

"Defending the NBA Pick & Roll"

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-With shot clock change, things he would recommend to college coaches

1. $\frac{3}{4}$ court pressure
2. Down side pick & roll

-To beat the best, we are going to be a multiple pick & roll team. Our 4-men need to be able to do more than one coverage. We need to have that flexibility. We draft that way, we make trades that way.

"Your evaluation/recruiting should fit your system."

-Regardless of the level you're at, ***switch everything that you can.*** We start every shootaround with switching groups ("Who can switch versus these guys? 1-3? 1-4?") We will switch every pick and roll that will not result in a significant matchup problem. ***"Anything you can switch, I would switch."***

-We will start most games going under ball screens. We go under more ball screens than anyone in the NBA. With veteran players, you can manipulate ball screen coverages between different offensive players. Take advantage of guys that aren't range shooters. ***Going under will limit rotations and roll baskets.***

Advantages of Downing Side Pick & Rolls

1. Keeps ball out of middle
2. Slows ball movement
3. Forces offense to execute at a higher level

-If you're ready to install the "down" coverage on side pick & rolls, you can't just play your base. You're going to have to have exceptions (versus the knockdown shooters at the 4) or have an alternative coverage (showing versus the stretch 4).

-Pick & Roll defense starts with controlling the ball (can't give up initial separation).

-Limit shots for the ball-handler and we never want to give up a good shot on the first pass out of a ball screen.

-Toughest things in the NBA to guard:

1. "The Great Player" (puts more heat on the D than anything else)
2. Pick & Roll game (multiple pick & rolls)

- "ELC" = Early, Loud, Continuous

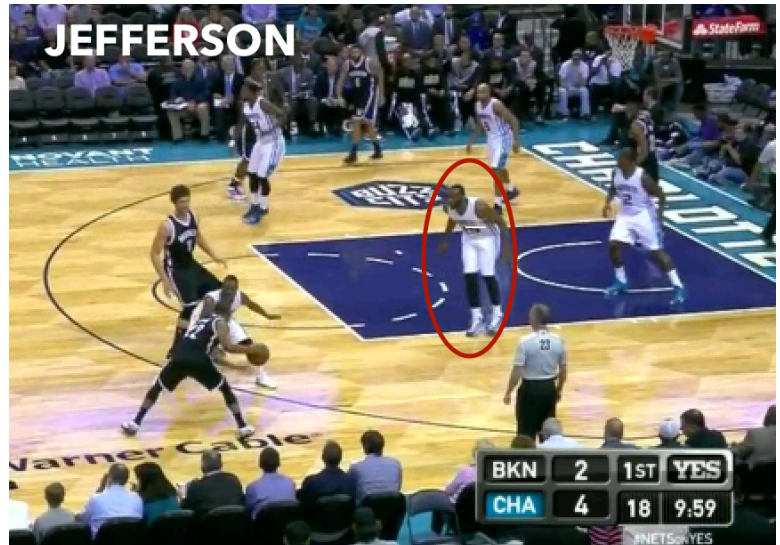
-In our "Down" we are personnel-driven and will adjust the distance how much the big guy comes out on the coverage. Al Jefferson drops, Marvin Williams will come all the way out to a step and a half off the ball. Let players play to their instincts and their strengths.

-This big can't give up dribble-arounds. Can't let the ball get to the baseline or to the middle of the floor.

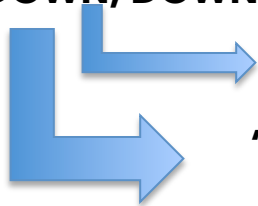
3 Elements of Pick & Roll Defense

1. Coverage (2 guys on the ball)
2. Protection (3 guys off the ball)
3. Recovery (rotations back)

"We have to be good in all three phases."

