

The Difference between a great team and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will.

The price of greatness is responsibility.

Winston Churchill

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FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES OF SONIC DEFENSE

TEAM -- Before anything else, we are a team. We play a team defense and rely on each other to be effective. Each player on the floor has responsibilities, but the one constant is that we help each other to stop the opponent. In order for the team to be successful, we need the talent, energy and commitment of every player.

WEAKSIDE "I" -- Refers to the position of all the defenders on the weakside. The "I" gets its name because it is similar to the "I" formation in football. The "I" is the backbone of our team defense. The "I" allows us to be aggressive on the ball and all of our rotations are based on the positions within the "I". We refer to the players in the "I" as being at the top, middle, or bottom of the "I".

BALL PRESSURE -- We must be aggressive on the ball and pressure it as much as possible. [Ball pressure is one of the most important aspect of our defense.] If we pressure the ball and defend the ball and create problems on the ball, the rest of our defense becomes much more effective. Ball pressure multiplies the effectiveness of our team defense. [Offensive players do NOT like to be pressured.]

NO MIDDLE PENETRATION -- We do NOT want the ball penetrated to the middle of the floor. When the ball is gets to the middle, our defense can be broken down and it creates problems for all of our defenders. If the ball starts in the middle of the floor, we want to push it to a side. Once it is on a side keep it there!

SWITCHING -- We switch more than any team in the NBA. We switch because it is to our advantage. Our switching is an aggressive part of our defense meant to disrupt the offense's screening games and to take screening out of their offense. [Our switches are physical, contact, come together switches] [We switch to deny the passing lanes] and we [do not let the screener step to the ball (slip)]. This is NOT a soft or lazy defense. We do NOT switch because it is the easy way out but because it is the best way to defend most screens.

ROTATION -- We are an aggressive trapping defensive team that relies on all five defenders to get a defensive stop. [We rotate to the problem] regardless of who is rotating or how the problem occurred. [The nearest man rotates to the problem] and everyone else reads. Rotation is a key to all of our trapping schemes.

TRANSITION DEFENSE -- The transition game is the key to winning in the NBA. Just as we are committed to getting out and scoring easy baskets in transition, we MUST keep the other team from getting easy baskets in transition. Transition defense is a team defense and the responsibility of everyone on the floor. Teams do not want to play against our halfcourt defense and they will try to run against us. We have got to be committed to not allowing other teams to run.

BIGS IN - LITTLES OUT -- Whenever possible, we want our smaller players ("Littles") guarding out on the floor and our bigger players ("Bigs") playing in the paint. We do this by inverting stacks, by switching screens, and by putting our Bigs in the bottom of the "I" and our Littles in the top of the "I". When the Bigs are In and the Littles are Out, it does not matter who specifically any of them are guarding.

PHYSICAL and AGGRESSIVE -- (post, cutters, rebound) -- The NBA game is a physical game and this is a KEY to all our defensive principles. We must be physical and aggressive in all aspects of our defense. [We hit and bump cutters,] we battle the post ups, [we hit and slash the ball,] we hold up screens. We get after it and we don't back down!

DISRUPT -- Our whole defensive system is predicated on [disrupting the opponent's offense and not letting them run what they want to run.] We do not want them to run their. The more that we "disrupt" their offense, the more confusion, frustration and individuality enters their game. Teams do NOT win when they are confused, frustrated, and individualistic.

VERSATILITY -- We believe in our versatility. We want to be able to defend various situation in a variety of ways. We believe in having versatile players that can play multiple positions. We have 8 different ways to guard the Pick/Roll. We have 9 different ways to defend post-ups. We like to switch so that it does not matter who is guarding whom. We have preferred ways of defending but there is no one best way. What works against one player or team, may not work against a different player and team. [We MUST excel in a variety of ways.]

COMMUNICATION -- Communication multiplies the defensive talents of all of our players. We MUST communicate. We must know what defense we are playing or how we are defending various plays. We must communicate our switches, our whites, our GOs, our base GOs, our V-Backs, our inverts, our rotations, their screens, their cuts, their isolations, their plays, etc., etc. TALK! *SUBSTITUTIONS = KNOW SCHEMES, POSITIONS = WE HAVE HAD PROBLEMS WITH THIS AREA.*

OPPONENTS' OFFENSIVE SETS -- We are more prepared to defend than any other team in the NBA and we take pride in shutting down opponents' offensive sets. In our preparation, we divide other teams' offensive sets into four basic groups: 1) Pick & Roll Games, 2) Post Up Games, 3) Screening Games and 4) Isolations. All of our defensive preparation and schemes revolve around these four aspects of the offensive game.

REBOUND -- The purpose of all these defensive schemes to get the ball. We love to create steals and force turnovers, but the reality is that we MUST rebound the ball after we have forced the offense into playing poorly. Just like defense, rebounding is an attitude. For us to benefit from our defensive work, [we must finish our defense with the rebound.]

GUARD THE BALL -- The ball dictates our defense. Whether it is pressuring the ball, rotating to the ball to the weakside, or attacking the ball when it is penetrated, or defending the ball in transition, [it is THE BALL that is our first priority.] The ball is the responsibility of every defender.

VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

2 Back	See BackShadow.
2 Face	A full court defensive press where the man guarding the inbounder will roam and everyone else will 'face' guard their man to deny the pass. <i>CENTERFIELD, SHORT STOP, ROAMER</i>
Aggressiveness	See our Fundamental Principles.
Back Shadow	Also called 2 Back or 2B. A full court defensive strategy where a defender will 'shadow' the ballhandler in the backcourt. The shadower is usually a 'big' and guards the rebounder. He also can be designated. The backshadow can be a soft shadow to slow the advancement of the ball or an aggressive shadow to get the ball out of the guard's hands and possibly create steals. It takes time off of the clock and delays the offense from getting into their 1/2 court sets. <i>1. DELAY / SOFT</i> <i>2. DOUBLE TEAM EARLY</i> <i>3. JUMP SWITCH</i> <i>4. DOUBLE TEAM AT HALF COURT (UNLU)</i>
Ball Pressure	See our Fundamental Principles.
Ball Reversal	When the ball goes from one side of the floor to the other. We do NOT want the ball to be reversed. We want to keep the ball on one side of the floor. <i>PURE PRESSURE (COACH BWD)</i>
Ballside Shoulder	When we are guarding cutters and screeners, we want to hit and hold up the offensive player by attacking their 'ballside shoulder'. <i>BODY BETWEEN BALL AND CUTTER</i>
Base Checkpoint	The small mark on the baseline of all NBA floors 3' on each side of the NBA lane. This is the mark where we push sideline drives and lock up double-teams. This is as far as we want sideline drives to get. (See Court Diagram)
Base Go	When the defender playing the bottom of the "I" goes from weakside to StrongSide to attack a drive to the basket.
Bigs In- Littles Out	See our Fundamental Principles.
Blue	Physical, bumping and disrupting of screens (no switches).
Body Bump	Describes how we want all of our double-teams to occur. Both defenders in the double-team should close the distance between them and the offensive player with their lower body and press up against him. Also referred to as "Body F__k".

Close-out	When we rotate to the man with the ball. We like for our close-outs to be quick but under control and on the high side to deny middle penetration.
Communication	See our Fundamental Principles.
Contested jump shots	What we would like all of our opponents field goal attempts to be.
Cutters	A critical aspect of our defense is to [see, hit, and deny cutters.] If we are not alert and prepared to defend cutters, our defense will suffer.
Disrupt	See our Fundamental Principles.
Dive	A cut from outside to the paint (usually from the weakside).
Dots	The bottom half of the free throw circle. (See Court Diagram)
Double Fist	Half court match-up zone that begins with a 1-2-2 alignment.
Elbow	Where the free throw line intersects lane lines on both sides. We feel that this is one of the most dangerous places on the floor, therefore we want to [deny the catch at the either elbow] when ever possible. (See Court Diagram)
Fist	Half court match-up zone that begins with a 1-3-1 alignment.
Fist Up	An extended 2-3 half court zone designed to get the ball out of the point guard's hands, especially when the offense begins in the middle of the floor.
Flare	When a player at top of key receives a backpick and flares away from the ball to receive a pass on the weakside.
Get	Hand-off on the wing. (We usually like to double this when we can).
Go	A double-team on the ball.
Go from Base	When the defender comes to double-team the ball from the <u>bottom</u> of the "I".
Go from Top	When the defender comes to double-team the ball from the <u>top</u> of the "I".
Go on Dribble	When the defender comes to double-team the ball when the offensive player begins to dribble.

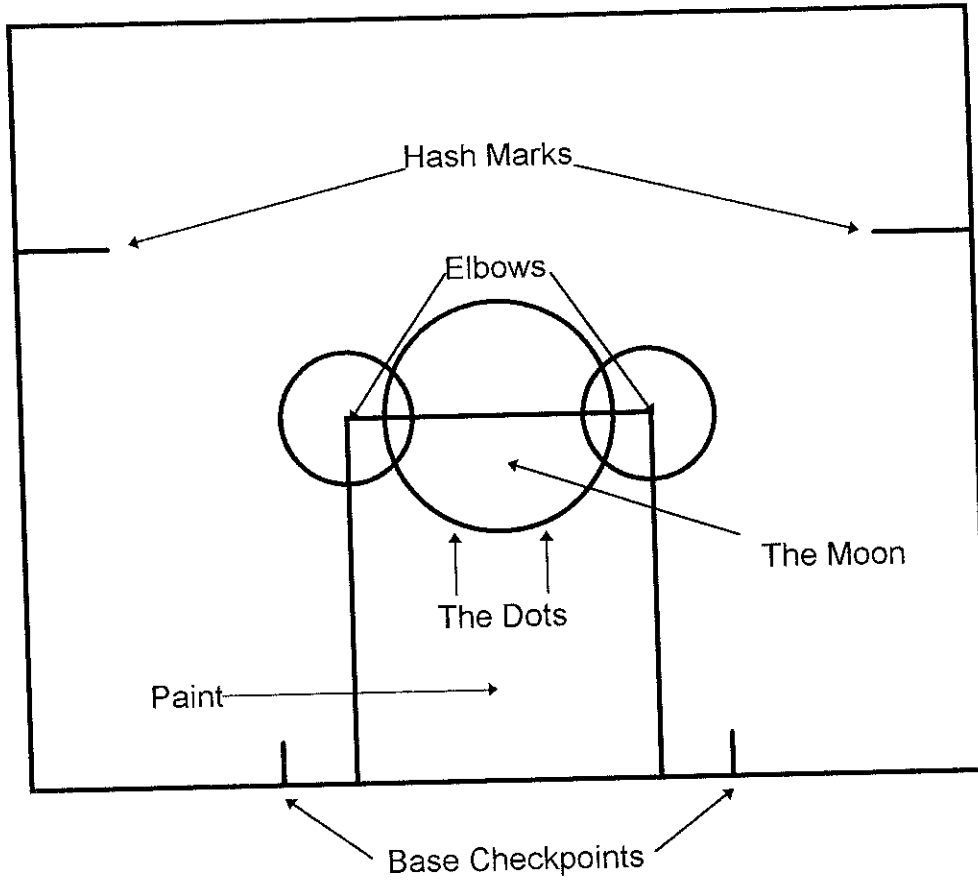
Go Roamer	When the defender who comes to double-team the ball is [designated as the 'go-guy'] or the [player who is guarding a certain offensive player.]
Gray Area	The area where the responsibility to cover is uncertain.
Green	Our half court defense where we look to switch as much as possible.
Hash Mark	The line on each sideline that is halfway between the top of the key and the halfcourt line. (See Court Diagram)
Hit Cutters	We do NOT let cutters go where they want to go. Hit them and be physical with all cutters.
Hit the Ball	Pressuring and slashing at the ball no matter where the ball is. The offensive player with the ball should always feel defenders hitting the ball whether he is passing, shooting, or driving.
"I"	See our Fundamental Principles. Also called the WeakSide "I",
Inverting	A technique used to keep our Bigs in and our Littles out., regardless of where the offensive players are. On the weakside, it means that our Bigs will be in the bottom of the "I" and our Littles will be on the top of the "I". We want to invert almost always on the weakside and when we can on the StrongSide.
Laker Red	A defensive scheme where we send a defender (usually for the top of the "I") to double the ball when it comes across halfcourt or lower at the hash mark. [The purpose is to get the ball out of the point guard's hands] to keep the offense from running the sets that it want to run, and to keep the ball from going where the offense wants it to go.
Lock it up	Whenever we get a double-team, we want to 'lock it up', especially with the lower body.
Middle Penetration	See our Fundamental Principles.
Mismatches	We do NOT believe in or worry about mismatches. Offenses tend to over-react to what they think are mismatches and they get away from what they want to do. We use all of our pressure defensive concepts and weakside help to take advantage of these situations.
Moon Rebound	Long rebound out to the dots.

