponents’ strength.

ABS
1 Sit ups + medicine balls
2 V abs + raise legs + basket balls
3 Planking

LOWER BACK
1 Low back + ball roll under
2 Low back raise + leg block + medicine ball extended head
3 Lay down position + dribble away by 10, 5, 2, 1 + switch hands

STEP UP
1 By one on the step / one leg squat
2 Step up jump
3 by one on the step + medicine ball/Step up+ bands

JUMPS
1 Stairs frogs (Two legs, one leg)
2 Side jumps under the board
3 Follow with one/two balls, by one, or two players

OVER BODY (Bands β)
1 Flies/ biceps, flies /triceps
2 Basketball pushups  (on two balls/ roll the ball from hand to hand)
3 Basket Ball throws (wall ball, slam ball)

SPEEDING

1 Ball relay diagonally
2 Speeding with bands
3 Two triangles + box on the middle (change of pace, change direction)

ENDURANCE (AGES 13 TO 15)

In these ages the young players are capable to work in full strength. The objective is still aerobic capability, but the contacts in the games and the high sport ability is something we seek.

ABS

1 Sit ups + medicine balls
2 V abs + raise legs + basketballs
3 Planking
LOWER BACK
1 Low back + ball roll under
2 Low back raise + leg block + medicine ball extended head
3 Lay down position + dribble away by 10, 5, 2, 1 + switch hands

STEP UP
1 By one on the step / One leg squat
2 Step up jump
3 By one on the step + medicine ball/Step up+ resistance bands

JUMPS
1 Stairs frogs (Two legs, one leg diagonally)
2 Side jumps under the board/jump from low pox to higher box
3 Follow with one/two balls, by one, or two players

OVER BODY (bands)
1 Flies/biceps, flies/ triceps
2 Basketball pushups (on two balls/ roll the ball from hand to hand)
3 Medicine Ball throws (wall ball, slam ball)

SPEEDING
1 Ball relay diagonally
2 Sprints with bands
3 Two triangles + box on the middle (change of pace, change direction)

BALL HANDLING

One of the most basic aspects of basketball is the ability to handle the ball. Being a top ball handler is key to play in the point or the shooting guard spot, but being the best ball handler and dribbler that you can be has nothing to do with what position you play!

You can find players that can dribble not only two but four balls at once and keep control of all four balls. Also there are a lot of ball handlers famous for being able to dribble really fast, put the ball through people’s legs, and make people fall. Important detail: Only a small percentage of these maneuvers can be efficient at game time.

What really matters is to do the basic staff (crossovers, between the legs, behind the back, pull behind the leg, spin, half-spin, back dribble, and a quick in and out) as fast as you can. Catch, go hard one direction, counter, then pull-up or go finish at the rim.

Ball handling can be divided into three parts, setup, attack moves, and counters. There are many ball handling drills and we’ll present some of those in «Basketball player development” but remember that quantity is much more valuable than quality in this case.

The goal of every player should be to get the basketball into his hands as often and for as long as possible. The goal is to become so familiar with the feel of the ball that having one in
his hands should be as natural as breathing or walking. Then your eyes will be to the rim, to
the court or the stands, but never on the ball, then you will feel totally free on the floor,
capable to do whatever you imagine...

BALL HANDLING DRILLS

Two dribbles +crossover, under the legs, through the legs, behind the back 2) one dribble
+crossover, under the legs, through the legs, behind the back 3) Straight crossover, under
the legs, through the legs, behind the back
Ball – handling, use two basket balls

All the players have two balls and work on two dribbles+ crossover, through the legs, in-out, crossover-through the legs, crossover- behind the back.

Ball Handling plus tennis ball

Player 1, starts from corner, uses two dribbles to reach the elbow, then changes direction, drives to the middle, changes direction again to elbow, then he does stride stop and finishes (to change direction use cross-over, under the legs, through the legs, behind the back and to finish all 4 ways, (outside hand, same side layup, inside hand, same side layup, outside hand, reverse layup, inside hand, reverse layup)
O1 changes direction from both sides (use crossover, under the legs, behind the back, through the legs) at the cones and then finishes with stride-stop (4 ways) (outside hand, same side layup, inside hand, same side layup, outside hand, reverse layup, inside hand, reverse layup)
FOOTWORK

The importance of footwork and agility is underestimated today. The top teams focus on valuable practice time to developing their player’s quality of footwork, balance and agility. Every basketball player loves to practice dribbling, going to the basket, shooting the ball and in the past the majority of practice time, both as a team and individually, was spend on these areas. Now we understand that good agility and footwork allows all the other areas of the game to be successful.

Good footwork allows the players to get space for their shot. It allows them to beat their player to get to the basket. It allows the player to defend. Good footwork and agility enhances every aspect of a basketball player’s skills. It is the foundation of his entire game.

There is no quick and easy way to make it happen. It is all about spending the time to practice and put in the hard work it takes. In this chapter of “Basketball player development” we present basic drills that focus on using proper footwork in combination with ball finishing drills.

Solid footwork has nothing to do with a player’s athletic ability. Having great footwork has a lot to do with a player’s ability to stay on the ground and move on it correctly, rather than take off for a dunk.