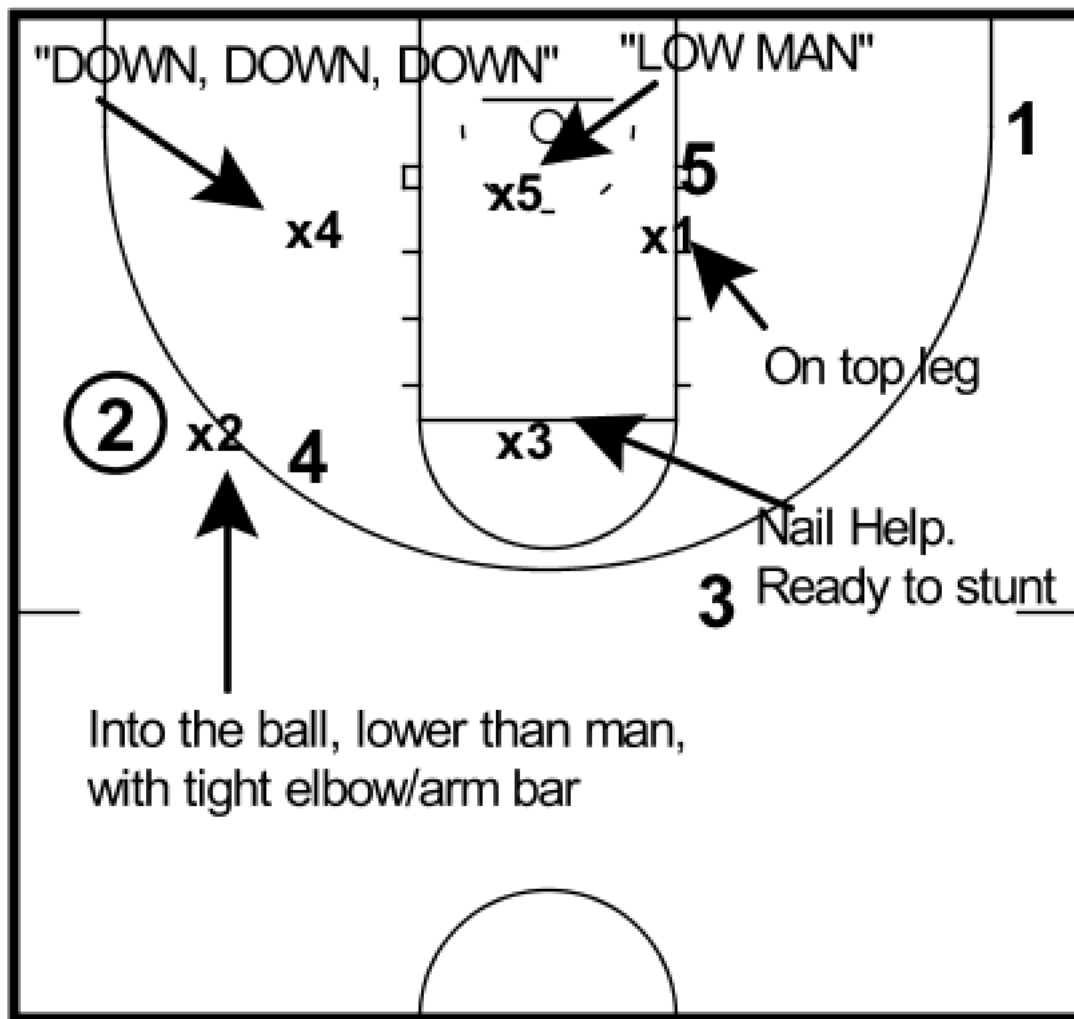


"DOWN, DOWN, DOWN" (ball, you, basket)

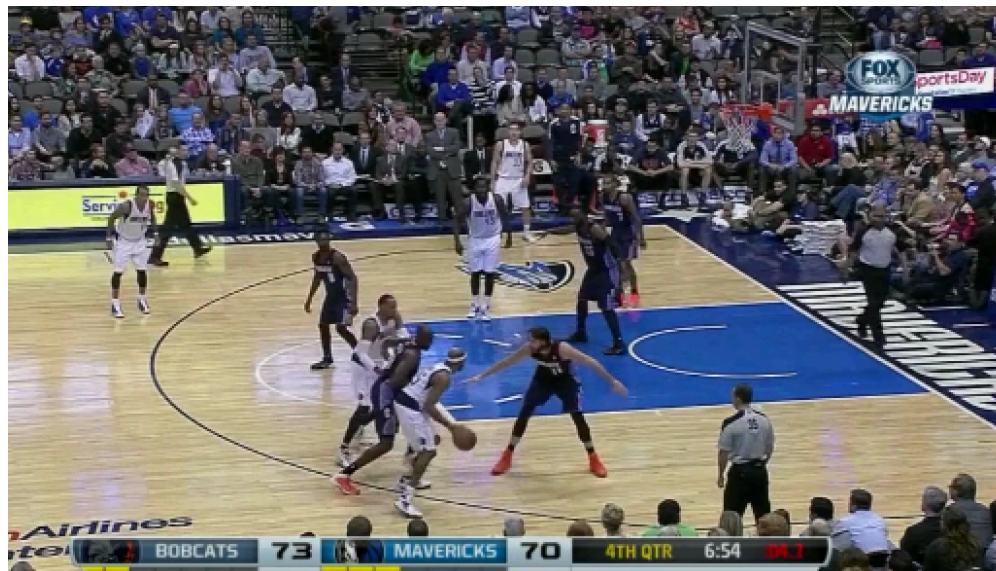


Guard gets into the ball, lower than the offensive player, with an arm bar (tight elbow).

