



## Mike Mackay – Manager Coach Education and Development

### Guided Defense

Coaches often complain to me that their players just don't understand the game. "I tell them over and over what to do, but they just don't get it" is an often spoken refrain. I would content that this lack of understanding is not the player's fault, it is in the way we, as coaches, teach the game. The hardest part of the game is the ability to read what is going on and make a decision. Many coaches, myself included, often simplified drills to the point where we eliminated the decision making for the athlete. We then expected in 5 on 5 complete games with many distractions the player would be able to properly execute the skills learned in total isolation. It just doesn't work. With this in mind we have implemented the concept of guided defense as a way to teach decision making to our athletes.

The purpose of guided defense is to:

1. Lead the offense in learning to read the defense.
2. Assist in decision making, do the hard thing first
3. Increase the mentality of the defense
4. Expose players to different defensive options

How is guided defense implemented?

1. The offense is given a read by the defense. The offense makes the decision based on what this read. The offense stays on offense a number of consecutive times. If you are teaching two reads stay offense three times. Once for read A, once for read B and once for a random A or B read.
2. Mix up the reads.
3. Start with two reads. As the players ability improves add other options one at a time.

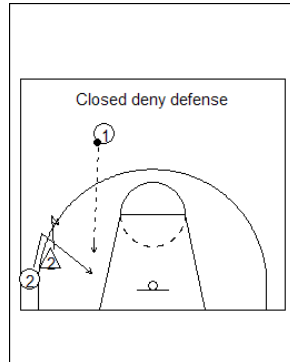
Example

Wing entry – the defense can play the following ways:

- a) closed sag – the defenders hand is in the passing lane – the offensive player blast cuts to get open



- b) closed deny – the defenders elbow is in the offensive players line to the ball – the offensive player back cuts to the rim



The offensive player stays on offense three times before switching.

As the players master these two maneuvers add other defensive reads;

- c) Open sag – the defender stays below the line of the offensive player in a help position – the offensive player face cuts to the basket.