Being able to destroy the balance of your defender with simple footwork and pull up for a mid-range jumper from the wing while using the backboard is not as glamorous as working on a killer crossover move using 5 cones, two tennis balls and weights on their wrists.
Proper footwork is key to success. Players must be able to move efficiently on the court, minimizing unwanted movement and learning how to use angles and length to gain an edge over their defender. Also, by training footwork on offense, players –the same time- are training their self to become better defenders.

FINISHING

Learning how to finish around the basket can add a lot of value to the game of every basketball player. How many times during a game does a player make a good move or the offense executes a play perfectly, but the player misses the finish at the rim? This actually happens more than you would think, but it can be prevented if you are willing to spend time working with your team on finishing around the basket.

Every coach needs to work with his players on a daily basis on some of the different finishes around the basket, and how to score through contact. The coach must teach players how you catch the ball, how you protect it, different options to score around the rim.

It is important be able to mix up your finishes between; floaters, runners, athletic finishes, left hand, right hand, scoop shots, etc.

As players begin playing against better opponents, getting to the basket and finishing with a score becomes more difficult. Defenders are bigger and more athletic, the risk for blocked shots becomes much higher.

Offensive players must develop a variety of ways to counter these potential problems around the basket and score as they get to the rim. Players must have the ability to avoid the steal and the blocked shot if they want to be consistent finishers at the basket.

Big part of the individual practice must be work on finishes and then execute the same moves under pressure. The level of ability to score around the basket against all types of defensive reactions separates the great from the good players.

The ‘Basketball player development” presents a series of drills that combines footwork and finishing to make it more interesting for the players, more effective and without spending valuable practice time.
FOOTWORK+FINISHING DRILLS

O1 starts with finger break from baseline, stops by stride-stop, finishes with left hand
O2 starts with finger break from middle, stops by stride-stop, finishes with right hand
Finishing

O1 starts with finger break from baseline, stops by stride-stop, finishes with left hand from the opposite side of the rim
O2 starts with finger break from middle, stops by stride-stop, finishes with right hand from the opposite side of the rim

Footwork and finishing

O1 uses quick-feet footwork moves (face to baseline) to pass over two blocks, then finger break and one dribble to reach the cone, then changes direction 4 ways - crossover, under the legs, behind the back, through the legs) stride-stop and finishes (4 ways- outside hand, same side layup, inside hand, same side layup, outside hand, reverse layup, inside hand, reverse layup)
O1 uses quick-feet footwork move (face to the middle) to pass over two blocks, then finger break and one dribble to reach the cone at middle post, 4 ways to change direction (under the legs in front the cone one dribble, stride-stop and finishes (4 ways, outside hand, same side layup, inside hand, same side layup, outside hand, reverse layup, inside hand, reverse layup)
Footwork and finishing
O1 starts with finger break from the side of middle, then changes direction (4 ways - crossover, under the legs, behind the back, through the legs) in front of the cones then stride-stop and finishes (4 ways - outside hand, same side layup, inside hand, same side layup, outside hand, reverse layup, inside hand, reverse layup)
Footwork and finishing

O1 starts with finger break from the side of middle, then changes direction (4 ways- crossover, under the legs, behind the back, through the legs) in front of the cones then stride-stop and finishes (4 ways- outside hand, same side layup, inside hand, same side layup, outside hand, reverse layup, inside hand, reverse layup)

**SHOOTING**

Shooting is one of the main factors that make difference in basketball and by far is the most important skill of the game. The fundamental skills of passing, dribbling, defense, and rebounding may enable you to get a high percentage shot, but you must still be able to
make the shot. Development of an accurate shot forces defender to play tight and become vulnerable to a fake, allowing to pass and drive.

Coaches that have shooters on the floor help everything work on offense even if you are having cold streaks on the floor. Just by having the threat of a good shooter stretches out the defense and causes them to cover more ground.

A large part of shooting is mental attitude. In addition to shooting skill, you must be confidence to shoot well.

Great shooters are made, not born. They were beginners at once and developed into pure shooters through dedicated practice.

Shooting is a skill you can practice by yourself. Once you understand correct mechanics, all you need is a ball, a basket, and an eagerness to be improved.

But it is also helpful to practice shooting under game conditions, including the pressure situations that occur late in a game.

Practice with a partner providing the defensive pressure of an opponent. Through this kind of practice you will develop shooting skill and confidence.

It is nice to have a coach to correct the shot when an individual is practicing, but the most of the job is done when the player is alone. So he must learn what he is doing wrong when he misses and be able to correct his next shot.

When players practice their shot they must follow the basic rules: You have to shoot every time in the same way. Proper footwork is essential. Put the ball on your finger pad, not on your palm, extend your elbow, keep your hand high until the ball reaches the rim. Effective shooting is coming like everything else in basketball, through hard practice and good habits...

Remind your players what they already know: Coaches want great shooters on the court. So good shooters get more playing time and this what every basketball player in the world cannot get enough of - Playing Time!

Also, teams that shoot at a higher percentage give themselves a tremendous competitive advantage. All other factors being equal, it’s obvious that the better shooting team will win. A tiny improvement in your percentage will contribute towards winning more games! The message is clear: You have to do everything possible to build up your team’s shooting percentage.
SHOOTING OFF PASS + FOOTWORK

O1 executes 3 times X-feet then runs over the block and performs again quick-feet, then runs to the cone2, picks-up the ball, stride-stop and shoot.

