



Attack

One of the biggest concepts that coaches moving to FIBA rules will have to face is the realization that all players need to develop attacking skills.

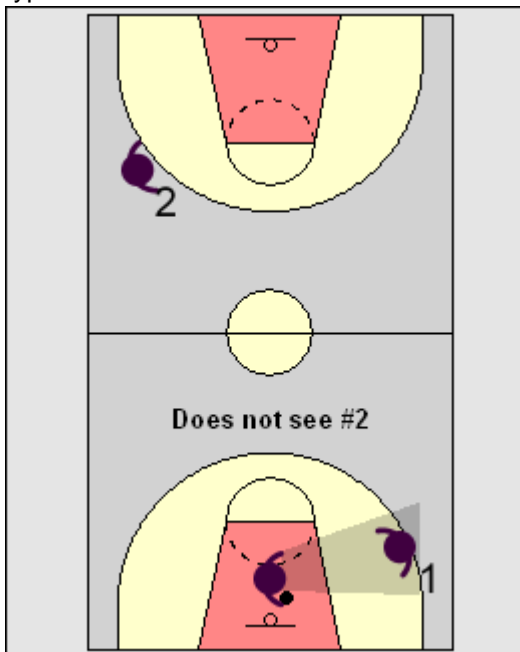
What are **Attacking Skills**?

1) In the backcourt these skills include the ability to:

- scan the rim
- stretch the floor vertically
- break out dribble or push the ball vertically
- pass the ball vertical
- deal with ball pressure
- make the right decision on when to use these various skills
- analyze advantage /disadvantage situations
- perform all of these skills at an ever increasing rate of speed

2) In the front court the player must be able to:

- scan the rim
- create a shot for him/her self or a team mate
- finish creatively
- pass creatively
- deal with ball pressure
- analyze advantage /disadvantage situations
- perform all of these skills at an ever increasing rate of speed, with a limited time clock and against all types of defenses

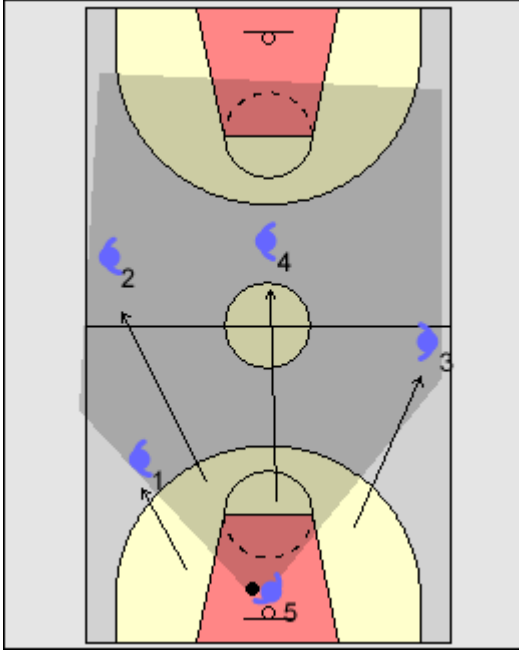


3) Back court

Scan the rim

Teams that only look for the point guard become easy for good teams to defend as the game progresses. It is very difficult to have one point guard be the sole ball handler for every possession of every game. Playing 40 minutes of every game is difficult enough, let alone being effective late in the game.

By teaching players to scan the rim they will see advantage situation immediately that they can exploit. If they are looking only for the guard first these may not appear.



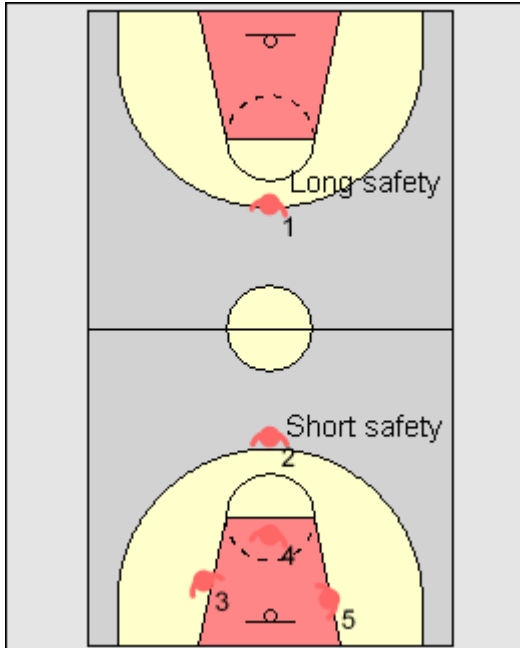
4) Stretch the floor vertically

When a rebound is secured and the rim is sighted the other players put immediate vertical pressure on the defense by sprinting vertically. They fan out to spread the floor. It is important that these players have been taught to run forward while still looking back over their inside shoulder.

Decision making now comes into play. The player with the ball must decide to

- throw long
- break out dribble
- pivot and look for a team mate to cut back to the ball

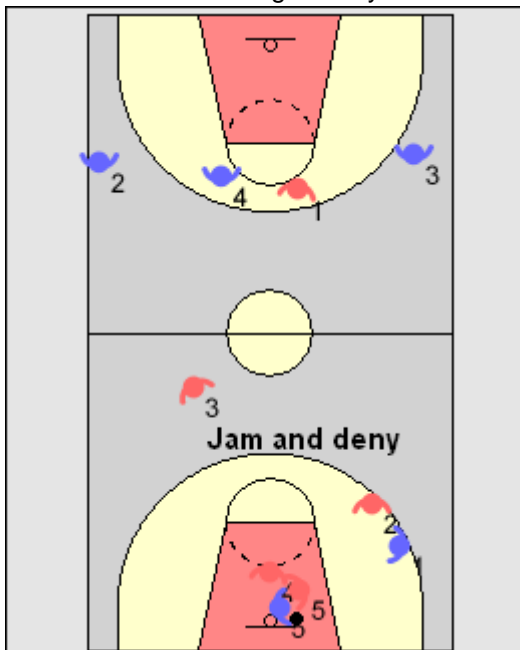
The other players must evaluate the situation also. You can still have the point guard cut back to receive the outlet.