Near Man Concept	When we rotate and scramble out of a double-team, [the nearest man to the 'problem'] (usually the ball) rotates to the problem and everyone reads accordingly.
Physical & Aggressive	See our Fundamental Principles..
Pick/Roll #1	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- [Aggressively switch the pick & roll.]
Pick/Roll #1 Red	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- As the switch (#1) occurs, the top of the "I" runs at the dribbler to double the ball.
Pick/Roll #2	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- The man guarding the screener jumps the dribbler as he comes off the screen to double the ball.
Pick/Roll #3	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- The man guarding the screener pushes the screener up and the man guarding the ball [goes under] both the screener and the man guarding the screener.
Pick/Roll #3 Red	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- The man guarding the screener pushes the screener up. The top of the "I" runs at the ball handler and the man who was originally guarding the ball goes to the "I".
Pick/Roll #4	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- The man guarding the screener goes to double the ball as the screener begins to come set the screen.
Pick/Roll #5	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- The man guarding the ball forces the ball sideline and does not let the screen occur. The man guarding the screener is off his man in a help position to guard against the dribbler driving to the basket.
Pick/Roll #6	When guarding the Pick/Roll -- The man guarding the screener lets his teammate [slide through the screen.]
Pindown	A down screen usually occurring when the offensive wingman screens down on the offensive player in the post.
Rebound the ball	See our Fundamental Principles.
Red	Usually meaning some double-team scheme (i.e. Laker Red)
Rope	As one defender goes to rotate, the other defenders are pulled to their rotation spot by an imaginary 'rope' that connects the two players.
Rotation	See our Fundamental Principles.

Run and Jump	Usually used in the backcourt, when a defender will run at the ball and stay with the ball. The man guarding the ball will release and rotate to the open man.
Scramble	When we rotate out of a double-team, [it is an organized scramble using the [near-man concept] and always covering the problem.]
Screening games	One of the three main areas into which we divide various offensive sets. The other games are pick/roll sets and post-up sets.
Sideline Push	When the ball is on a side, we want the defender to push the ball down the sideline and keep it out of the middle.
Slash	We want our players to 'slash' at the ball and 'hit' the ball, especially when there is a drive. We like position defense, but we really like slashing at the ball.
Slip Front	The technique we use to front (white) the post.
Slip Screen	When the screener fakes the screen and cuts.
Smother	In our transition defense, when the opponent gets a defensive rebound, we want the one defender who is nearest the ball to 'smother' the ball. This is to keep the ball from being quickly and easily outlet for a fast-break.
[Split Double-team]	When the offensive player, who is being double-teamed, steps through the two defenders who are doubling. This kills us! Come together and lock it up with your lower bodies.
[Squeeze]★	When the ball is in the middle of the floor with a player who is a driving threat, we want our wing defenders to get closer to the lane and squeeze the driving alley.
Stay	When we 'stay' with our men and do not double-team.
Stay Low - Switch High	A term used when we are defending the box-to-box screen. If the offensive player who is coming to the ball goes low, then we stay with our men. If he goes high, then we switch.
Straight	When we play 'straight up' defense. No switching, no doubling. Guard your man and keep him from scoring.
Switching	<i>See our Fundamental Principles.</i>

Trail	When a defender is being screened, he can trail (chase) the man he is guarding to avoid being screened. (Also called chase)
Transition Defense	See our Fundamental Principles.
Triangle (Chicago)	When the offense has a wing player with the ball, a post player, and a player in the corner.
V-Back *	Also called a weakside drop. When the bottom of the "I" goes to the StrongSide to help defend a drive, the next player up the "I" must V-back (or drop) and become the new bottom of the "I".
Versatility	See our Fundamental Principles.
WeakSide "I"	See our Fundamental Principles. Also called the "I".
White	Fronting the post.
YoYo	When the offense is set in a two-man game, the man guarding the offensive wing player goes back and forth between his man and the offensive post player.

IMPORTANT SPOTS ON THE FLOOR



THE WEAKSIDE "I"

Refers to the position of all the defenders on the weakside. The "I" gets its name because it is similar to the "I" formation in football. The "I" is the backbone of our team defense. The "I" allows us to be aggressive on the ball and all of our rotations are based on the positions within the "I". We refer to the players in the "I" as being at the top, middle, or bottom of the "I". Generally, we like for our Bigs to be in the bottom of the "I" and our Littles to be in the top. On the weakside, we do not guard men, we guard areas relative to the "I".

Diagram 1 refers to the most common "I", the 3-man "I".

X2 is the top of the "I" and is considered the free safety. In a 3-man "I", the top of the "I" has the freedom to roam since he has two players behind him. He is often the 'go-man' in our trapping schemes.

X3 is the middle of the "I". He is the Linebacker and reads the offense and defense. He is responsible for most cutters.

X4 is the bottom of the "I". He quarterback's the defense and may have the most difficult job on the floor. He must be alert to a number of situations which will be discussed through this book. ** LAST MAN IN DEFENSE + MUST SEE (9) PLAYERS / COLLEGE RULE AT UNLV - LAST W'SIDE MAN IN ZONE OR MAN.*

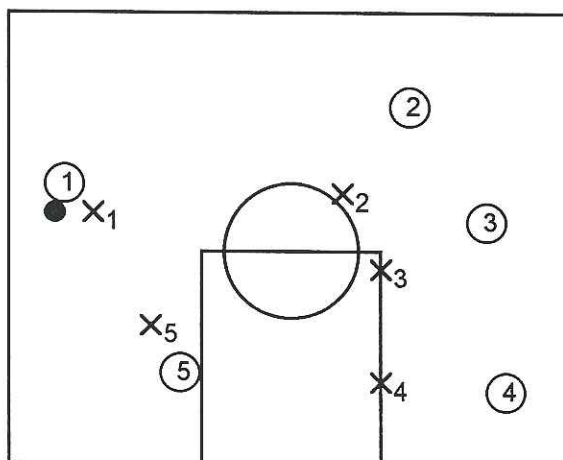
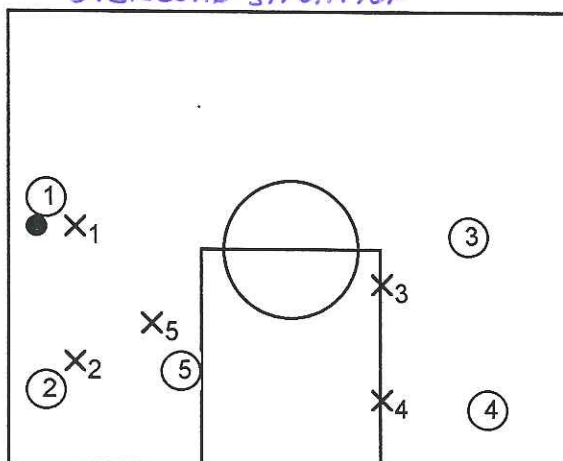


Diagram 2 shows a 2-man "I" which is the other most common "I". The 2-man "I" often occurs when we are trapping the ball, so that the 2-man "I" is guarding 3 weakside offensive players. The players in a 2-man "I" must be VERY alert to cutters and ready to rotate. The other possibilities are a 4-man "I", which means an isolation play or a 1-man "I" which often occurs when we have double-teamed and the 1-man "I" is caught guarding two players on the weakside. A 1-man "I" can also happen if there is an offensive overload.

OVERLOAD SITUATION



*OVERLOAD SET = GOOD WHITE (FRONT)
SITUATION FOR OUR DEFENSE. ALSO
90 90 34 GUARDS !*

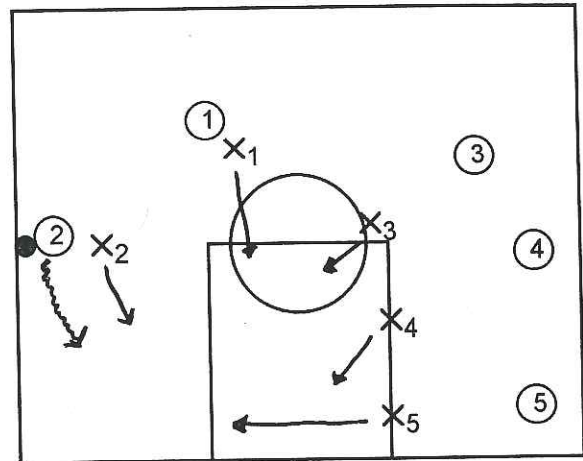
SIDELINE PUSH (NO MIDDLE PENETRATION)

The crux of our half court defense is that we push the ball sideline and keep the ball out of the middle. Our defense is more easily broken if the ball gets to the middle of the floor.

In this Diagram ,

X2 -- We want the player guarding the ball on the wing to apply as much pressure as possible and push the ball sideline [without getting beat to the basket.] The closest we want the wing drive to get to the basket is to the **base checkpoint**.

X5 -- The bottom of the "I" is in a position to see any problems on the floor. If X2 gets beat, X5 must **Base Go**. Base Go is when the bottom of the "I" goes to the StrongSide drive and locks up the double-team at the base checkpoint.



X4 -- The middle of the "I" must **V-Back** when he sees X5 base go. the V-Back is critical for weakside rebounding and automatically becomes the bottom of the "I". At the same time, X4 must be aware of weakside cuts and dives.

X1 and X3 -- When there is penetration that has caused a problem, we want all of our defenders to have a foot in the paint. When X5 goes, X1 and X3 must also V-back to the paint. Both are ready to rotate if the ball is passed out and they are both ready to hit any cutters to the ball.

X5 = SEE (9) PLAYERS = BETTER EARLY THEN LATE . STOP BALL OUTSIDE LANE = IDEAL AT CHECK POINT

X4 = SAFETY VALVE FOR X5 / TOUGH JOB MUST PROTECT FROM BEHIND AND GIVE X5 CONFIDENCE . ON SHOT HE MUST REBOUND THIS IS TOUGH PART OF HIS JOB.

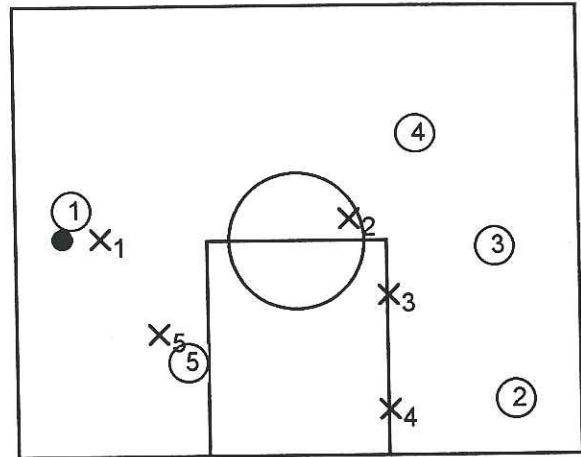
X1 / X3 = ROAMERS JAM LANE , STEAL PASS , HIT CUTTERS , READY TO ROTATE , REBOUND

INVERTING

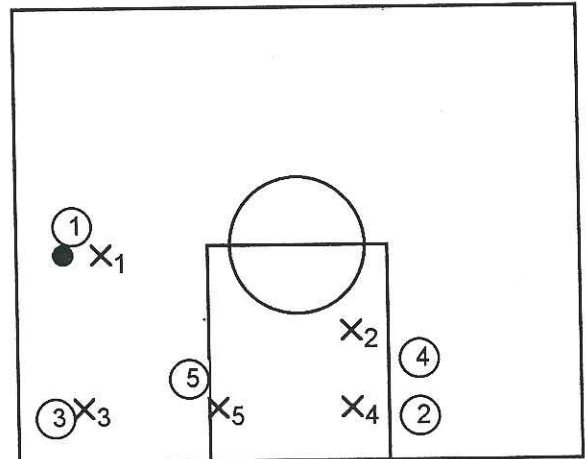
We will refer to inverting through this book. We invert to keep our Bigs close to the basket and our Littles close to the basket. We often invert the "I", regardless of which offensive players are on the floor.

In Diagram 1, X4 takes the bottom of the "I" even though he is technically guarding #2, while X2 takes the top of the "I" even though he is technically guarding #4. So here we can invert an extended "I". Regardless of the movement on the weakside (i.e. pindowns or exchanges) the Big stays in the bottom of the "I" and the Little stays on top of the "I".

** INVERT HELPS OUR WHITE FRONT DEFENSE. WE HAVE BIG X4 COMING TO LOB PASS.*



We invert all stacks (Diagram 2) and put the Big on the bottom and the Little on the Top. Defensive inverting means Bigs-In and Littles Out.



TRANSITION DEFENSE

Transition is the key to the NBA.