FOOTWORK AND PASSING

O1 starts from elbow, sprints diagonally to close out on the block, then repeat 3 quick-feet, slide moves over the blocks, runs to pick up the ball from the chair and finish, with stride-stop and spot shoot.

Footwork and shooting

O1 uses one and a half step (fake move to the right) then change direction, sprints around the cone number 1 then take the ball from the chair, stride-stop and shoot. Then O2 follows and does the same move from the opposite side.
O1 leaves the ball on the chair, sprints to cone 1, does one push-up, runs to chair in front of cone 2, catches the ball that O2 put on this chair, stride-stop and shoots. Then O2 follows and does the same move from the opposite side.

O1 leaves the basketball ball on the chair, then runs to the first cone, touches the floor, sprints to the fifth cone then runs to point X and does one push-up to the third cone, the ball from the chair, stride-stop and spot shoot.

O1 holds the ball at the triple threat position, and performs three times X-feet over the block, spot shot.
SHOOTING OFF DRIBBLE & FOOTWORK

Taking shoots off dribble is a very different than shooting off the catch. Players have to practice separately every specific type of shooting drills that involve the dribble. Situations like shooting off of a ball screen action, after using a combo move, or in transition, must be analyzed from the coach. Next step is to use drills like those that “Basketball player development” present and to work hard until the players learn how to shoot off of the dribble.

Using the dribble to score sometimes is not a good idea because it’s probably the shot with the lower percentage in basketball. The truth is that there are a lot of situations where being able to shoot off of the dribble can really add value to an offense.

There are moments in the game (like end of clock, or isolation situations) that defense gives no other option than to put the ball on the floor and attack, so it’s better to be well prepared for that. Of course, Coaches don’t want a team of players that only look to create off of the dribble for themselves, but many times they wish they have a player with that ability...

The ‘Basketball player development” presents a series of drills that combine footwork and shooting to make it more interesting for the players, more effective and without spending valuable practice time.
SHOOTING

O1 starts with finger break, moves from elbow to elbow,
Uses two dribbles, stride-stop with the inside foot to hit the ground first and shoot

SHOOTING

O1 starts with finger break, moves from baseline to elbow,
Uses two dribbles, stride-stop with the inside foot to hit the ground first and shoot

SHOOTING

O1 starts with finger break, moves from corner to elbow,
Uses two dribbles, stride-stop with the inside foot to hit the ground first and shoot
SHOOTING

O1 starts with finger break, moves from baseline to opposite elbow, dribbles, stride-stop with the inside foot to hit the ground first and shoot.
O1 and O2 use quick-feet footwork move (face to the baseline) to pass over two blocks, then finger break and two dribbles to reach the cone at elbow, stride stop and dribble pull up.

O1 performs quick-feet move over the blocks, then he dribbles to the cone, does a push-up with ball and then dribbles again to the blocks, changes direction (4 possible ways, crossover, under the legs, behind the back, through the legs) two more dribbles, stride stop and shots at the side of the cone.
SHOOTING OFF PASS + FOOTWORK

FOOTWORK AND SHOOTING

O1 executes 3 times X-feet then runs over the block and performs again quick-feet, then runs to the cone2, picks-up the ball, stride-stop and shoot.

FOOTWORK AND PASSING

O1 starts from elbow, sprints diagonally to close out on the block, then repeat 3 quick-feet, slide moves over the blocks, runs to pick up the ball from the chair and finish, with stride-stop and spot shoot.

Footwork and shooting

O1 uses one and a half step (fake move to the right) then change direction, sprints around the cone number 1 then take the ball from the chair, stride-stop and shoot. Then O2 follows and does the same move from the opposite side.
O1 leaves the ball on the chair, sprints to cone 1, does one push-up, runs to chair in front of cone 2, catches the ball that O2 put on this chair, stride-stop and shoots. Then O2 follows and does the same move from the opposite side.

O1 leaves the basketball ball on the chair, then runs to the first cone, touches the floor, sprints to the fifth cone then runs to point X and does one push-up to the third cone, catches the ball from the chair, stride-stop and spot shoot.

O1 holds the ball at the triple threat position, and performs three times X-feet over the block, spot shot.
ONE ON ONE DRILLS

OFFENSE 1 on 1
When we talk about one-on-one basketball moves the topic is individual offense and defense. Basketball is a team game but there is no way to build a successful team without players capable to perform in 1 on 1 situations, offensively and defensively.

Young players often receive the wrong message when they work individually. They forget that basketball is a 5 on 5 game and they start to play 1 on 5. Sometimes it’s so bad that 1 against 5 because even their teammates are like opponents to them.

We are looking for great personalities that they will have the skills to attack 1 on 1, but at the same time they will be unselfish and they will play for the team.

Triple threat position is the starting point for everything in basketball. From there you can shoot, pass, or dribble. Priority one is shoot, second is passing to an open teammate, otherwise dribble and try to create a defensive break through penetration. Important detail: If you put the ball on the floor once or twice then your new situation is dribble triple threat, because you don’t want to waste the time on 24 clock dribbling for nothing.

