

TOWN OF CLIFTON PARK BOY'S REC BASKETBALL

COACHING DRILLS

Mission statement:

This league was formed many years ago to provide a safe, instructional and FUN program for our children to learn and enjoy the game of Basketball. As coaches, it is your responsibility to set a good example for each of your players. Please take the responsibility that you have accepted seriously. During this season, we expect that you will be prepared, punctual and most of all KIND.

You will need to understand that your action, positive or negative, will have a lasting effect on the kids that you coach. I am sure that many of you can still remember the coaches that you had in grade school.

The late John Wooden said ...

*“If you Learn to play basketball, you will Learn to love this game,
But if you Learn to coach ... you can change people’s lives.”*

I would like to thank each of you for your time and efforts. It is because of you, that this program has been a success for well over 20 years!

Frank Massa

Dribbling Drills:

If a Kid is going to learn to play basketball, he will have to learn to dribble with *both* hands. Teach the players to dribble low and to the side. They should keep the body and free hand between the ball and the defender. The ball should never come to shoulder level when dribbling.

In your practice secessions use cones or other markers on the floor. This will give the players a spot on the floor to advance to. DO NOT allow them to run with the ball. (OK maybe the 2nd & 3rd grade)

- (1) **Z- Drill :** Player dribbles right handed to one spot then switches left to next spot
- (2) **Cross over dribble:** is a dangerous offensive move and is also a lot of fun when you learn to turn the defender around and go by him. Emphasize that this must be done low.
- (3) **Reverse Dribble:** Teach your players to dribble backwards to create space. Have the players dribble the length of the court backwards. Have them stay on the “Balls” of their feet, weight forward or they will end up on their “Buts”.
- (4) **Full Turn Dribble:** Player starts right handed with the defender on his left side, teach them to turn their back to the defender, change the ball to the left hand and change direction. (Repeat on each side)

Dribbling Drills: (cont.)

- (5) **Two Ball Drill:** Player dribbles two balls at the same time. Switch from alternating One down, One up to balls bouncing at the same time.
(this really is the single best drill to teach dribbling)
Be patient with this one, it may take some time for the younger players.
- (6) **Head UP !:** You can use the “Helmet Head” or other dribbling aids to teach the players look up and not at the ball. You can also teach this by having them dribble in a line that passes the coach. Hold fingers up and make them call out the number, to do this they will have to look at you and not at the ball.
(Old Balls never die ... they become “Helmet Heads”) Make two for your Kids and have them Race while wearing. The kids have a riot and they learn to keep their heads and eyes up. (Just remember to remove the valve stem)
- (7) The kids need to keep the ball in their fingertips. Don't let them slap the ball with their palms.
- (8) **Jump Stop:** Teach the players to come to a Jump Stop without picking up the dribble. This happens in a game, every time that a defender slows their progress. Stress that they must maintain the dribble and control of the ball.
- (9) **WALL Drill:** have the players dribble off a wall. This will force them to dribble with their fingertip and forearms, elbow is bent and they can not throw the ball against the wall.

Passing Drills:

Body positioning on passing is very important. Elbows out, Thumbs down and snap the ball. They must “Step To” the target they are passing to. Do not let them throw the ball. Hands even and they should PUSH the ball away from their body. This is also a good time to teach the correct way to receive a pass. **Target Hand** should be out and shown to the person that is passing. When they learn to catch the ball with target hand out ... they can then shoot, pass or dribble from this position. This is called the Triple Threat.

Make sure that with Bounce Passes they go through the exact same motions. Teach that the ball should be bounced early enough to bounce above the receiver's waist. Even the High School guys throw passes that bounce at people's feet and then Coach Massa isn't very happy.

Line Drills and Flip drills are good to keep the kids moving and involved. With each passing drill ... Make sure that the receiver is moving toward the ball ... **COME TO THE BALL!**

Passing Drills: (cont.)

The **STAR DRILL** is a great way to teach passing and communication between players.

Start with five players in a circle and one ball. Player with the ball will pass to the player that is second from his right. Before he passes he must call that players name and see that he is looking at him. Remember, good form and target hand out. The receiver then calls out the player's name that is second to his right and passes to him. This repeats and the ball goes around the circle.

With this you are teaching good eye contact, proper form and the team mates will learn each others names. Do not let the receiving player call for the ball. (They do that too in games any way) Make sure that the ball is not passed until the receiving player is looking at the passer. Stress eye contact.

Now the fun starts! Add a second ball to the mix and eventually a third ball (If they can do it) When things start to get hectic ... remember to stress that they keep proper form and step to the target. Do this with Chest Passes and Bounce Passes ... the kids love it.

Shooting Drills:

Shooting is probably the hardest skill to teach in Basketball because it is a very individual thing. Younger players are not usually strong enough to shoot a basketball with proper form and reach a ten foot basket. Because of this ... they develop all kinds of bad habits.