"LOW, LOW LOW" (low man on the weakside)



-Your goal is to stay out of rotations as much as you can so you don't spread out your defense more than you have to (remains compact) and limit how much you need to stunt. Exceptional on-ball defenders will do this.



-Talk to your "Low Man" about reading the roll. If there is no roll (like on a nonaggressive throwback to the screener), he can kick the weakside corner defender out (off the weakside big's top leg/body) so the defense can stay organized and not be more spread than it has to.

-On-ball defender: no middle stance already, I move into the ball with tight elbow, lower than the offensive player. Pursuit to get back in the play (as handler dribbles away). Activity level on the ball (disrupt/contest every pass—over us or around us).

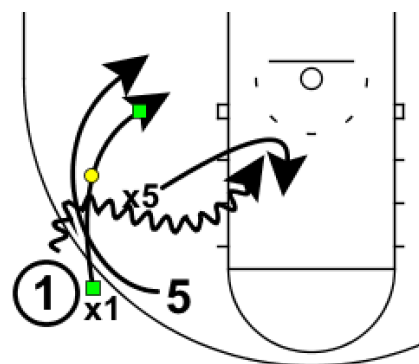
-Screener's man: varies depending on personnel how deep you are. **On pass back to screener, we go inside/out to keep the ball out of the middle of the floor.**

-Nail defender: slightly inside the nail. **The closer the screener pulls to the elbow, the more I am going to inch over (is also dependent on who he is).** If the screener rolls, we'll stand him up with a bump and force him down to the "Low Man."

-Limit your stunts early in the game. Make him make a couple and then we'll get more aggressive. Since becoming a head coach, Clifford is much more conservative with his stunts from the nail defender. He will live with the screener hitting jumpers. **If you over-stunt, you get burnt on the second side of the floor because you're overextended.**

-Force the second pass in every pick & roll.

-Crossover middle is the killer. Versus this: "Veerback" or late switch. Screener's defender will stay between the ball and the basket as **the guard defender will veer back and get into the screener's legs and try to force him out of bounds.**

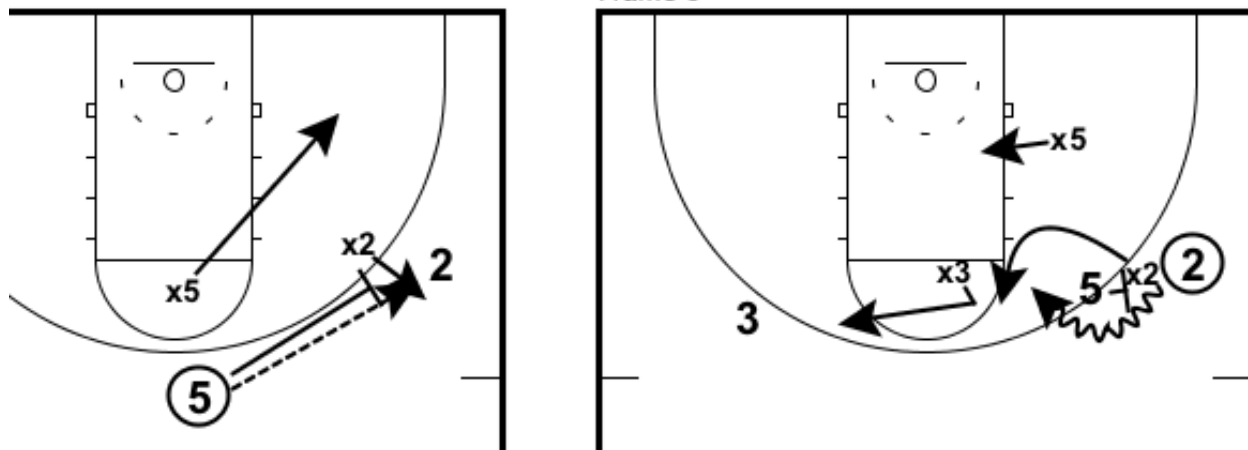


-Good offensive players will try to get over the top of your down (and they will try to crossover middle).

-When there's a roll, we blitz.

- Why? Because the roll will suck in our defense.
- If we don't have ball pressure in our blitz, the ball-handler will zip it to the weakside of the court on us as we're sucked in on the roll.
- Coverage hears "roll" by the nail defender, they blitz.