Every time that the offensive player catches the ball, must be ready to read the defense and execute with weapons like footwork, shot, pass and dribble. To be honest the most important of these skills is the shot otherwise you can’t play. If the defense doesn’t respect the shooter stays away from him and then there is no pass or somewhere to go by using dribble.

An offensive player can think shot and recover to a pass, he can also think shot and recover to a dribble, but he can’t go the other way. When a player get a pass and starts looking for someone to pass, he can’t realize that he is wide open. If he changes his mind and decides to shoot because he didn’t find another solution he will never score! That is because you can’t recover to a shot.

DEFENSE 1 on 1
Defense is a different story because defenders must be smart enough to react and anticipate the offensive opponent’s moves. Any good player can play defense if he is dedicated to his role. A winner will accept the challenge of working hard at the defensive end.

Defensive drills in practice must be done at game tempo so their players are able to react and perform well in real situations.

Every player must know his defensive priorities when he guards the ball a) No lay ups, protect the basket b) don’t give the middle, because if the ball is there no one can help without cost c) stay always in front of the ball, don’t gamble, don’t try to steal and create rotation e) play hard, don’t give to offense second opportunities

Coaches remind to their players how important it is to stay in proper defensive stance. It takes practice to happen. When guarding the player with the ball, defender must always put pressure on the user and a hand on the rock. The defensive player must anticipate the dribble and maintain a defensive cushion of at least a step. If the dribbler gets ahead of the defense the defender should turn and run, using a cross-over step to get back in position.
When the defender forces the dribbler to pick up the ball, he should try to prevent a good pass. Now the defensive player should be in a parallel stance with both arms extended as high as possible to force the lob pass.

All the 1 on 1 drills that we use in “Basketball player development” are designed with the players to execute in the same exercise both offensive and defensive role. We strongly believe that transition from offense to defense and the opposite is one of the most important matters in today’s basketball.

GOALS: 1 on 0, 1on 1

FACE TOWARDS THE BASKET

1. CHANGE OF PACE (5 SWEAT SPOTS)

![Diagram](image)

2. HALF SPIN / FULL SPIN

Emphasize on starting with finger break/ finishing by using both hands/catch the ball before the ball hits the floor

3.1. Finish 4 ways (stride stop, outside hand, same side layup)
3.2. Finish 4 ways (stride stop, inside hand, same side layup)
3.3. Finish 4 ways (stride stop, outside hand, reverse layup)
3.4. Finish 4 ways (stride stop, inside hand, reverse layup)

Back towards baseline

1.4 PIVOT + SHOT
2.4 PIVOT + CROSS DRIVE+FINISH
3.4 PIVOT+CROSS DRIVE+ UP AND UNDER + FINISH
Coach has two balls, O1 runs around cone 4, the same moment X2 touches cone 2 and sprints for close-out defense on O1, after the shot, the two players exchange roles, (O2 offense, and O1 defense).

O1 attacks to the basket around cone 2 +3 while X2 passes to the coach, sprints to cone 1 and works vs. O1 to prevent the layup, after the shot X2 curls around cone 1 to receive the pass from Coach, O1 touches the baseline and sprints for close-out defense vs. O2.
1on1

O1 attacks to the basket around cones 3, 4, 5 while X2 passes to Coach and then
Sprints around cones 6, 2 to stop O1, then X2 changes role and curls around cone 2
to receive the pass of C, O1 touches baseline and sprints for close out defense to X2

1on1

O2 curls around cone 4, C passes the ball to him and shoots. O1 chases O2 from behind to
Deflect his shooting action.
O1 dribbles around cone 3 and attacks to the basket while X2 O2 dribbles to cone 4, puts down his ball and sprints to protect the box, then X2 sprint to cone 4 to attack, O1 touches baseline and sprints for close out defense.

O1 starts from elbow, puts down his own ball, perform three repetitions of x-feet to the three point line and back, then sprints for close-out defense to the corner blocks, performs quick-feet, touches baseline and sprints to cone 2, picks-up the ball of X2, stride-stop and shoot, O2 is doing exactly the same moves and sprint to defend on the shot of O1, then sprints to catch the ball from cone 1 while O1 sprints to baseline and then runs for close defense to O2.
Coach holds the ball and he can pass either to O1 or O2, stride stop and finish, the other player is automatically the defender, X feet footwork and tries to block the lay up.

O1 rolls his ball to the cone 3 and sprint to pick-up his ball, (emphasis on footwork), O2 dribbles and sprints to cone 4, passes his ball to C and sprints to defend the shot of O1, then players change role, and O2 exits from cone to shot, while O1 sprints to baseline and then runs for close defense to O2.
O1 sprints and leaves the ball on the chair, then sprints back to baseline and runs again on the chair to pick up the ball and attacks. The same time O2 is doing the same move and after the second trip to baseline sprints for close out defense to O1. Then players change role, and O2 exits from cone to shot, while O1 sprints to baseline and then run for close defense to O2.
O1 dribbles to cone 2 and attacks, at the same time O2 passes to the coach, touch cone 3 and sprints to stop O1 penetration. Then players change roles, and O2 exit from cone 2 to shot (Coach passer), while O1 sprints towards the baseline and then runs for close defense to O2.