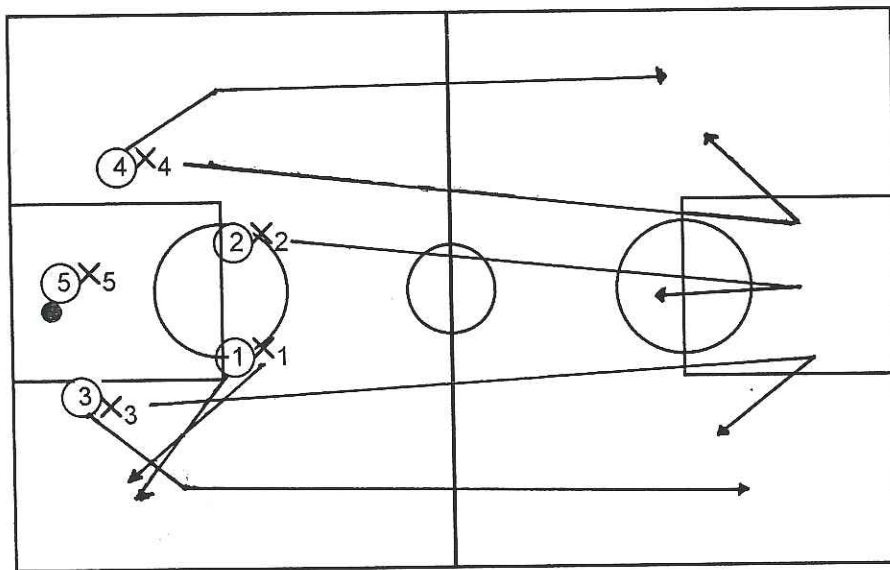
1. We want to score easy baskets.
2. We want to stop easy baskets.

Defensive transition is the ability to change from offense to defense quickly and within the team concept.

There are basic ways stop the fast break:

1. The #1 way to stop a fast break is to score.
2. The #2 way to stop a fast break is to attack the offensive boards.
3. The #3 way to stop the fast break is to **smother the rebounder** with the nearest man and prevent a quick outlet.
4. We want one of our guards to pressure or **deny the outlet** receiver.
5. The other guard should **cover deep** and give up nothing behind.
6. The other players should **sprint back** to the paint.

Once the initial break has been stopped we like to solve any transition defensive situation with: **PAINT -- PROBLEM -- MAN.**



When we are back on transition defense, everyone gets back (sprints) to the **paint** so that we do not give up any easy opportunities. Once the basket is covered, the near man goes to the **problem**. In transition defense, we do not cover our men, we cover our problems. . The problem is usually the ball (getting to it or stopping it), but the problem could also be a cutter or an open man. We are almost in a zone in our initial transition defense. Once the problem has been solved, everyone goes to their **man** (or areas in the "I"). Finally, everyone is a rebounder in transition defense.

PARTS OF THE WHOLE PHILOSOPHY

We break the offensive game down into parts and defend these parts within our team concepts and principles. There are hundreds of offensive sets that are run in the NBA and we will have a detailed scouting report on all of them, however, the vast majority of these sets can be broken down into smaller parts.

We will discuss in the following pages how we defend the variety of basketball situations that we will see in the NBA and how defending the parts remains consistent with our concepts and principles.

AGAINST THE LOB:

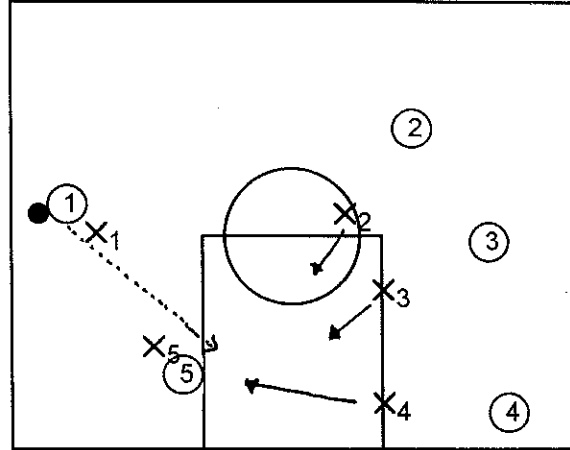
If #1 lobs the ball to #5:

X4 -- Must anticipate this and be into #5 as he catches the ball and double the ball.

X5 -- Stays with his man and doubles the ball.

X3 -- V-backs to become the bottom of the "I".

X2 -- Becomes the top of a 2-man "I".



NOTE: If the ball gets this deep, we want all of our players to have a foot in the paint.

BOX-TO-BOX

There are a few things that are constant in defending the box-to-box, regardless of which two offensive players are in the action.

1. It is a physical bump and grind battle where both offensive players have trouble going where they want to go.
2. Both defenders hit the **ballside shoulder** of their men.
3. We do not want the screeners to get an angle on their screen.
4. Once the offensive player gets to the StrongSide box, we are in a white, especially if we had to switch.
5. If the offensive player coming to the ball comes high, we can aggressively switch to keep our Bigs In-Littles Out principle.
6. We can and like to aggressively switch X2-X3 and X4-X5.
7. Force Cutter High --- Stay Low & Bump High

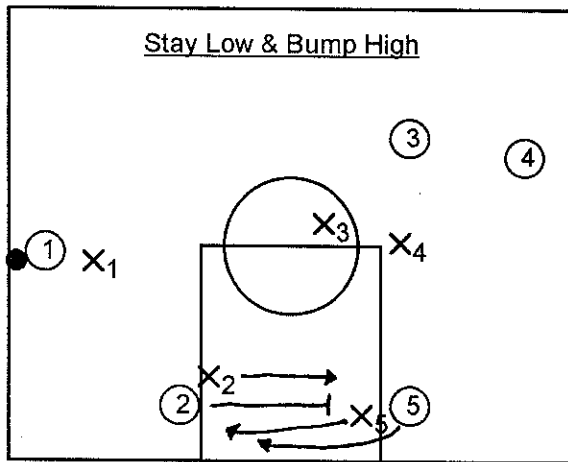
Little on Big

X2 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #2 towards the baseline and bumps #5 if he come high

X5 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #5 forces him high and pushes him higher than he wants to go.

X1 -- Pressures the ball and keeps it on the side.

X3 -- Has a foot in the paint and is ready to help if #5 comes high.



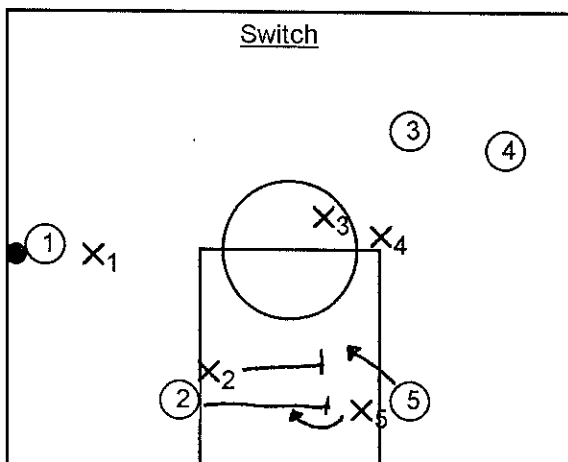
Big on Big

Guard it the same as above, but he can always switch X4-X5.

When we switch this, the man switching onto the screener must not let him seal in the lane.

Big on Little

Guard it the same as above.



CUTTERS

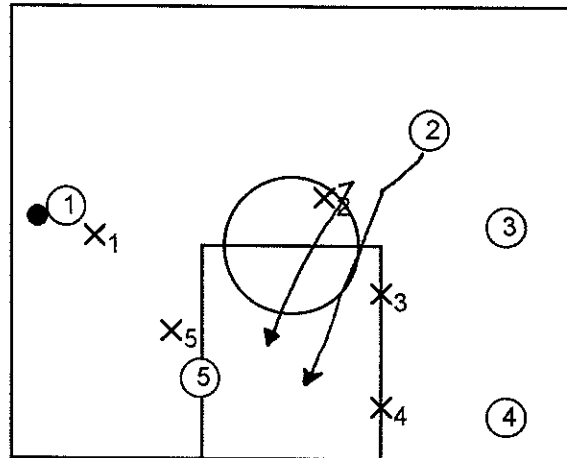
We must not allow players uncontested cuts to spots where they want to catch the ball on the floor. Make cutters take alternate paths.

1. Remember that if you are guarding a cutter, hit his **ballside shoulder**. Do not let cutters cut over the top, force them behind
2. Even if you are not guarding a cutter, you should hit and bump him.
3. You do not give the cutter a straight cut.
4. Make him go through you body or veer from the direction that he wants to go.
5. Deny cutters the catch out to the 3-point line.

WeakSide to StrongSide

WS High to SS Low (Dive):

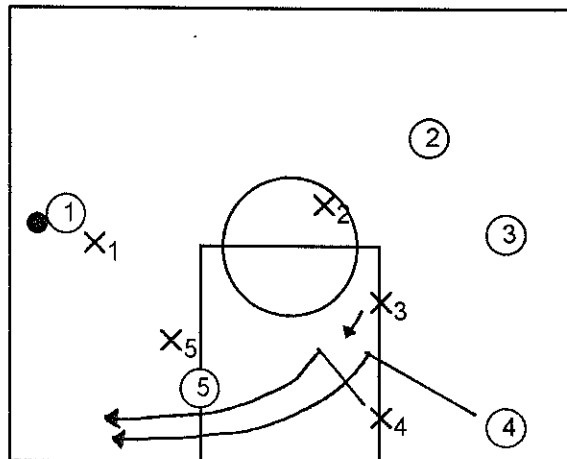
X2 -- The top of the "I" hits **ballside shoulder** and stays high on him.



WS Low to Flashpost:

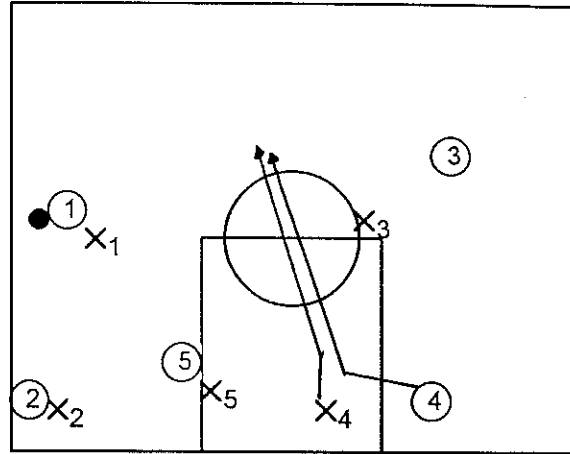
X4 -- Stays high on #4, makes contact early with him, force him to go low.

X3 -- If #4 continues his cut, X3 must V-Back to become the bottom of the "I".



WS Low to SS High Post (into Hi-Lo):

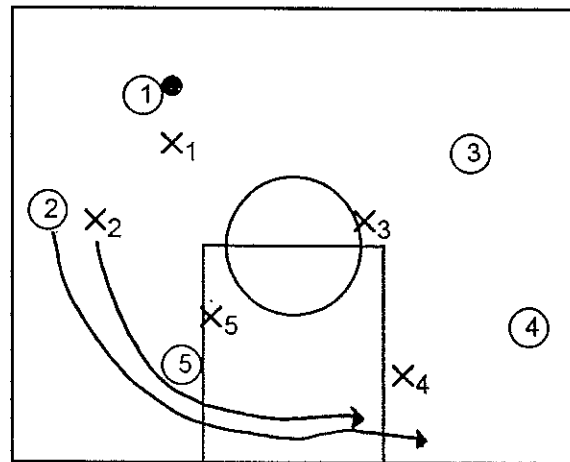
X4 -- Stays high on #4, makes contact early with him, force him to go low. If he does go high, X4 denies the catch out to the 3-point line .



StrongSide to WeakSide

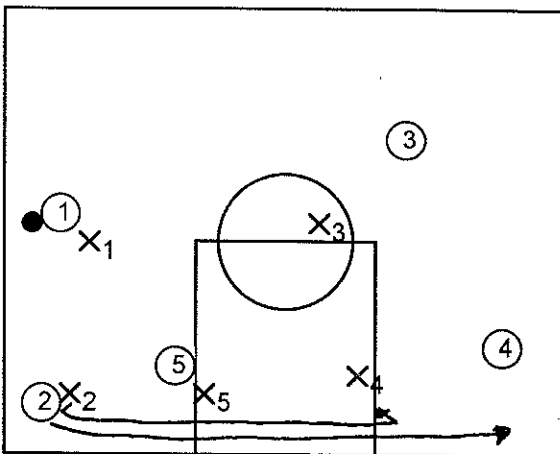
When a cutter goes from the StrongSide wing:

X2 -- Hits his **ballside shoulder** and stays between him and the ball. He gives him to the "I" and then can either go into the "I" or come back to the StrongSide to double the ball (see Post Defense vs. Triangle)



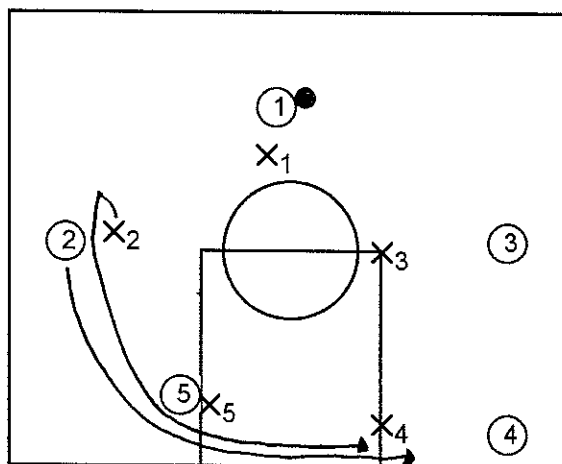
When a cutter goes from the StrongSide corner:

X2 -- Hits his **ballside shoulder** and stays between him and the ball. He gives him to the "I" and then can either go into the "I" or come back to the StrongSide to double the ball (see Post Defense vs. Triangle).



