



## **THREE OF A KIND**

### **Course 01: Coach Ettore Messina**

#### **Lesson 09: Transition Game 2**

#### **Language: English**

### **TRANSITION GAME 2**

In Transition Game 1 a number of simple concepts have been illustrated that are the theoretical basis of a transition: it is obvious that each concept must be adapted to the makeup of the players on your team.

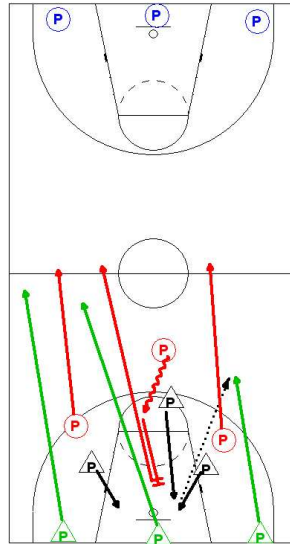
If for example we have a point guard who is very good in the transition game such as Sergi Llull, we will encourage him to push the ball up the court. If we have a player such as Marko Jaric then we prefer him to pass the ball up the court to then receive a pass back and take advantage of his three point shot. These are just two examples that help us remember that theory is nothing until it is applied to real life cases.

Regardless of how interesting a theory may be, if it is not applied then it will always remain as an intention; one of the coaches tasks is to be as specific and practical as possible. It is however possible to use various 3v3 fast break situations that can be found on the court for any team.

I think it is appropriate in this case when not outnumbering the defense, to try to finish the play before the rest of the offensive players arrive, as that way there are more spaces on the court to take advantage of. With this in mind I use a drill which I call "3v3 Recovery", which recreates a specific game situation. In **diagram 14** we can see three circles attacking against

three triangles. After the play is over the three circles must transition from offense to defense whilst the three triangles who were waiting at the baseline will receive an outlet pass from one of the three triangles currently defending on the court. The drill continues at both ends of the court, with two teams one made up of six triangles and the other the six circles, each divided into two groups of three, playing until one team reaches a particular score.

LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 14

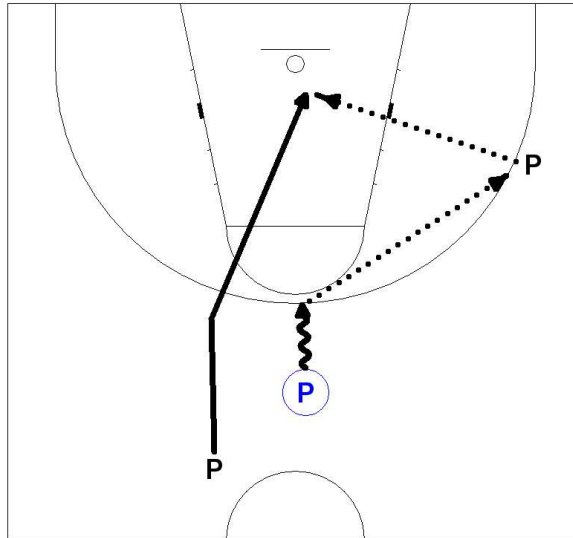


The effect is that three offensive players run at speed to attack the basket, and almost immediately have to run back at speed to defend their own basket before the three new players run down the court. As mentioned above, this recreates a game situation that we wish to work on.

If sixteen players are available then this drill can be run 4v4 and is very useful both from a conditioning point of view and from a technical point of view, because it forces the use of fundamental techniques at high speed. This for me is an efficient fast break drill, and one that I prefer over the more traditional drills where the defense is stationary in its own half court and waiting (contrary to what occurs in games).

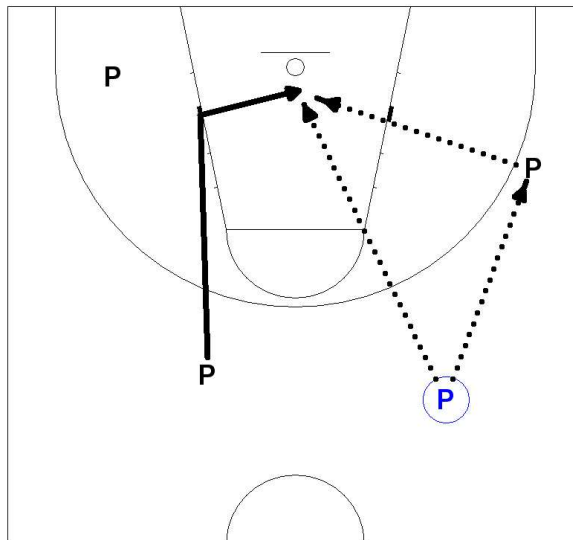
Once the initial wave of attack has finished in the 3v3, a big player should make a cut into the restricted area who most of the time will make this cut down the middle of the court (**diagram 15**).

LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 15



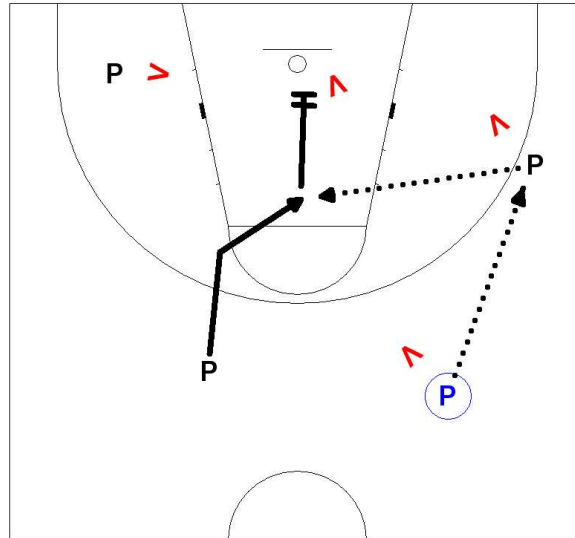
The cut can either be straight to the basket (as seen in diagram 15) or diagonal (**diagram 16**).

LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 16



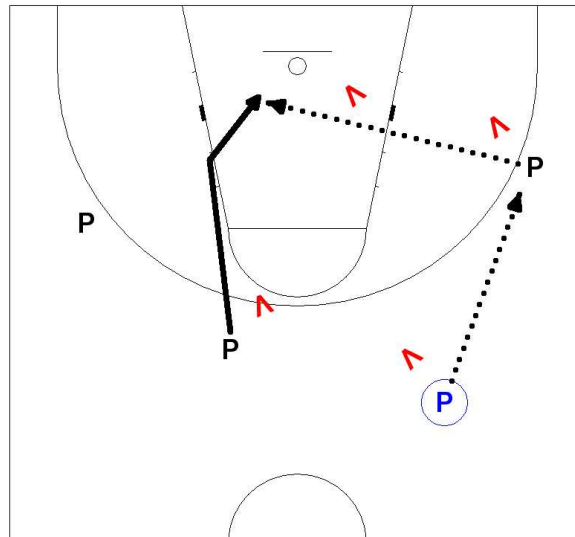
If the defense is very deep and beneath the basket, the player can stop and shoot inside the restricted area (**diagram 17**).

LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 17

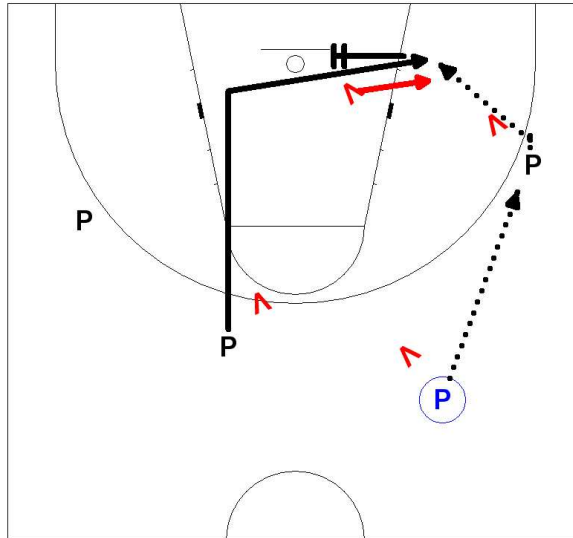


If a defender is already on the low post ball side (**diagram 18**), then the cut can be made to the opposite side of the basket for a lob pass or perhaps fake there and then cut back strong to the ball side short corner, surprising the defender with a three meter jump shot (**diagram 19**).

LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 18

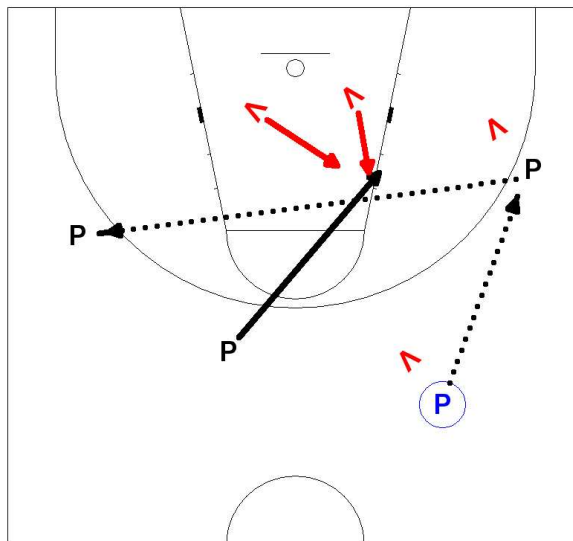


LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 19

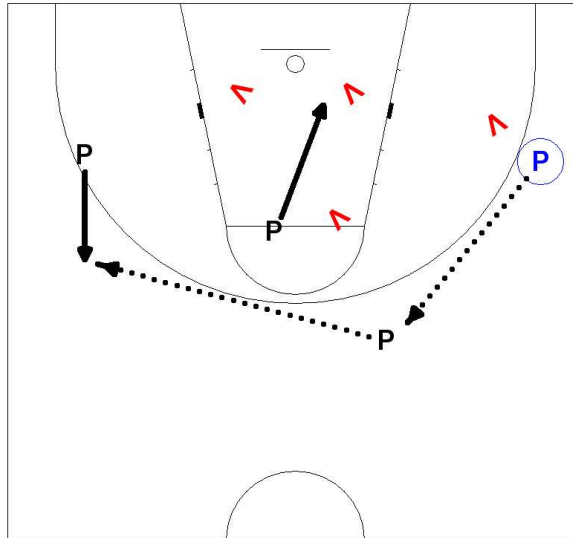


The basket cut performed by the trailer, even if he does not receive a pass usually causes the defense to collapse, making the ball reversal easier either via a skip pass (**diagram 20**) or through the point guard (**diagram 21**) reaching a shooter located on the help side. This player can shoot, dribble penetrate or pass to the trailer who could have relocated to the ball side low post (**diagram 22**). I am convinced that 3v2, which then becomes 3v3, the use of a trailer and the shooter on the help side are all vital to the primary break. This should be attempted in all of the situations described above, and the team should practice this on a daily basis, together with defensive work, as explained in Lesson 07.

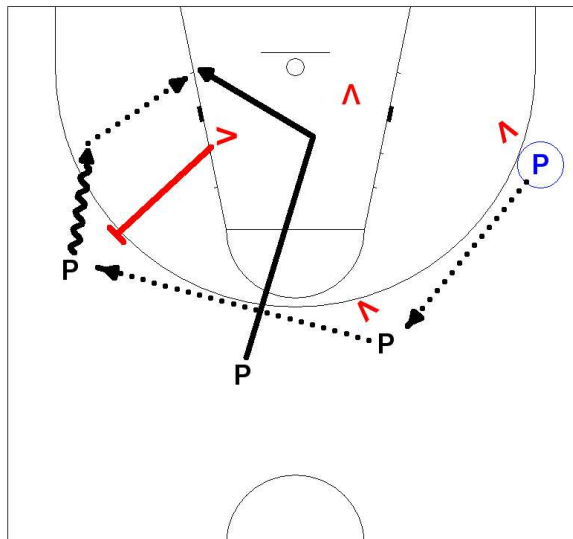
LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 20



LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 21



LESSON 09  
FASTBREAK 2  
DIAGRAM 22



This conviction implies that we retain an important and valid objective for our fast break and that is not only to look for a shot by the basket, but also that an uncontested three point shot by a player with high shooting percentages in these situations is also beneficial. Finishing a fast break using three outside players and one inside player usually brings a positive result for our team. On the contrary, if a primary or secondary break is attempted using all five players, our players tend to lose their killer instinct and the necessary mental aggressiveness, worrying more about what they should do later in the possession.

A fast break is usually preceded by an error on the part of the opponents, a rebound, two passes and a scoring action. For this reason I have always given priority to the primary break based on the arguments previously laid out, to then give the ball back to the point guard for a set play if necessary. With the introduction of the twenty-four second shot clock, once a primary break has finished without a basket, it is wise to use the short amount of time left to finish the play, getting the ball quickly to the hands of the best scorers so that they can create an advantageous situation for themselves or for one of their teammates.

The traditional secondary break that took close to 8-10 seconds to run when the thirty second shot clock was still in place in order to create mismatches in the defense before running a set play has practically disappeared in the modern game.

Finally I also like to encourage our transition game after having conceded a field goal or a free throw, in order to stimulate our offensive game using that way all of the possible seconds at our disposal when we have been unable to run our primary break.

### **REMEMBER**

- The fast break cannot exist without a strong defensive play which forces the opponent to commit an error in their shot or pass
- A quick and fast outlet pass, around the free throw line extended is one of the keys for the success of the action and fast break that the team has started by capturing the defensive rebound
- The fast break can be initiated by the dribble or the pass and the most important situations are not only those where the offense outnumbered the defense but also 3v3
- A strong basket cut by the trailer allows ball reversal and also good positioning for a three point shooter
- 2v1, 3v2, 3v3, the use of the trailer, a three point shot after ball reversal are the different parts of our primary break. Once this action has been finished, we prefer to give the ball back to our point guard and run a set offense