O1 dribbles to the cone 2, puts his ball down and sprints back cone 1, the same time O2 dribbles the ball from cone 3 to cone 4 and also puts the ball down, O1 sprints, catches the ball and attacks, while then O2 sprints from cone 4 to 3 and then close out defense to O1, then players change roles, and O2 exits to cone 4 to shot, while O1 sprints to cone 5 and then runs to cone 4 for close out defense to O2.
O1 dribbles from cone 1 to cone 5 and executes a drag-step, the same time O2 passes to Coach, touches cone 4 and sprints to defend penetration of O1. Then players change roles, and O2 exits to cone 3 to shot, while O1 sprints to cone 1 and then runs to cone 3 for close out defense to O2.
O1 dribbles from cone 1 to cone 3 for the pull up jump, at the same time O2 passes to Coach, touches cone 1 and sprints to defend the shot or the penetration of O1. Then players change roles, and O2 exits to cone 4 to shot, while O1 sprints to cone 1 and then runs to cone 4 for close out defense to O2.

9) Coach holds two balls, O1 runs to the cone 1 to receive the pass from Coach and at the same time O2 closes out to cone 1 to defend. Then players change roles, O2 touches the baseline and exits from cone 2 to shot, while O1 sprints to baseline and then runs to cone 2 for close out defense to O2.
Coach holds two balls, at the same time O1 and O2 start to do x-feet on the blocks then touch the baseline cone and sprint diagonally to the elbow, Coach can pass to each one, Then players change roles, and O2 exits to cone 2 (at the right side) to shot, while O1 sprints to cone 3, then O1 is the defender Vs. O2 run to cone 4 for close out defense to O2.

Coach hold two balls, while O1 and O2 execute quick feet move, then O1 runs to cone 1 to receive the pass from Coach and the same time O2 close out to cone 1 to defend. Then players change roles, O2 touch baseline and exit from cone 2 to shot, while O1 sprint to baseline and then run to cone 2 for close out defense to O2.
O1 dribbles from cone 1 to cone 3 for the pull up jump, at the same time O2 passes to Coach, and sprints to cone 3 to defend the shot or the penetration of O1. Then players change roles, and O2 exits to cone 4 to shot, while O1 sprints to cone 1 and then runs to cone 4 for close out defense to O2.
Coach holds two balls, while O1 and O2 execute quick sprints to the corner and set strong baseline cut to the basket. Coach can pass to any player, the player without the ball is automatically the defender, then players O2 and O1 touch again the corners and C passes the ball to any player he wants.

2 ON 2 DRILLS

When we are working on the individual player development, it is crucial to improve teamwork, his ability to read the defense as total, to make sure that he knows what is going
on the whole floor. This is the reason why we use 2 on 2 drills in order to teach players how to move when they don’t have the ball the moment that his attacking teammate will work with the ball (dribbling, passing and shooting skills) to create a defensive break.

At the same time the defensive pair will develop their shadowing, zone marking, and tracking ability as they try to control the ball, close out the attackers and finally win the defensive rebound.

The defender that is one pass away from the ball must constantly work to prevent his player from receiving the ball or cutting toward the basket for the shot. When the defender is one pass away from the ball he should place himself between his opponent and the basket.

He should be at least one arm’s length away and make sure one hand and foot are in the passing lane at all times. The defensive player must continually adjust his stance as his opponent moves or the ball moves so that he maintains the defensive triangle.

All the 2 on 2 drills that we use in “Basketball player development” are designed with the players to execute in the same exercise both offensive and defensive role. We strongly believe that transition from offense to defense and the opposite is one of the most important matters in today’s basketball.
then they sprint back to the baseline and back to the cones, O1 + O4 are teammates and attack, X2+X3 talk and defend, then they change roles.

2on2 Close out defense from O1 to O2 (both 1 are defenders) at the elbow + corner (Baseline 1 pass to 1 at the top and sprint diagonally to defend)
O 1 passes the ball to O2 and sprints to play close out defense on O 3. O2 passes the ball to O3 who attacks. Player O3 attacks to the basket and player O 4 plays defense while waiting under the basket.
Coach holds a ball, while O1 goes to the basket, X2 tries to steal the ball from behind and X3 attacks to block the lay-up of O1. Then O3 curls outside from the opposite elbow to receive the pass of C and X2 touch the diagonal cone + sprint for close out defense.

Player O1 passes to O2 and runs opposite to defend O3 player no 3 to play close Out defense. O2 after the pass to player O3 runs to cover defensively player no 4. Player O3 attacks the basket and player no 4 try to receive the ball.
Coach passes the ball to the player 1 and then the player (2) who is on the same side with player 1 becomes offense, the other two players who are on the other side of the court become defense, then play 2on2.
With C’s order X1 runs fast towards the coach to press the ball, while X2 is in ready position to see where C is going to pass. As soon as the pass occurs, X2 does a close out to stop the offender and X1 returns to helping position as the last defensive player. The two defenders have to talk to each other to decide who marks the ball and who assists while the main defensive goal is to keep the ball away from the middle.

C is the passer, O5 sets a screen for O4 and opens to the charity line. The defense players have to communicate and deny the entry pass in the paint, also they should check the upper side. If the ball goes at the low post the defender denies the middle.