When the Ball is in the Middle of the Floor

X2 -- Hits his **ballside shoulder** and stays between him and the ball. X2 does not let #2 cut on top of X2.



DIAGONAL SCREEN

Very similar to our box-to-box defense with the same basic fundamentals, regardless of which two offensive players are in the action.

1. If we can switch and keep Bigs In-Littles Out, we will.
2. It is a physical bump and grind battle where both offensive players have trouble going where they want to go.
3. Both defenders hit the **ballside shoulder** of their men.
4. We do not want the screeners to get an angle on their screen.
5. If the offensive player gets to the StrongSide box, we are in a white, especially if we had to switch.
6. If the offensive player coming to the ball comes high, we can aggressively switch to keep our Bigs In-Littles Out principle.
7. We can and like to aggressively switch X2-X3 and X4-X5.
8. Force Cutter High --- Stay Low & Bump High

Little on Big

We can switch this to stay with our Bigs In-Littles Out Principle,

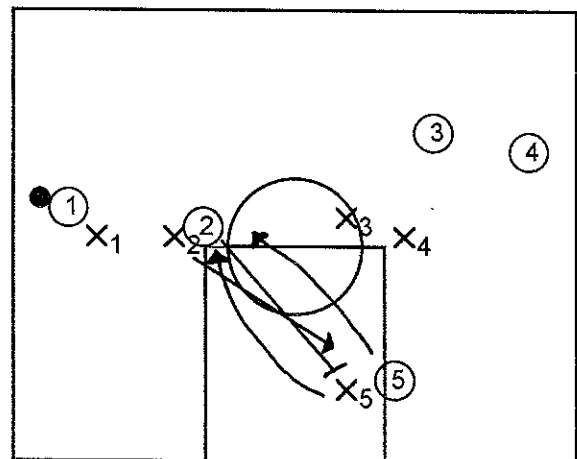
OR:

X2 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #2 towards the baseline

X5 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #5, stays on the low side, and pushes #5 high.

X1 -- Pressures the ball and keeps it on the side.

X3 -- Has a foot in the paint and is ready to help if #5 comes high.



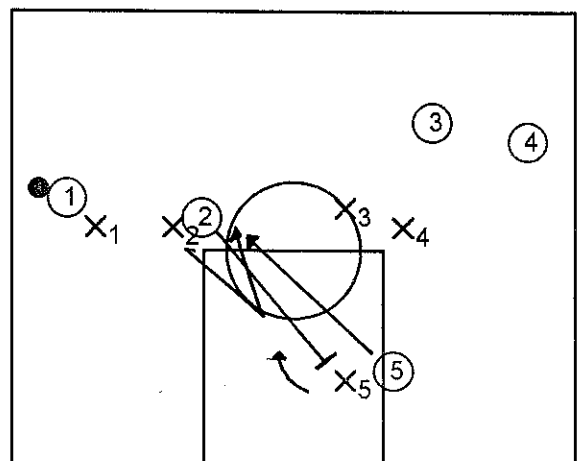
Big on Big

Guard it the same as above, but he can always switch X4-X5.

When we switch this, the man switching onto the screener must not let him seal in the lane.

Big on Little

Guard it the same as above.



DOUBLE DOWN

Stay

There are two ways of staying with your man on the double down.

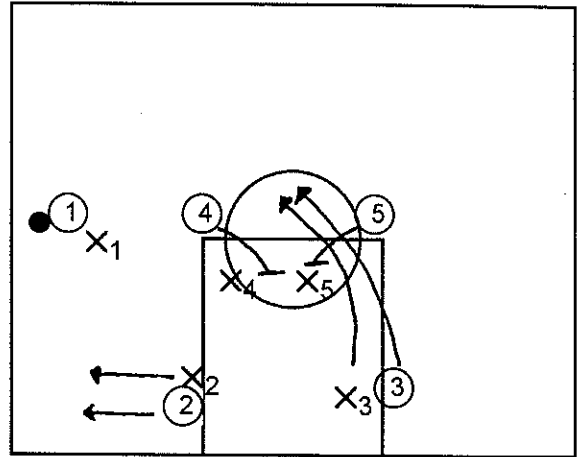
TRAIL:

X3 -- Trails (chases) #3 around the double screen.

X4 -- Is on the ballside shoulder of #4 and is in a position to bump #3 if he curls or switch out onto #3 if X3 gets caught up on the screen.

X5 -- Plays the ballside shoulder of #5. - ZONE
4 + 5 + TALES SLIP

X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline.



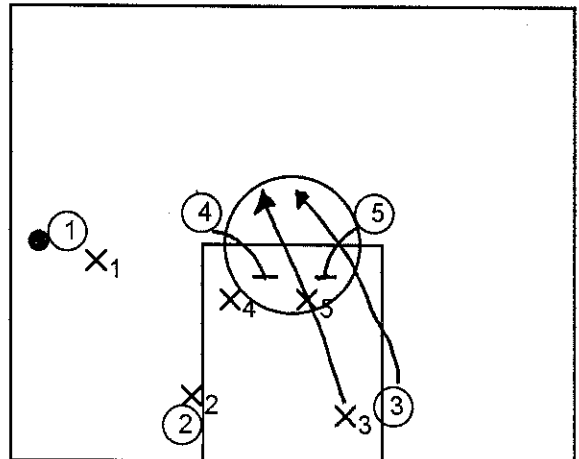
SPLIT THE DOUBLE SCREEN:

X3 -- Comes through the double screen and tries to deny the pass.

X4 -- Same as above.

X5 -- Plays #5 straight up giving room to X3 to get through.

X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline.



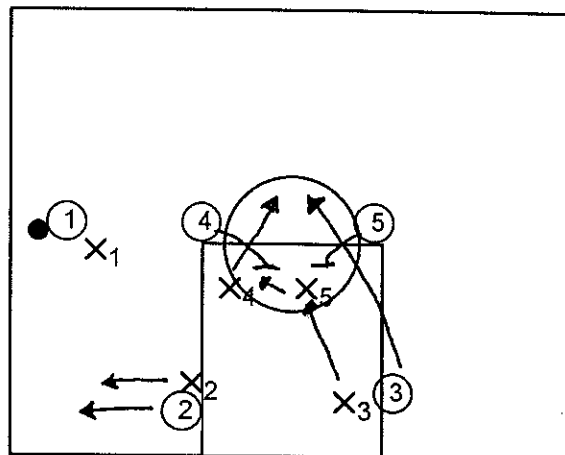
Switch with X4

X4 -- Plays the ballside shoulder of #4 and aggressively switches out to deny the pass to #3.

X5 -- Plays the ballside shoulder of #5 and as X4 switches out, X5 takes #4 and denies the pass to him if he slips the screen.

X3 -- As #3 comes off the screen, X3 switches onto #5.

X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline.



Elbow Switch

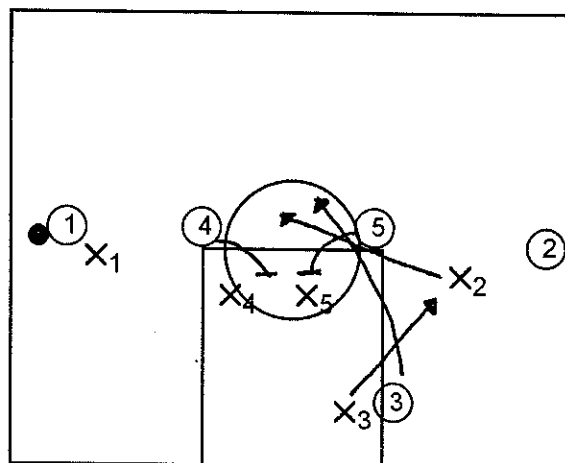
X2 -- Switches onto #3 as he comes up the lane.

X3 -- Switches onto #2.

X4 -- Is on the ballside shoulder of #4 and is in a position to bump #3 if he curls or switch out onto #3 if X3 gets caught up on the screen.

X5 -- Plays the ballside shoulder of #5.

X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline.



BACKSCREENS

The backscreen is the single most difficult play in basketball to defend. The general rules that we have regarding the backpick are applied to the following actions:

The primary way that we guard backscreens is to switch and keep with our Bigs-In Littles-Out principle:

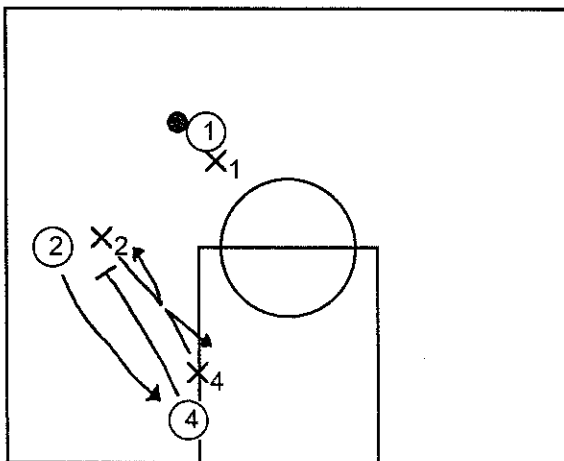
1. **Invert** when we can.
2. We switch #2-#3 and #4-#5 backscreens.
3. When we switch, it is **communicated**. Call out the screens!
4. We do not let the screener slip the screen and come to the ball.
5. We come together and aggressively switch to a deny.
6. If we switch and their is a mismatch, we become more aggressive with our whites and Gos.

If we do not switch:

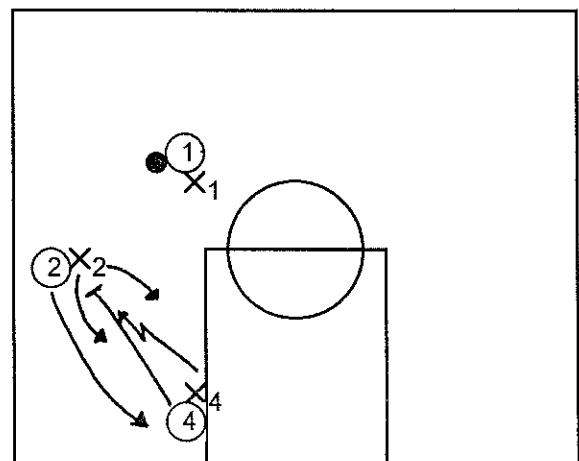
1. The man guarding the screener (X4) bumps and holds as long as possible. As the cutter begins to use the backscreen, X4 becomes a helper until X2 has recovered. If he can, he should bump #2 therefore slowing up his cut or making him veer.
2. The man who is getting screened (X2) is on the ballside shoulder of #2. As he gets screened, X2 must fight through (high or low) and recover to his man.
3. The man guarding the ball (X1) pressures the ball and pushes to the sideline.

Wing Backscreens

The most important thing in defending backscreens is to communicate them, **TALK!** Let the guy know that he is being backscreened so that he can prepare



Switch



No Switch

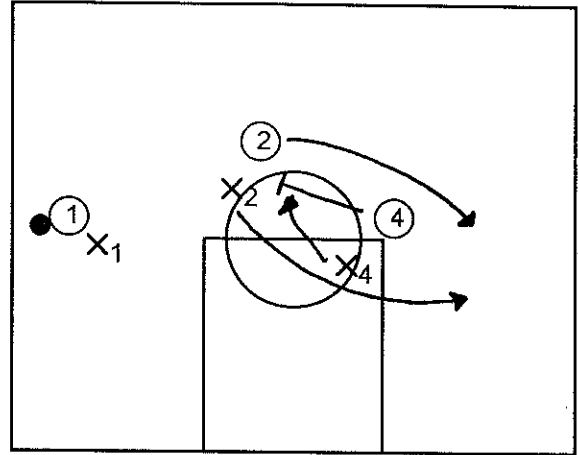
Flares

We can switch, OR:

X4 -- Pushes the screen up and does not give #4 an angle to screen. Yells backscreen .

X2 -- Goes under both #4 and X4.

If #4 gets a good pick on X2 and #2 goes for the lob, X4 can switch and protect low (Bigs In-Littles Out).

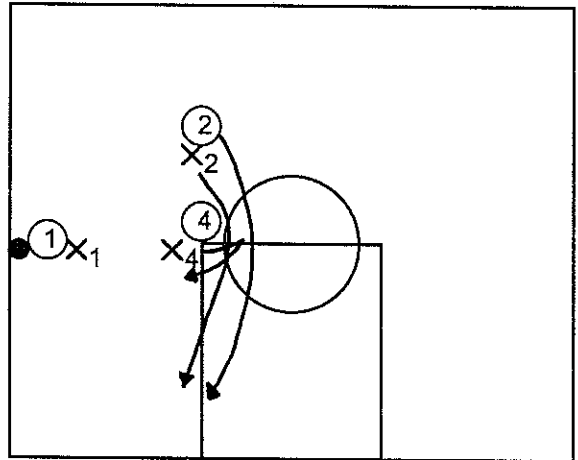


UCLA

With the UCLA action, we want X4 to really bump the cutter. Both X2 and X4 are on the ballside shoulders of their men until the screen occurs.