-Need to work a ton on downing the "pass & follow." Very hard to get into down position. Big: you need to be down in order to say "Down." You can't call "Down" without being in a ball/you/man position or we're going to get beat to the rim. If we are beat over the top of the down on the pass & follow, we spin underneath for pursuit (big stays down, he doesn't rush up at ball). ---



-Versus a team that loves to pass & follow, they won't rush out to 5 on his perimeter catches for the sake of ball pressure. They will back up to anticipate that x5 will need to get to a "Down" position on ball reversal.

-Be experts on your players. Put them in positions to play to their strengths.

-We need to control the ball. If we're getting rocked on the ball—be it with our closeout technique, individual defense or pick & rolls—you're putting your defense in peril all night.

-Talk brings organization.

-On pick & roll traps: leave your feet to deflect.

-We want to take the roll baskets/the screener's baskets out of the game.

-Don't jump into the ball until you hear the "Down" call. Put the heat on your bigs to communicate.

-If you have good guys and you establish good grounds of communication with them, they'll work hard to meet your expectations.

-Hold your guys to high standards to execute your system, but be realistic and make accommodations for difficult covers ("We want to 'down' the pass & follow, but we can't get to it sometimes and this is how we play it if that happens")

-There can't be a "Down" call without a "Low Man" call.

There should never be a pick & roll run where there's not two calls ("Down"/"Low Man"). If not, you'll give up baskets to the roll man. Even if it's not the correct rotation/protection scheme, by having a low man you disallow the #1 basket that kills ball screen D: roll-man layups. Even if it's not perfect, if you get a low man, you give yourself a chance to rotate/scramble out of it (rather than giving up a roll man layup). **No matter the defensive coverage, there needs to be a "Low Man."**

Talk does 2 things:

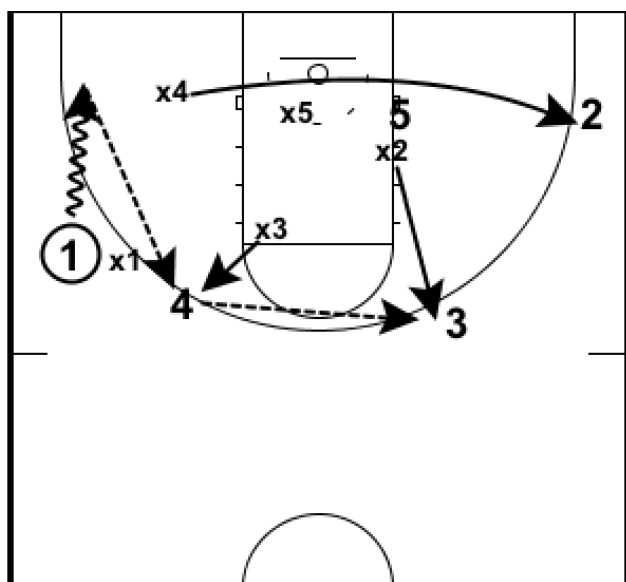
1. Helps your teammates play better
2. Tells your coaches you know what you're doing

-With our pick & roll D, our talk comes from our bigs. With our DHO defense, the talk comes from the guy guarding the cutter.

-When your man cuts through to the weakside, you go through slowly and with vision of the ball.

-They throw the ball out of a blitz, they're 4-on-3 and there's gaps everywhere. Sprint out of the trap and look first to the rim.

"Blitz 43" (may use versus Dirk if he's hit a couple)



Full rotation. X3 rotates to 4 on his catch. X2 rotates up. Note: x5 is Al Jefferson so they will rotate through him (x4 bumps out to take 2 in the right corner and x5 stays home on 5).

-If you're able to keep the ball down on side pick and rolls, it takes another layer of offensive execution to get a good shot.

-Nothing more important (offensively or defensively) than getting guys to play to their strengths.

-Regardless of your scheme, how much to help is everything.

- Younger big guys struggle with this (shot-blocking is everything).
- Limit your help
- Over-helping puts you at size disadvantage.
- "This is too much help/This is good help" (video)

-Versus the down:

- Give yourself room. Make sure you're not playing too close to the sideline.
- Pivot game: step to the baseline and then bring the ball over the top of the defender to get over the top of the "Down."
- Screener is always a receiver first (Pete Carril). Screener stops at elbow for a catch and guard cuts off him (baseline or over the top).
- Throwback to the screener. Quick DHO back to the guard (don't even look at the rim). Drive it downhill and flip it back to the guard.
- Throwback to the screener for ball reversal and wide pindown.