OPTION 2: players of the same height can change in that screen as long as there is communication between them and in every change they should be able to defend in front of the new player.
2 on 2 + C defense vs. back pick

C is the passer, O4 performs a back screen for O2 and opens towards the low post. The respective defensive players have to talk, forbid the pass inside the paint, do not allow the screener to perform a back pick exactly where they want to. If the ball goes to the low post, the defender forbids the middle.

OPTION 2: players of the same height are allowed to change in that screen, as long as there is communication and in every change, both defenders, should be able to defend in front of the new player.
2 on 2 + C defense vs. down pick

C is the passer, O4 performs a down screen for O2 at the weak side and opens to the low post. The respective defensive players have to talk, forbid the pass inside the paint, do not allow the screener to do the pick exactly where they want him to. If the ball goes to the low post the defender has to forbid the middle.

OPTION 2: players of the same height are allowed to change in that screen, as long as there is communication and in every change, both defenders, should be able to defend in front of the new player.

2 on 2, COVERING AFTER SIDE BREAK

O1 begins with an advantage because X1 is defeated in defense on the ball. O1 penetrates from the side, while X2 help early and X1 sprints to the weak side to deter O2’s lay up
2 on 2 with offensive advantage

O1 starts behind the cone, just a little bit upper from the 45° and has the right to attack to the basket only after he has passed with a quick dribble the cone placed at the opposite side, also at 45°. X1 starts at the same time, his goal is to pass behind the cone which is placed at the opposite low post and defend to O1. At the same time X2 and O2 move vertically and after they pass behind the cones and go to the weak side they also participate in the drill.

2 on 2+ C, defense at low post.

C is the passer and X5 plays hard overplay to 05, O4 predicts the defense and performs a flash at the peak to get the ball and feed 05 who changes his angle and moves from the one low post to the other. X5 continues to defend from the front side while X4 presses the passer.

TOUGHNESS

Can coaches teach toughness in basketball? Of course! It is what you preach to your players and then what you practice that makes players tough mentally and physically! There are rules that each individual must follow for staying alive in such a competitive environment as the basketball floor. Maybe the most important rule is playing. The most important play is
the next one. In order to be mentally tough, you must treat each game as if it’s the most important one. What happened yesterday, and what will happen tomorrow doesn’t matter.

Then players must learn to be uncomfortable. Kids must prefer to be uncomfortable because they know this is the only way to get better. This is how true mental toughness is developed. Push yourself past the initial hurt. Wake up earlier than you ever have and put in work. Greatness starts before the sun comes up. Be tough, be uncomfortable.

Third: There’s a difference between playing hurt and playing injured. Being hurt means you have discomfort, which will not lead to injury. Being injured means you cannot physically go. If we only played and worked on the days where we felt great we wouldn’t get much accomplished. It is that simple.

Eliminate excuses is also crucial. Be the person who accepts responsibility even if it wasn’t your fault. That is what true leadership looks like. Get the job done no matter what the circumstances are. Put a sign at locker room and write: “No Excuses, No Explanations.”

There are many more characteristics of tough players like to focus on what they can control, their attitude and effort. Forget your coach, boss, officials, or opponent. It’s also important to be in superior physical shape because fatigue can beat you. And a great sign of toughness is to ignore the officials. It is a waste of time and energy to argue with officials. They will never change a bad call and we all know that.

We talk with the players every day for staff like this and then we practice drills like those we present at “Players basketball development” with great intensity and conduct. We force players to dive for every ball, to chase every rebound, to play hard without any fear. In this way, at the end of the day, even when we lose the effort is there.

TOUGHNESS DRILLS

(Figure 1)

1) With the coach’s order, players are performing one, two, or three defensive steps in various directions which the coach indicates (one right, two left, three front, one back). When the coach raises his fist and makes the offensive foul signal, all players are falling down and backwards, just if they have closed the corridor and the opponent fell on them. (Figure 1)
2) C throws the ball towards the side line and O1 dives on the floor to save the ball, O2 supports him and runs in order to keep the ball alive. O1 stands up and sprints along the side corridor. O2 passes to O1 in order to score with stride stop and lay-up. Afterwards the two players exchange roles. (Figure 2)

O1 performs a drive from 45° and X2 from the weak side closes the corridor and wins an offensive foul. O3 rolls to the ball towards the charity line and X2 who has already stood up dives on the floor to get the ball and passes to O3 who scores with stride stop and lay-up. Afterwards players change one position. (Figure 3)
4) The first two players from each line pass to the coaches who are at the elbow. Then they ran to get the ball from coaches' hands, cross their legs and score with stride stop and lay-up. (Figure 4)

5) O1 holds the ball strongly and X1 is the defender, who tries to place his hands on the ball in order to steal it. O1 doesn’t have a dribble and he can only do pivot to protect the ball. This drill lasts for 15 seconds and then players exchange roles. (Figure 5)
6) O1 holds the ball strongly, but now there are two defenders to press the ball for 15 seconds. The offender cannot dribble and can only pivot to protect the ball. The offenders place their hands on the ball. After 15 seconds the players exchange roles. (Figure 6)

7) The offender O1 can only move inside the circle for 15 seconds and has to withstand the pressure of X1 who tries to lead him outside the lines. (Figure 7)

8a) O1 passes at the coach, the coach rolls the ball to the corner and player O1 catches the ball with slide in order to score with stride stop and lay-up.