If we switch, we must be ready for #2 to pull to the corner and #4 to slide down into the post. If this happens, X2 must battle with whites or push #4 off the block. This is a difficult play to defend and we do not often switch the UCLA cut when it is Big and Little.

X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline.



Zipper Upscreen

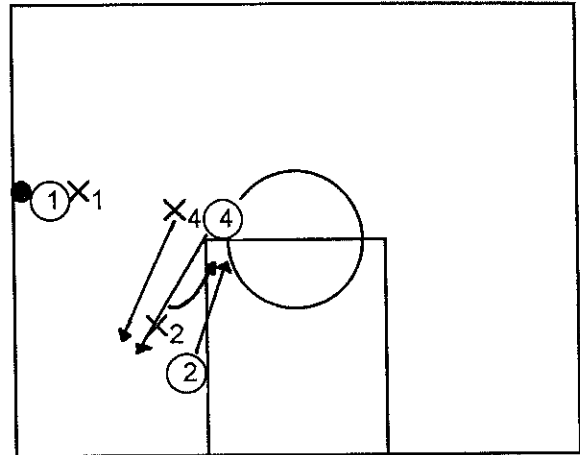
If we invert and switch, we may run into the same problem as in the UCLA action with #2 pulling to the corner and #4 sliding to the post. If this happens, we guard it the same way as mentioned in the UCLA action.

If we are not switching and #2 is setting the screen, and

X2 is in a white -- X2 pushes #2 on his ballside shoulder, away from the ball, to disrupt the screen.

X4 -- Plays ballside shoulder and as the screen comes, X4 goes ballside of the screen. X4 battles #4 and does not let him cut straight to the block.

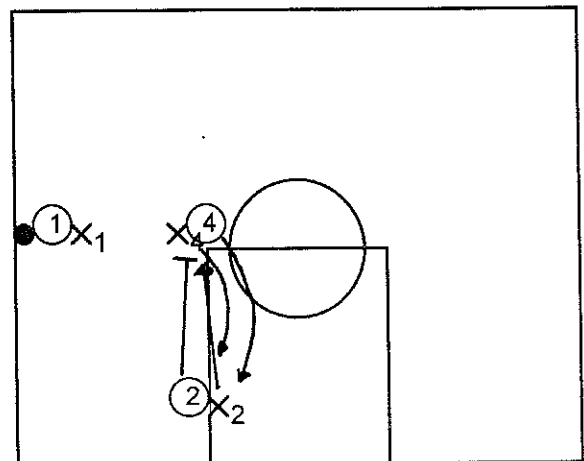
X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline.



If **X2 is not in a white**, then he pushes #2 towards the ball to disrupt the screen.

X4 -- Plays ballside shoulder and as the screen comes, X4 goes weakside of the screen. X4 battles #4 and does not let him cut straight to the block.

X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline.



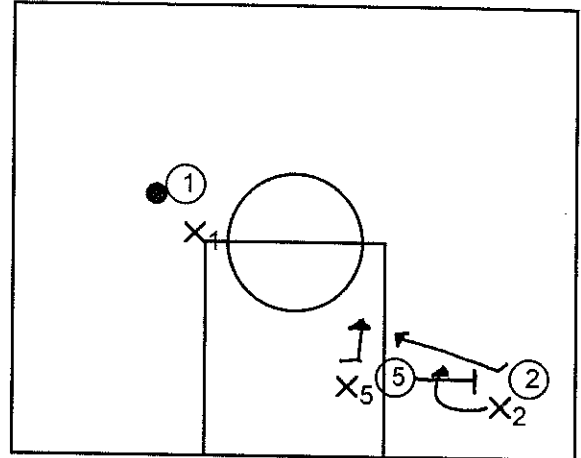
Flex Cut

We often switch flex cuts and flex continuity actions. Otherwise, we stay with our Stay Lo - Bump High Principle.

When we switch:

X2 -- Forces the cutter to go high and after the switch, does not get sealed.

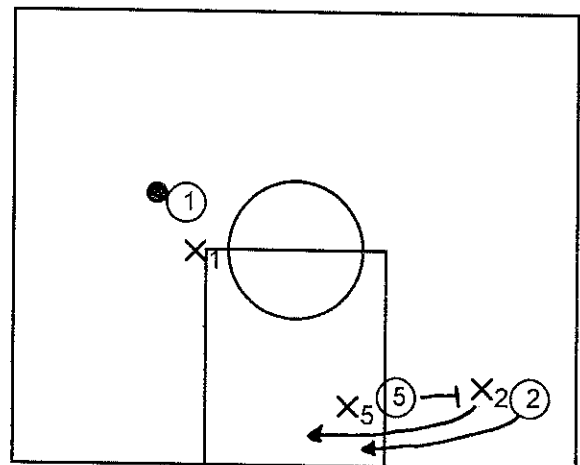
X5 -- Steps high and switches to a deny.



If we do not switch:

X2 -- Stays on the low side of the cutter to go low and stays (similar to our box-to-box defense).

X5 -- Pushes #5 high so he does not have an angle for the screen and bumps the cutter if he goes high.

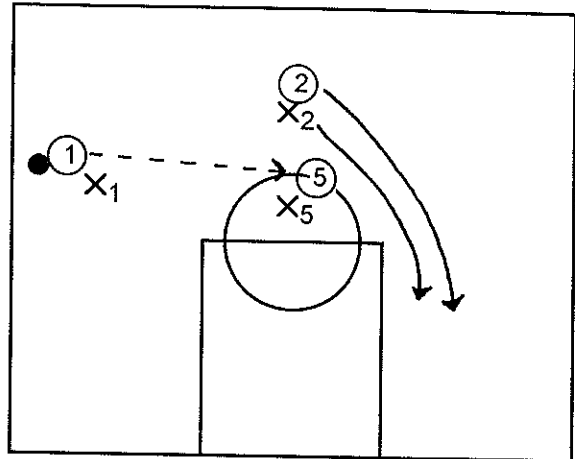


HAND-OFF AT ELBOW

The best way to stop this play is to deny the catch.

X5 -- Should deny the catch or force the catch out to the 3-point line. If #5 does catch, X5 plays off #5 if his back is turned to the basket. He is in a flat help position as #2 comes off for the hand-off. X5 stays with #2 until X2 can get back to #2.

X2 -- Plays the ballside shoulder of #2 and stays close to him so that he can come between #2 and #5 on the hand-off.



We do not like to switch this, but if we do it needs to be communicated so that if #5 fakes the hand-off, he does not have a path to the basket.

If #5 turns and faces, X5 guards him as he normally would.

HAND-OFF ON WING (GET)

We double-team all Gets on the wing.

There are two ways that we could double-team the Get:

Early Double-Team

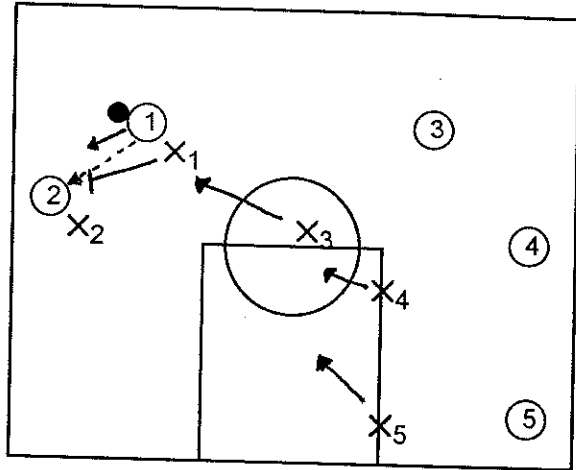
X1 -- As #1 begins his motion towards #2 to receive the hand-off, X1 goes quickly to double the ball and locks up the lower body with X2. (similar to our #4 Pick/Roll defense)

X2 -- Plays regular defense on #2 and as X1 comes to double, he locks up the double-team

Do NOT let #2 split the double-team.

X3 -- Picks up #1 if he pops back high.

X5 -- Picks up #1 if he dives low.



Disrupt and Double the Hand-off

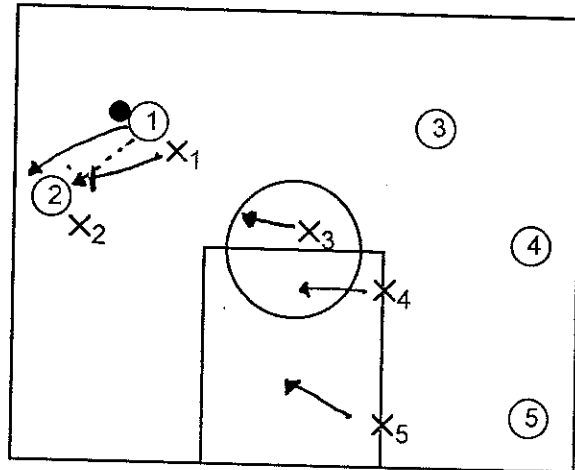
X1 -- As #1 goes behind to receive hand-off, X1 disrupts and bothers the hand-off as much as possible. X1 doubles the ball, whoever ends up with it on the wing.

X2 -- Plays regular defense on #2 and when X1 doubles, X2 locks up the double-team

Do NOT let #2 split the double-team.

X3 -- Picks up #1 if he pops back high.

X5 -- Picks up #1 if he dives low.

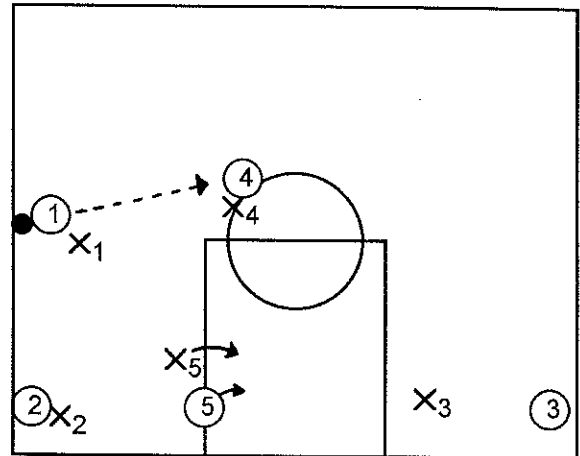


If Ball is Caught at High Post -- StrongSide Low Post

X4 -- Is off (in case of a hand-off) if #4 has his back to the basket. If #4 turns and faces, X4 pressures the passer.

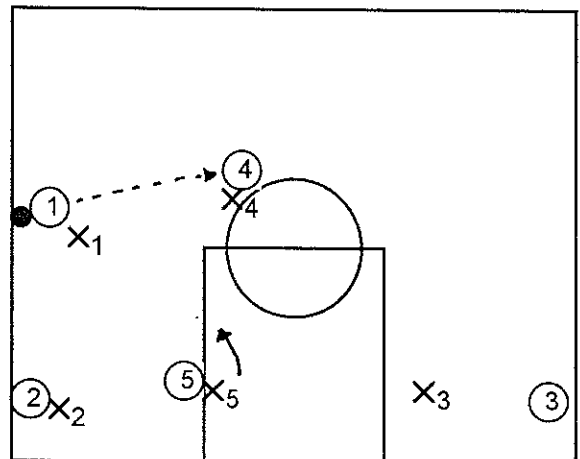
Post White

X5 -- If he was in a white, then he stays in a white but it is VERY important that he does NOT get pushed out. He must stay low and push #5 under the basket so that he can not receive the lob pass.



Playing behind Post

X5 -- Must battle to get on the high side of #5 so that he is not able to flash into the paint to receive the ball.

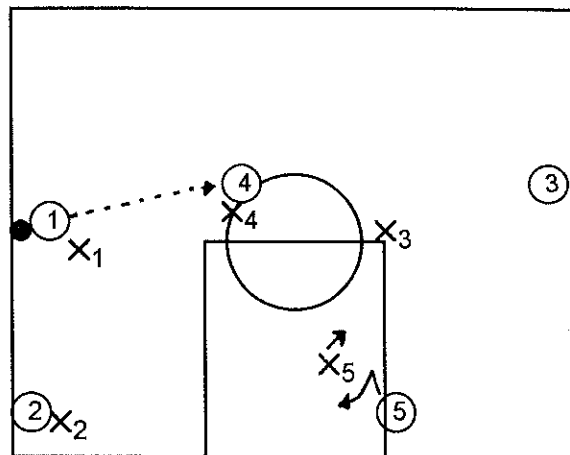


If Ball is Caught at High Post -- WeakSide Low Post

This could be run out the "Hawk" offense.

X4 -- Is off (in case of a hand-off) if #4 has his back to the basket. If #4 turns and faces, X4 pressures the passer.

X5 -- Stays on the high side of #5 and battles him. Does not let him cut on top of him and come to the ball.