5) Taking advantage of transition defense

Generally transition defense has been taught in a number of different ways:

- "get back" - everyone sprints back to the defensive 1/2 court and then matches the ball. This type of transition does not challenge the attacking team until the half court. If you push the ball you will find advantage since not all players will arrive at exactly the same time.
- Fan - in this transition the defense spreads out to meet the offense. It becomes like a zone press. The slower you attack the easier for the defense to set.
- Funnel - the concept here is to immediately find the ball and put pressure on it to direct it to spots advantageous to the defense
- Combination - these more complex transition defenses rely on a combination of fanning and funneling. The most common taught today involves long and short safeties.



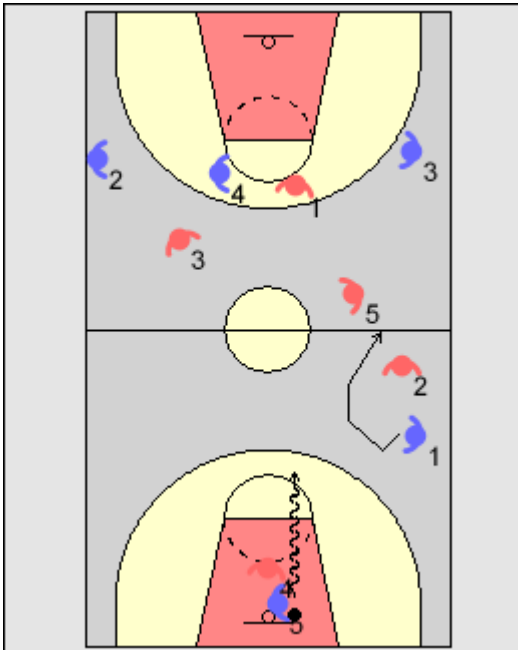
6) One of the major weakness of all transition defenses is the mismatches in numbers and in abilities

that can occur when teams run. Failure to run allows teams to begin to exert pressure on the ball immediately. In fact teams will even be able to deny outlet passes and set up 1/2 court and 3/4 pressure.

A vulnerable time for the transition defense is the time when the safeties (usually smaller perimeter players) are released by the retreating bigger players to apply ball pressure. It requires communication and coordination to for this to happen seamlessly.

Teams that fail to run or always use one player to advance the ball allow this to happen almost instantaneously. A team can leave their bigs to jam the rebounders and send a player to deny the outlet because they know there is no deep threat.

This puts instance pressure on the defense and forces the back line players to move backward. If you do not do this and allow these players to move forward teams get very good at building pressure. There is always that point when the defensive safeties must be released by the retreating interior players. The further down the floor this occurs the more space and less pressure the offense will face.



7) Teams that stretch vertically throw long or use break out dribbles move the release point to further down the floor, later in the transition. The safeties must move back first before moving forward. Teams may also have to designate fewer players to the offensive boards.

The advancing defenders now have to face an offensive player coming at speed.

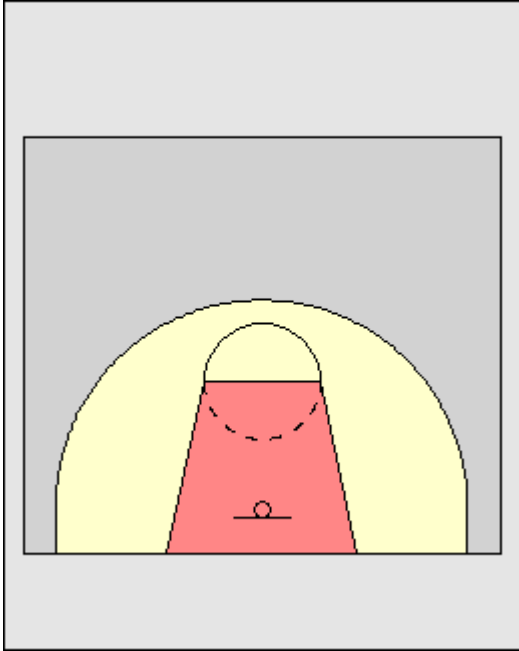


8) Front court attack

When the shot clock winds down another universal attack situation occurs. If teams begin to realize that players cannot attack late in the clock they become very good at disrupting the offense when these players have the ball. If coaches try to hide these players it can really disrupt your court spacing and the ability for others to create.

Teams will not guard a non shooter late in the clock who stands on the rim. Also a non ball handler who catches the ball will face extreme ball pressure.

The more players who can create shots and assists the harder to defend. One trend that we have started to notice internationally is that it is rare to have one player dominating the scoring. These players are too easy to stop over the long haul. It is the team that has a number of players averaging double figures that are tough to defend.



9) Analyze the situation

Players need to be able to analyze the situation

- What are my strengths
- How am I being defend
- Who are my teammates (strengths)
- How are they being defended

The player with the ball must know where the greatest advantage lies for the team. Ideally we want the player with the greatest advantage to have the ball to score. The key is having all players know what this is and how to get the ball to that player. When it is a late clock situation the is urgency is magnified.

Great teams seem to have the knack of not panicking in these situations and still getting off quality shots.

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