8b) O1 now, instead of sliding, he performs an X-feet and dives on the floor to catch the ball before it goes out. (Figure 8)
The coach throws the ball and O1 runs to catch it by diving on the floor and those passes to X1 who scores (Figure 9).

(Figure 9)

(Figure 10)
10) O1 rolls the ball at 45°, he runs and catches the ball, then he does a drive from the baseline, X1 stops him and positions his body in a way that he will fall and get an offensive foul. (Figure 10)

(Figure 11)

11) Players 1-2 are couple as players 3-4. They both perform the same exercise in different sides of the court. They push each other with their elbows and arms, using their bodies, then two dribbles and shoot. (Figure 11)

(Figure 12)

12) Offensive player starts with the ball on the base-line against 2 defenders

• Coach stands at the mid-court

• Offensive player must maintain dribble against the 2 defenders, using crossovers and the retreat dribble, keeping the eyes up at all times

• When the coach raises the hand, the offensive player must make an attempt to make a firm, fat pass to the coach. (Figure 12)
13) X1 passes the ball to O1 and O1 shoots, at the same time X1 and X2 do a box-out at players O1 and O2 who jump for the offensive rebound, them whoever gets the rebound play 2 on 2 at the opposite basket. (Figure 13)

(Figures 14 και 15)

14) The coach passes to player 1 and X1 runs to stop him, as soon as player one changes direction and moves to the middle, X1 falls down for offensive foul. Then, player 1 performs a retried to the cone and moves towards the basket. X1 stands up and does an x-feet to the cone at $45^\circ$ and then he runs to stop player 1. (Figures 14 and 15)

(Figure 16)
16) Three players are moving inside the paint. The coach shoots and all three players go for the rebound. The game stops when someone manages to score 2 point (Figure 16)

(Figure 17)

17) X1 has to stop players 1, 2 and 3 once. Every time he wins a defense he returns to the coach’s ball and the coach passes whenever he wants and X1 does a close-out (Figure 17)

(Figure 18)

18) The coach throws the ball powerful on the floor and simultaneously four players jump for the rebound and X players do box-out. Then whoever gets the ball play 4 on 4 at the opposite basket. (Figure 18)
(Figures 19 & 20)

(Figures 19-20) Terrific drill for practicing passing, use of fakes and pivots in finding the open player

- 4 offensive players making a "box" around the key area
- 2 defenders in the box (the "birds")
- Offensive players must move the ball around the square, finding the open player as the defenders attempt to deflect the ball (Figure 19 and 20)

(Figure 21)

21) 4 on 4, 3 teams, each team plays at the half court and if they score they do the outlet pass and offend at the first half of the court against the same team, trying to break the press, as soon as the pass the center of the court the other team waits for them and continue the same drill. If one team loses the shoot them the opposing team becomes the offense and plays against the other team which waits at the other half of the court. (Figure 21)
22) This drill begins with 1 on 1 and after each effort, one player is added from the defensive team. – 1vs1, 2vs1, 2vs2, 3vs2, 3vs3, 4vs3, 4vs4, 5vs4, 5vs5. (Figure 22)

(Figure 23)

23) The coach throws the ball at the corner to the player O1, players X2 and X3 at the beginning of the drill are at 45° and at the elbow each, move offensively to make a trap. The drill develops as 1 on 2 to the opposite basket, or until the offenders manage to steal the ball and try to score at the fast break.
24) We have two offenders against three defenders. O1 does the outlet pass and O2 jumps sideways to receive the entry pass. Immediately players X3 and X2 make a trap at O2 and X1 jumps to the ball in order to forbid the pass at O1. The drill develops 2 on 3 till the opposite basket or until the defenders steal the ball and try to score at the fast break (Figure 24).

25) The drill begins 2 on 2 with the two offenders passing the ball to each other until the coach signals, then the offender tries a drive, the defender who is under the basket stops the penetration and the defender at the top (Figure 26) if the offense does not score, then O1 gives the ball back to the coach, who passes to the weak side at O2. Players X2 and X3 react in order to mark the shoot and close the rift by forming a new trap at the paint line.
27) We play 4 on 2 in box layout and the rules are that diagonal passes are prohibited and offenders who are at the elbow can only shoot the ball and not dribble. Players who are on the short corner can pass from the baseline and force the defense to close the center, in order to get help from the baseline. (Figure 27)

28) Live shell with 4 on 4 plus the coach! With coach’s signal the first player goes to mark the ball that the coach holds, he passes to the side and the rest of the players start to spin strongly. The drill develops 4 on 4 and when the defense gets the rebound, it tries to score at the fast break, while the offense has to return according to the rules of the offensive transition. (Figure 28).
OFFENSE: TRANSITION

At the last part of this book we present a simple swing offense that can be used in development ages in order to move the ball from one side to the other and give to every player the opportunity to contribute in the offense.

We insist on executing every option with full speed and we ask from players to reduce dribbling or even eliminate putting ball on the floor. Nothing will teach players more about spacing, passing angles, getting open, and making effective passes than not allowing them to dribble.

In this motion movement, screens away from the ball, middle and side ball screens, low post action when we feed low post and then 5 player movement according to the spot that the passer giving the ball is included.