PASSING GAME

We defend the Passing Game with all of our *Fundamental Principles*. In the Passing Game, we could see any kind of screening or cutting that has been discussed in this book. Since there is no 'call' on the play, it is very important for the defenders to talk and communicate.

StrongSide:

1. Ball pressure.
2. Sideline push and No middle penetration.
3. Contact switches when it is to our advantage.
4. Bigs In-Littles Out.
5. Deny passing lanes at least out to the 3-point line.
6. White the post-ups.
7. Hit ballside shoulder of cutters.

WeakSide:

1. WeakSide "I" responsibilities from the top, middle, and bottom.
2. Disrupt cutters. See and hit cutters (do not let them cut to the ball or on top of us).
3. Vision and reading from the "I".

PICK THE PICKER

There are two ways in which teams run "Pick the Picker", 1) With an Offensive Player in StrongSide Corner; and 2) With Offensive Player Isolated WeakSide High.

With Offensive Player Isolated WeakSide High

We defend this with the weakside elbow switch and this keeps our Bigs In and our Littles Out:

X1 -- Pressures the ball.

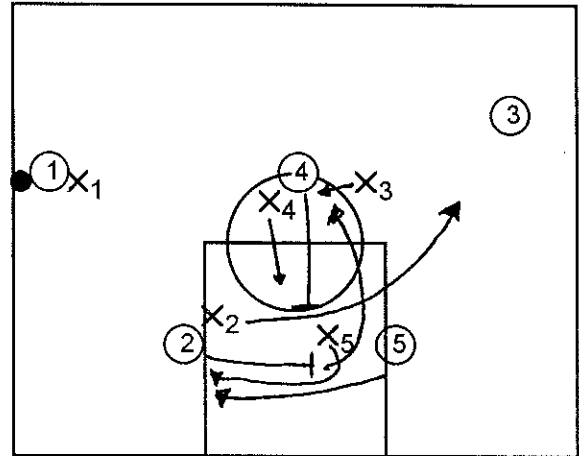
X2 and X5 (Box-to-Box Defense):

- X2 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #2 towards the baseline.
- X5 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #5, forces him low and does not let him cut high to the ball.

X4 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #4 towards the baseline.

X3 -- As #2 comes off #4's screen, X3 switches onto #2.

X2 -- Switches out onto #3.



With Offensive Player in StrongSide Corner

We **switch** these screens if it is to our advantage, otherwise:

X1 -- Pressures the ball and forces sideline to X3.

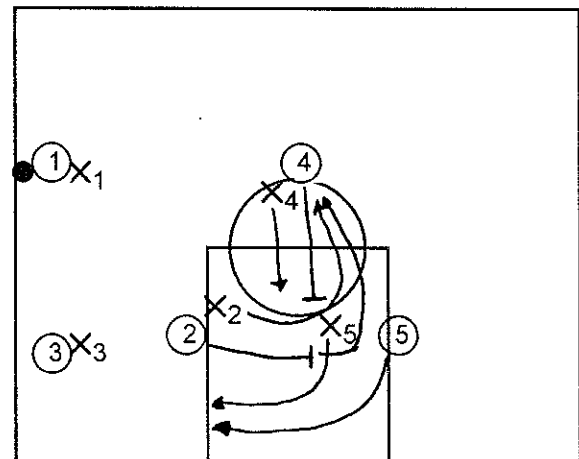
X2 and X5 (Box-to-Box Defense):

- X2 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #2 towards the baseline.
- X5 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #5, forces him low and does not let him cut high to the ball.

X4 and X2 (Diagonal Big on Little Defense):

- X4 -- Hits the **ballside shoulder** of #4 towards the baseline and as #2 comes off the screen, X4 shows to disrupt the pass and bump the curl. If #2 becomes a problem before X2 can get to him, then X4 will switch.

- X2 -- Trails the #2 out the screen.



PINDOWNS

After the Pick/Rolls and Post Ups, Pindowns is the most common play in basketball.

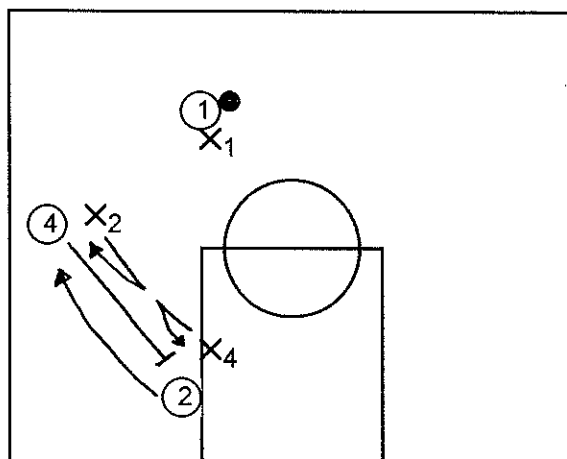
Invert and Switch Out

Ideally, we like to invert so that our Bigs are inside and our Littles are outside. When we are able to invert, we make aggressive contact, come together switches when the pindown is made.

X2 -- Is up denying the pass to #4, hitting his ballside shoulder and disrupting the timing of the screen. When the screen is made, X2 jumps out to deny the pass to #2.

X4 -- Is in a deny on #2. When the screen is made, X4 jumps high on #4 so that he is not able to step in to receive the ball (slip the screen).

X1 -- Pressures the ball.

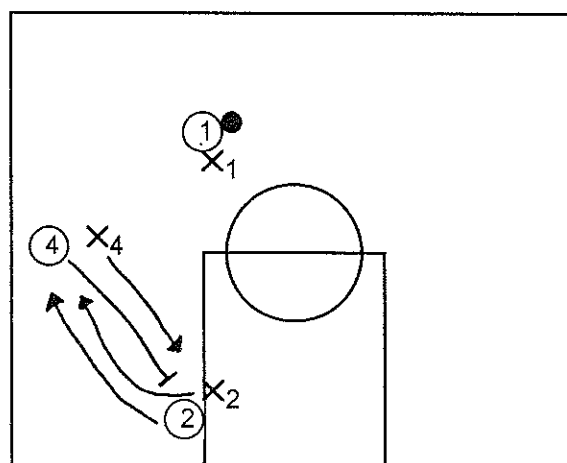


Trail and Bump Curl

If we were not able to invert, then we must trail (chase) the offensive payer out the screen.

X4 -- Is up denying the pass to #4, hitting his ballside shoulder and disrupting the timing of the screen. If #2 curls, X4 MUST hit and bump the curl, so that X2 can get back to #2.

X2 -- Is playing the ballside shoulder of #2. When the screen comes down, X2 tucks his shoulder behind #2 and trails him out the screen. Once X2 is past the screen, he denies the wing pass.



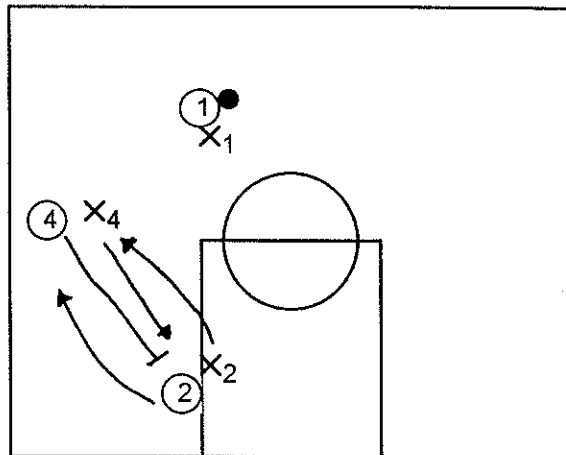
Go High

We do NOT like this route and do NOT recommend it. The man who is getting screened too often gets hung up and it is too easy to give up good shots.

When this occurs:

X2 -- Instead of trailing, X2 goes on the high side of the screen. If he gets through, he should be able to deny the pass.

X4 -- If #2 fades to the corner, X4 must be ready to get to the shooter



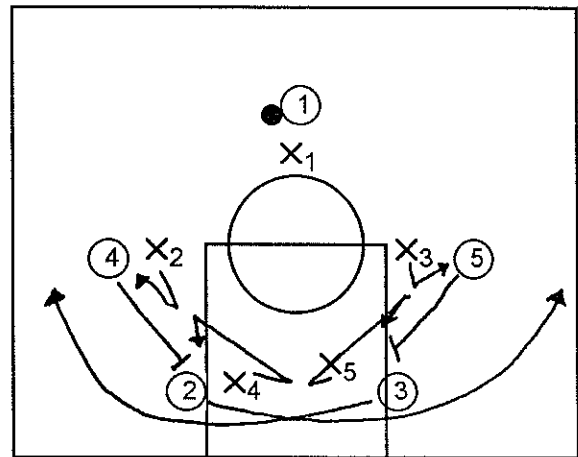
POWER

What we call "Power" is the most common offensive set in the NBA. Not only should we be able to defend this, we should shut it down.

Regardless of how the other four players are defending this play, we want the defender on the ball to push the ball to one side of the floor. We do NOT like the ball in the middle of the floor. **Pressure the ballhandler, get him to commit to one side of the floor and keep him there.**

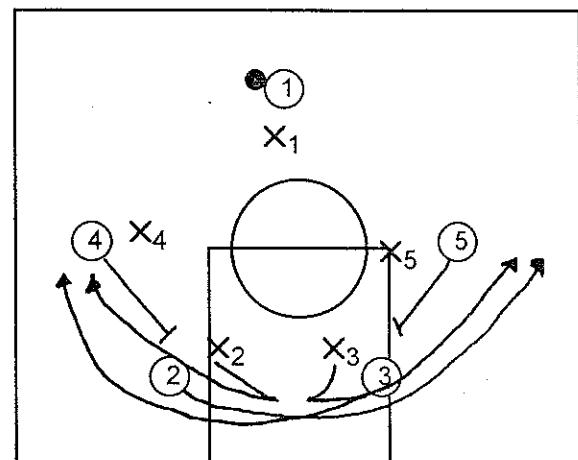
Invert

When we have the call for Power, we want to invert to keep Bigs In-Little Out. When we invert, we switch the baseline screens (X4 and X5). Then we switch the pindowns (X4 with X2 and X5 with X3) to a deny. (See Pindown Defense)



No Invert

If we are not able to invert, we still switch the baseline screens. Then we read the pindowns to see if we can effectively switch. If a switch is not to our advantage, then we trail and bump the curl. (See Pindown Defense).



SINGLE/DOUBLE (SS/DS)

Force out the Double Stack

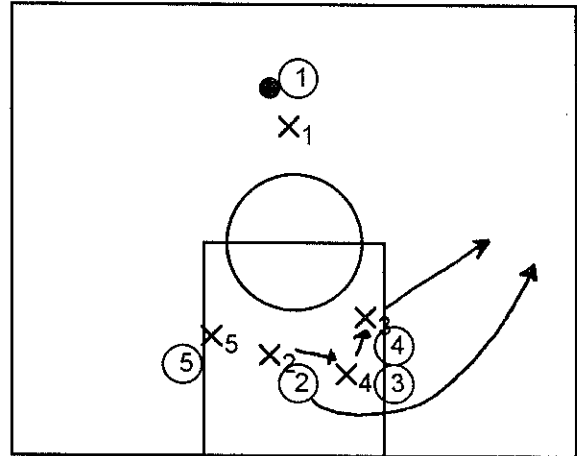
X1 --Once again, we do NOT like the ball in the middle of the floor. Pressure the ballhandler, get him to commit to the side of the floor with the double stack and keep him there.

X2 -- Stays high on #2 and then forces #2 to go out the double stack. When X3 switches out to #2, X2 takes #3.

X3 -- We invert all stacks. When #2 comes out the double, X3 switches out to a deny.

X4 -- We invert all stacks. When X3 switches out, X4 steps up and takes #4. X4 does not let #4 step in and flash to the ball.

X5 -- Is on the ball side shoulder and does not let #5 flash in the paint to receive the ball.



If #2 does go out the single stack, we defend it like a non-inverted pindown.

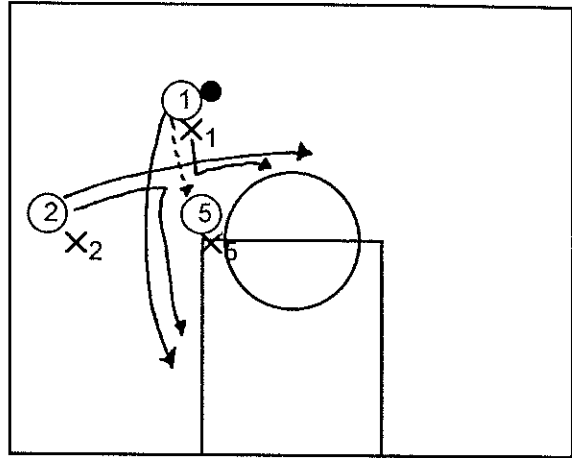
SPLIT POST

Defending the post split is similar to defending the elbow hand-off.

Little-Little Split (Switch)

X5 -- We do not want #5 to catch in this area. X5 should deny the catch or force the catch out to the 3-point line. If #5 does catch, X5 plays off #5 if his back is turned to the basket. He is in a flat help position in case a hand-off is made.