The best thing we can teach is proper form...

- The ball should be in the players finger tips (Not touching the heel of the hand)
- Elbow should be in and the upper arm should be pointing at ninety degrees to the target
- Forearm and upper arm should form an "L"
- Knees slightly bent and feet squared to the target
- Young players usually have their feet too close together, feet shoulder width apart
- When releasing the shot, the ball should be at least at shoulder level never waist level.
- As they get older and stronger you can teach them to release over their heads.
- On release, Teach them to spin the ball off their finger tips. Teach ball rotation in a shot.
- Be very aware of what the second hand is doing to the shot. Do not let them shoot with two hands. The guide hand should be on the ball to steady ... not to help push.

Try these drills:

Start with having the shoot at a spot on the wall. Kids worry so much about if a shot "Goes in" that they forget what they are practicing. Have them put the guide hand behind their back and with one hand hit the spot on the wall. Repeat until they have hit the spot five times with correct form

If a player is constantly shooting with two hands, have him take the guide hand and turn it out so that the ball is resting on the back of the hand. It will now be impossible for the player to push with both hands.

Shooting Drills: (cont.)

For the older players ... Balance in the shot becomes much more critical. All these kids watch the NBA too much and see players flying to their left or right, or falling backward and hit a shot. That's why they get paid millions, Our kids need to learn to be balanced thru the shot.

Take a 2x4 (wood) and cut it to about 30 inches ... place it on the court about ten feet from the basket and have the player stand on it. (Balls of their feet, not heels) Then have them take a shot. If they can't stay on the 2x4 ... They aren't balanced. You and the player will see very quickly if they are leaning forward or back. Move it out to the foul line and do the same. This is also forcing them to have their feet and body squared to the basket.

I know that this is old school and I really stole it from Baseball but if you are shooting or hitting ... You have to stay balanced.

Lay – ups: Both Left and Right handed

To start teaching the proper form ... get rid of the ball.

Have them get on a line ... take one big step with the left foot and have them jump up and pull the right knee to their chest (for right handed layups) the opposite for left. Make them do this until they seem to be comfortable.

Now have the throw their right hand in the air as they are jumping. It works, these kids need to learn what foot to take off on for a Layup and need to learn to bring the opposite knee up. Also, make them use the proper hand. They all want to use their right hand on a left handed Layup.

Next ... Line them up about five feet from the basket. They take one big step and explode to the basket. You can get so many more reps out of this drill because they are not dribbling and looking down at the Ball. Also, if the backboard does have a Box on it. Make them hit the square. The ball will go in and their eyes are on the backboard ... not the rim.

Teach proper angles to the basket ... the approach to the basket should be at about 45 degrees to the backboard for a layup. Unless they can dunk, they should not be coming directly toward the rim. This is one of the hardest shots in Basketball.

Rebounding and Boxing out

For years we have all hollered "Put a butt on somebody"

And this is absolutely the worst way to teach about "Boxing Out"

It is extremely important that we stop the kids from looking at the ball after a shot. When a shot goes up they should be making EYE contact with the person they are defending and stay between them and the basket. DON'T TURN ... This is where you teach "Feel and Seal"

A good Drill for this is ... Line up under the basket and one person at the Foul Line.

Baseline passes to the foul line and he shoots it. Player that has passed the ball now must feel and seal the shooter. THE SHOOTER BETTER NOT TOUCH THE BALL AGAIN.

Rebounding and Boxing out (cont.)

The basic Rebounding line is a great way to explain how to rebound correctly.

- The single line starts inside the foul line toward half court. The first player throws the ball against the backboard. The next player in line must catch the ball at the top of his jump. Control the ball with two hands as he lands, get wide and then throw it up again for the next player, run to the end of the line. You also should stress that the ball should never hit the ground.

Defense

The Key to teaching defense is having the Kids understanding footwork and balance.

First, you have to teach the kids “Good Defensive Positioning”

Bent knees, wide stance, head up, hands out and most of all they need to have weight on the balls of their feet. Don’t let them get back on their heels.

Hands must be out and up. Tell them not to REACH. That is always a Foul.

Defense is an attitude and the great players work on Defense and Rest on offense.

Drills ...

Slide Drill, Towel behind their back , running backwards.

In our league, especially the younger kids ... we do not allow them to double the ball Except in the paint. Please continue to stress that they should not be chasing the ball ... They need to stay on their own men.

NO ZONE DEFENSES ARE ALLOWED IN THS LEAGUE !!!

I am sure that each of you have your own drills and I would suggest that you talk with the other teams coach and possibly have the two teams work together prior to the games, for part of the practice.

Remember that nobody invents these drills, they just steal the good ones from other great coaches and use what works.

Good Luck this Season and Have Fun ...