This is the basic lay out of the offense (figure 1) and the formation with the ball side triangle the second trailer (5) at the top and a wing (2) at of side

(FIGURE 1)

Four passing options and corresponding automations (figure 2)

3 passes to 5 (swing)
3 passes to 4 (low post action)
3 passes to 1 (corner action)
3 passes at 2’s flash at the high post (pinch post action)
A: swing (pass at 05, transition of the ball at the weak side, 4’s screen at 3 and lock at the middle of the paint) (figure 3)

If player no3 does not get the ball at the middle of the paint, opens fast at the corner and player no5 screens at no4 and opens strongly at the middle of the paint while 4 moves towards the top (figure 4)
SWING: O1 gets open, O4 gives him the ball and the motion continues with the same sense, player 5 performs a diagonal screen for player 2. If player 2 does not manage to get the ball at the middle of the paint, opens quickly at the corner, then player 4 screens for 5 and opens strongly to the middle of the paint while player 5 moves to the top. (Figure 5)

LOW POST ACTION (WITH TWO GUARDS AT THE SIDE OF THE BALL). O1 gives the ball to 5 at the low post and cuts strongly at the middle of the paint, while O2 does the same thing from the baseline, giving to player 5 the opportunity for 2 passes. At the same time player 4 does a pick away for player 3 who does a substitution.
LOW POST ACTION (WITH ONE GUARD AT THE SIDE OF THE BALL). $o_3$ gives the ball to player 5 as the low post and cuts strongly to the middle of the paint, while $o_2$ does a substitution and comes at 45° at the side of the ball. At the same time $o_4$ does a flash at the high post in order to call the last offensive player away from the help and if he doesn’t get the ball, he does a pick away for player NO1. (FIGURE 7)

LOW POST ACTION: TRANSION AT THE BASIC LAY OUT. $o_5$ passes the ball to 1 at the top. Player 1 has two choices, he can either shoot or play 1 on 1, differently, he will pass at the other side of the court and he will run at the corner so that the team takes the basic positions again. (Figure 8)
CORNER ACTION: Player 3 gives the ball at the corner to player 1 and cooperates with 4 to create the right corner for a UCLA screen, away from the ball, in order to be free during his cut, while he has to be ready to pass the ball at the corner to player 2 if the defense reacts (Figure 9).

Player 4 after the UCLA screen at player 3, opens to the ball and receives the pass from 01 and the hand off, 01 can either shoot, pass or pass the ball to 4 for lay-up, or pass the ball to 5 for a high-low cooperation with 4 (Figure 10).
5 moves to the side of 2 and 3, player 2 as soon as 5 dribbles does a powerful movement for back door cut and 3 does a substitution to continue the game with new hand off and analogue cooperation between 4 who goes to the high post and 5 who performs a strong cut towards the basket. (Figure 11)

RESET TO BASIC LAYOUT: In the occasion that 5 wants to return to the basic game (swing), passes to the only player at the side and 5 respond immediately with pick away for 1 and then with a screen from player 4 to player 5. (Figure 12)
PINCH POST ACTION: If the defense reacts by playing overplay at the high post to prevent the transition of the ball, then the last offensive player of the weak side (O2) does a flash at the pinch post (at the weak side of the charity line). If player 3 gives the ball to player 2, then player 5 moves strongly behind his back to score with back door. (Figure 13)

PINCH POST ACTION: If 2 doesn’t catch the ball, then he does a back pick for 5, so that he is free under the basket and score from his pass. (Figure 14)
PINCH POST ACTION: 2 opens to the ball after the back pick and 4 and 5 do a staggered pick for 1. Right after the screens, 4 and 5 open to the ball while O1 is prepared to shoot as soon as he gets the pass from O2 (Figure 15)

PINCH POST ACTION: BASIC LAYOUT. In case that 2 will want to return to the basic game (swing), he passes to the only side player and fills the corner, 5 comes to the low post and 4 goes to the high post so that the game continues (Figure 16)
# DAILY WORKOUT

## EMPHASIS OF THE DAY

**DATE** .............................................

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<thead>
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<th>ASSISTANTS ROLE:</th>
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**notes:**
COACH REPORT/ EVALUATION

OF TEAM

Events, targets, objectives of previous period.

Training curriculum (fundamentals, transition, offense, defense, special situations,).

Evaluation of players (attitude, athleticism, skills)

Positives of previous period.

Negatives of previous period.

Incidents - Problems

Proposals for improvement.

Anything else you would like to add.
## Monthly programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>COACH</th>
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| FOOTWORK - FINISHING - HURDLES - LADDERS |

| BALL HANDLING - FOOTWORK - TENNIS BAKS |

| SHOOT (PULL-UP - WITH PASS) |

| 1 ON 1, (FACE - POST-UP) TOUGHNESS |

| COOPERATION (DEFENSIVE - OFFENSIVE (2 ON 2, 3 ON 3, 4 ON 4) TOUGHNESS |

| (5 ON 0) (5 ON 5) |

<p>| STRENGTHENING EXERISES - USE OFFINSTRUMENTS COUPERATIONS - GAME |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMY</th>
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<th>HOURS</th>
<th>EXERCISES</th>
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# TRAINING ATTENDANCE

| SURNAME | NAME | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
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**NOTES**

- **PRESENT**
- **V** Absent
- **X** Injured
- **T** Sickness
- **A** Game
- **N** Day-off
- **P**