X1 and X2 -- Body their men and stay between their respective men and the ball. When X1 and X2 come together, they switch.

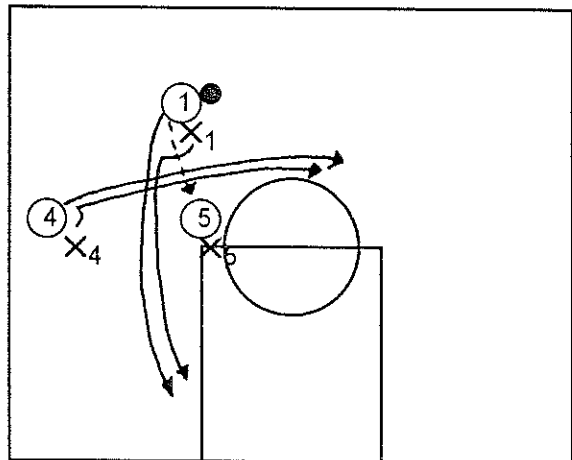


Little-Big Split (No Switch)

X5 -- We do not want #5 to catch in this area. X5 should deny the catch or force the catch out to the 3-point line. If #5 does catch, X5 plays off #5 if his back is turned to the basket. He is in a flat help position.

X1 -- Bodies his man and does not let him make a straight cut. It is an individual battle to deny him a cut and the ball.

X4 -- Bodies his man and does not let him make a straight cut. It is an individual battle to deny him a cut and the ball.



STACK

Stack is just like Power only even easier because we should be able to invert.

Invert

We invert all stacks.

X3 and X5 -- Invert the stack.

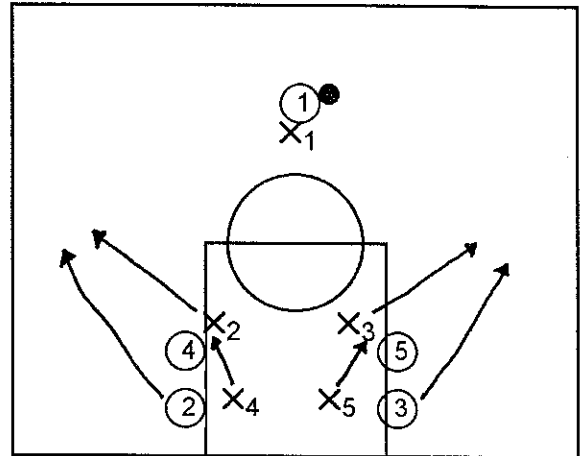
X3 -- Switches out to #3

X5 -- Steps up and take #5 and does not let him step in and flash to the ball.

X2 and X4 -- Invert the stack.

X2 -- Switches out to #2

X4 -- Steps up and take #4 and does not let him step in and flash to the ball.



ZIPPER DOWN

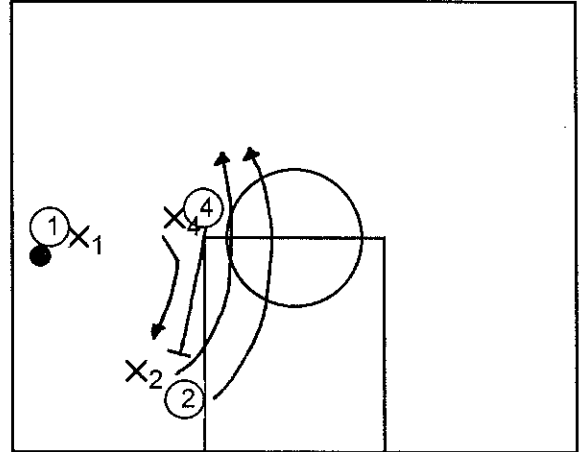
(Zipper Up see backscreens)

Often there are plays where we do not have specific rules other than, just get it done. The Zipper Down is one of those plays. It is a battle by both players involved with pushing, bumping and grinding.

Two different ways of guarding this:

X4 -- Pushes #4 Hits the ballside shoulder of #4 and holds up the screen. Once #4 is in the post area, X4 is in a White. He does not give #2 a chance to come up the lane.

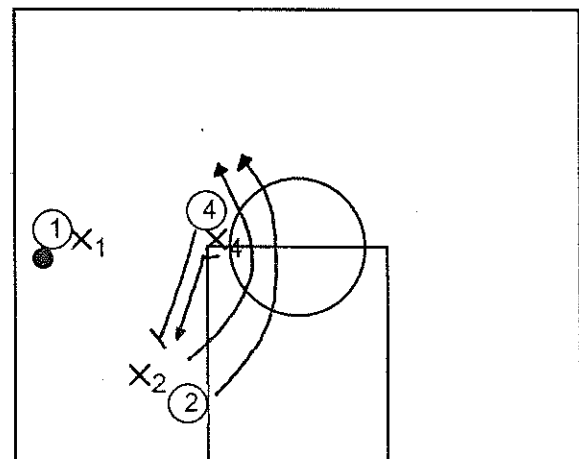
X2 -- Is in a white in the post. Hits the ballside shoulder of #2 as he comes up the lane and force #2 to go away from the ball. He then denies the reversal catch at the elbow.



The other way:

X4 -- Pushes #4 towards the ball and then plays behind him in the post.

X2 -- Trails #2 out the screen and then denies the reversal catch at the elbow.



SEATTLE PICK & ROLL

We have 8 different ways to defend the pick and roll and we could use any of these schemes no matter where the pick & roll occurs on the floor.

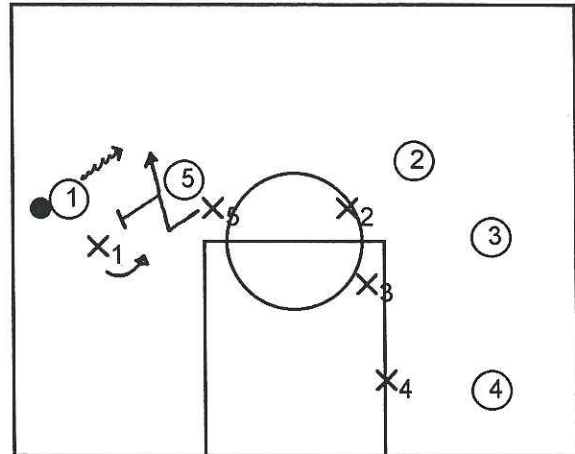
#1 -- Switch

This is when we switch the pick and roll. We can switch it two ways.

The first is an aggressive jump switch. where we try to still keep the ball on the side of the floor and push the ballhandler back to his original defender. X5 bumps the screener and then as the ball is coming over the top, X5 jumps out and takes #1. X1 jumps ballside of the screener so that he does not slip and roll to the basket.

X1 GET BELOW THE SCREENER AND THEN STAY BETWEEN BALL AND MAN.

5 GOES TO POST T = X1, FRONTS

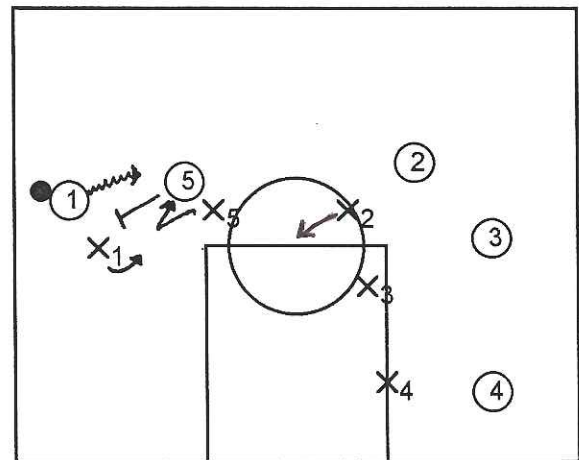


The second is a flat switch where we try to contain the penetration of the ballhandler. Here X5 flattens out so that the ballhandler cannot turn the corner into the paint. Again, X1 jumps ballside of the screener so that he is not open to receive the pass back.

A. STRIKE OUT BALL, EXTEND BALL, KEEP BALL IN FRONT OF YOU. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR LONG BODY. KEEP BALL IN FRONT OF YOU. HE CAN'T TURN CORNER.

B. #2 IS PLUGGING / NO MIDDLE PENETRATION

C. 5 GOES TO POST T = X1, FRONT



X2 ON NAIL / PLUG

#1 Red -- Switch with Run and Jump

As the switch (#1) occurs, the top of the "I" runs at the dribbler to double the ball.

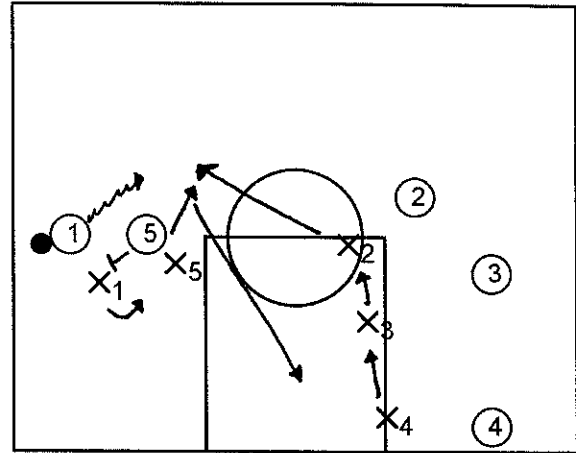
X1 -- switches to guard #5.

X5 -- switches to #1 (a flat switch), as X2 rotates to the ball, X5 rotates out to the paint and into the "I"

X2 -- runs at #1 to double-team the ball.

X3 -- becomes the top of the "I" and rotates in position to intercept the ball but is also alert for cutters.

X4 -- is still the bottom of the "I" but becomes even more aware of helping and seeing cutters.



If the pass is thrown out of the double-team, X5 rotates out to the paint and then we scramble to positions.

*RED IS RUN + JUMP DEFENSE. WHEN WE ADD RED WE
WILL ROTATE WITHIN SCHEME. EX. #1 DEFENSE = X2 PLUGS;
#1 RED DEFENSE = #2 RUN/JUMP + WE ROTATE*

★ STRONG (PHX.) IS PRE ROTATE CALL

#2 -- Jump It (TRAP)

This is when the man guarding the screener jumps the dribbler as he comes off the screen to double the ball.

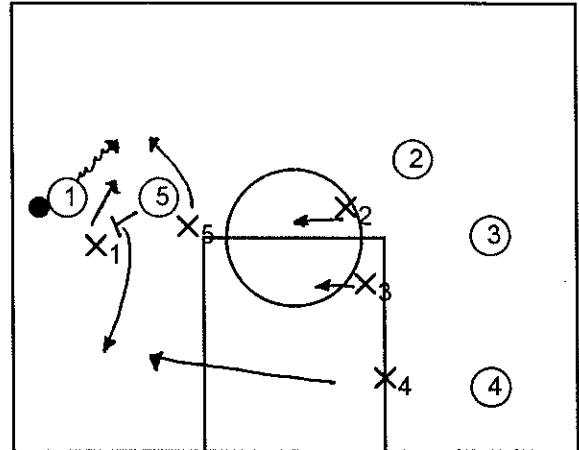
X1 -- pushes the ball to the screen (BIG IMPORTANT)

X5 -- jumps out high to keep the ball on the side and aggressively double-teams the ball. (He does not let the ballhandler split the double-team.)

X4 -- covers the roll man (#5).

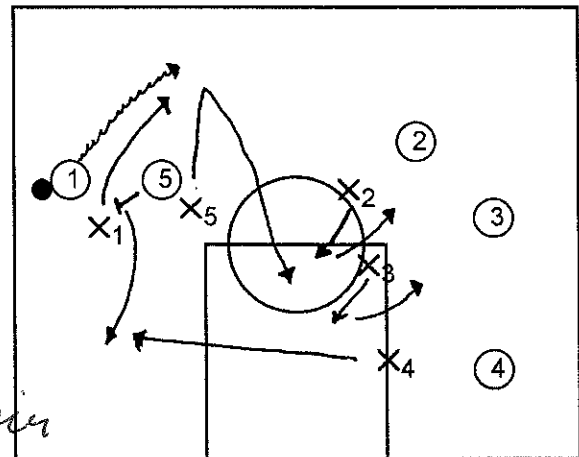
X3 -- drops to the bottom of the "I". + TAKES DUCK IN BY (4)

X2 -- is no the top of a 2-man "I".



If the ball is thrown out of the double-team, X5 rotates to the paint and then we scramble.

If the ballhandler veers high, X5 must read how long he wants to stay with it or rotate back to the paint.

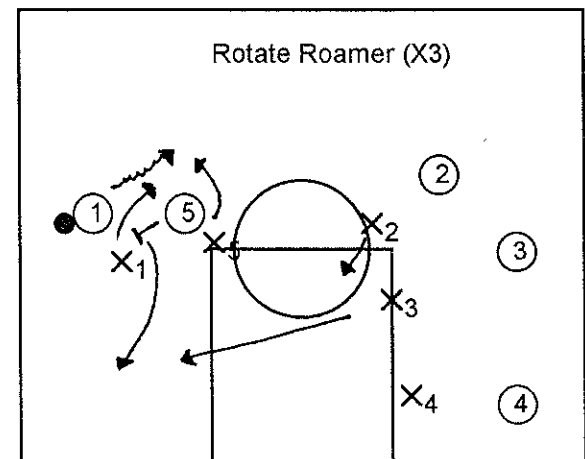


NEW RULE: STRONG GIVES US
QUICKEN ROTATION / BY X4 ESPECIALLY
VS A SHOOTER

★ We can also designate a particular player to be the rotator, and keep our big in the bottom of the "I"

A. ROAMER SCHEME: IF WE
HAVE SMALL TEAM

B. NEW RULE X3 CAN LEAVE
EARLY + STRONG.



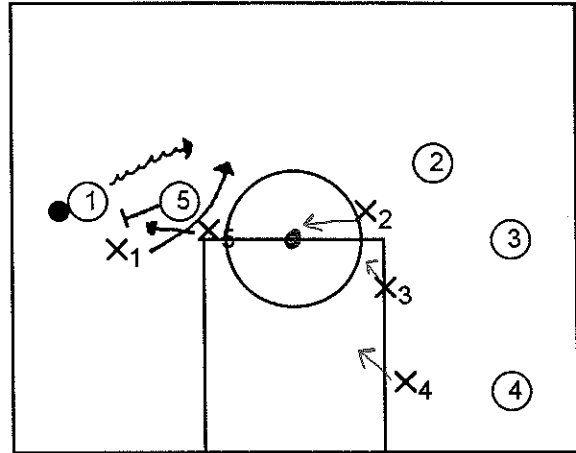
#3 -- Hit and Go Under

The man guarding the screener pushes the screener up and the man guarding the ball goes under both the screener and the man guarding the screener.

Both X1 and X5 stay with their men.

X5 -- pushes #5 up so that he does not have an angle to screen and forces the #1 to veer high.

X1 -- Slides under both #5 and X5 and tries to keep the ball on the side.



*X2 - PLUGS MIDDLE (NAIL PHX)
(TOP SEATTLE)*

*PORTLAND USED THIS VS KOBE +
O'N PIN'S*

X4 STAYS WITH DUCK IN BY 4 + SUPPORTS TOTAL SCHEME

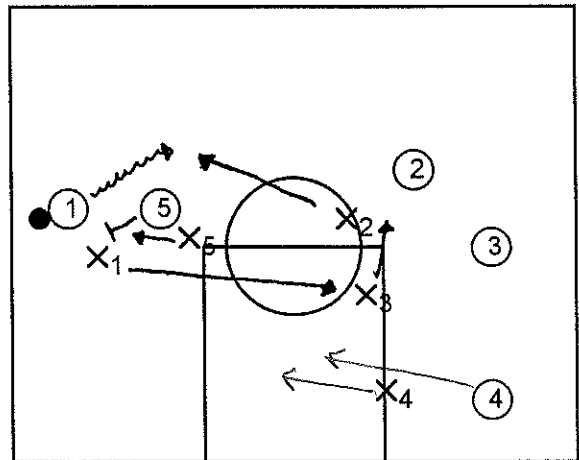
★ #3 RED -- Hit up with run and jump

A combination of #3 pushing up and a run and jump.

X5 -- Pushes up as in a regular #3 Pick/Roll defense.

X2 -- As the ballhandler comes over the screen, X2 runs at the ballhandler and keeps the ball on the side.

X1 -- As the ballhandler commits to using the screen, X1 rotates to the "I".



*PORTLAND USED THIS VS KOBE/
O'N PIN'S.*

*X4 TAKES DUCK IN + SUPPORTS
THE TOTAL SCHEME*

PHX USED PARKER / DUNCAN

*★ CAN USE VS MIDDLE
PENETRATION / SAME
ROTATION WITH G'S /
PERIMETER PLAYERS*

#4 -- Quick double-team (LAKER RED)

The man guarding the screener goes to double the ball as the screener begins to come set the screen.

X5 -- As the screener begins to come to set the screen, X5 runs at the ballhandler to double-team the ball on the high side. He does not let #1 split the double-team.

X1 -- Defends it as if it were our #2 Pick/Roll Defense.

Diagram 1 -- If the screener rolls low:

X4 -- If #5 rolls low, X4 rotates low to pick him up.

X3 -- Becomes the bottom of the 2-man "I". *TAKES DUCK IN B94*

X2 -- Is the top of the 2-man "I".

NEW RULE: STRONG WOULD MAKE THIS MORE EFFECTIVE VS QUICK SLIPS. CAN GO EARLY NOW + BE COVERED.

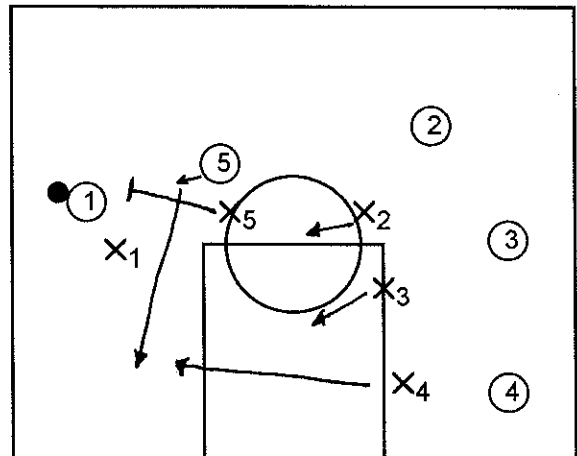


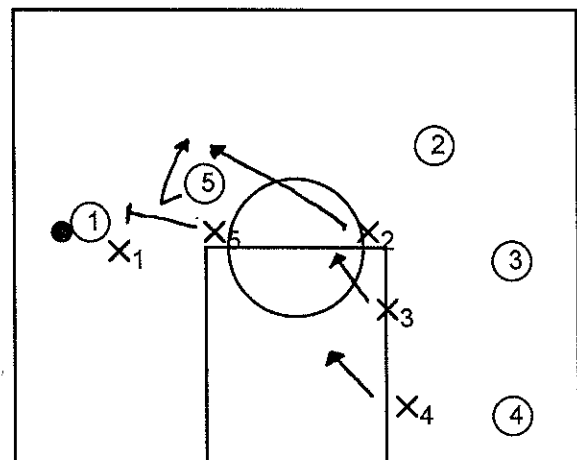
Diagram 2 -- If the screener pops high:

X2 -- Rotates high to pick up #5.

X3 -- Becomes the top of the 2-man "I".

X4 -- Is the bottom of the 2-man "I".

NOTE: X2 CAN STUNT + HAVE X5 GO BACK TO HIS OWN (5).



#5 -- Keep the ball away from the screen

The man guarding the ball forces the ball sideline and does not let the screen occur. The man guarding the screener is off his man in a help position to guard against the dribbler driving to the basket.

This is our PRIMARY coverage of the sideline pick and roll.

X1 -- Is in the regular sideline push defense as #5 comes to set the screen, X1 jumps higher to deny #5 setting a screen.

X5 -- As #5 comes to set the screen, X5 yells that we are in a #5 Defense and then drops to a help position to defend against the sideline drive. If X5 is able to get a good double-team on the baseline side, he locks it up.

X2 -- Rotates high to pick up #5 as he pops high.
WILL DENY OR BAIT PASS

X3 -- Becomes the top of the 2-man "I".

X4 -- Is the bottom the 2-man "I".

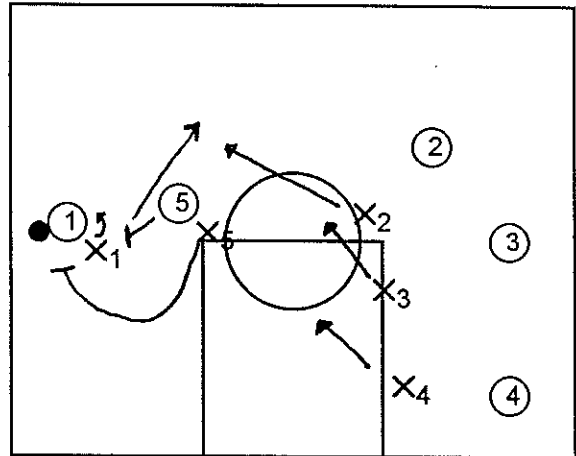
NEW RULE: STRONG: GIVE US MORE SUPPORT

#6 -- Slide Thru

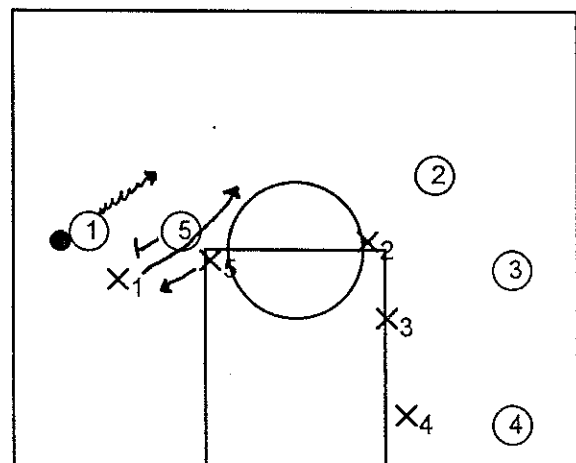
The man guarding the screener lets his teammate slide through the screen.

X5 -- As the screener comes to screen, X5 gives room for X1 to slide between #5 and X5.

X1 -- Slides through.



NEW RULE: STRONG PUTS US IN ZONE. PHOENIX VS S.O.W (LAKERS) STRAY ON HIS BALL + X4 STRONG !!



SEATTLE

Baseline (BLOB)

Our #1 rule when defending baseline out of bounds is to not give up anything under the basket. After that:

1. Invert -- Bigs In-Littles Out.
2. Switch to deny.
3. Look to double-team in the corner.
4. Do not let them slip the switch.
5. **Communicate** the switch.

Additionally, we will have a 2-3 zone and a 1-3-1 zone for BLOBs

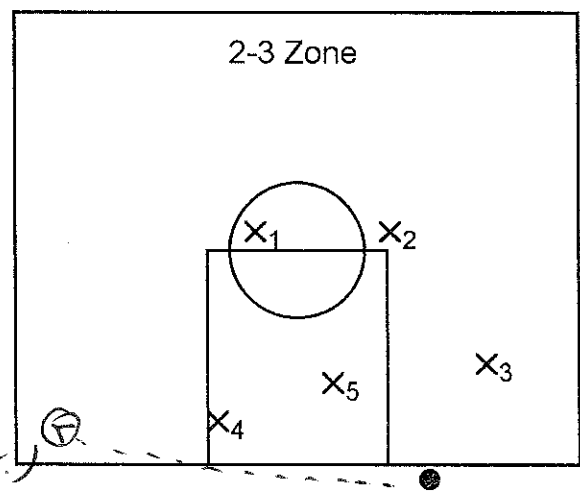
In the 2-3 zone, we are looking to defend areas and match up when the ball is passed in-bounds.

X3 -- Is Always in the strongside corner and defends whoever comes to him.

X4 and X5 defend the middle.

X1 and X2 match up out front.

** GIVE YOU WEAKSIDE CORNER IF
X4 LIFTS T TO HIGH = ALERT FOR
TEAMS LIKE (MILWAUKEE, MINN, PHX.)
THAT USE WEAK / HAMMER*



With the 1-3-1 zone, we are in a more aggressive trapping mode. If the ball is passed to the corner:

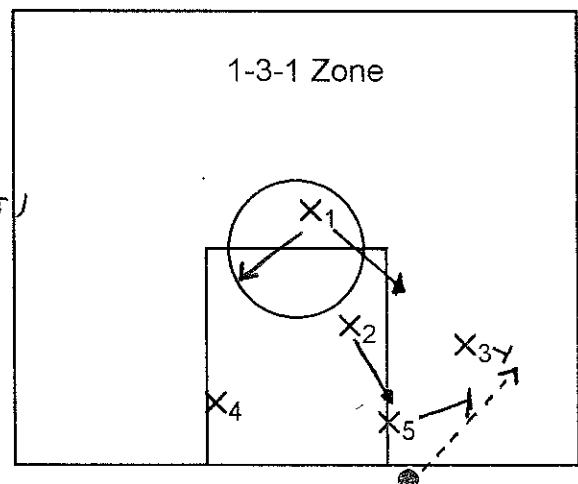
X5 and X3 --go to double team the ball. X3 is ALWAYS strongside.

X2 -- drops down to white any post up. (WHITE IS FRONT)

X4 -- defends the weakside and has the bottom of the "I".

X1 -- roams out front and is the top of the 2-man "I".

** CAN MAKE 2-3 TANDEM (1-3-1)
YOU ARE IN SAME DEFENSE*



1. In both zones, if the ball is passed out front, every defender rotates and matches up with an offensive player
2. *IMPORTANT 1-3-1 → TRAP CORNER WITH 3/5 → X2 TAKES POST ; X4 STAYS HOME ; X2 60 MUST FRONT / NO CATCH.*
- 3.