

RUN THE BLAZE OFFENSE AT ALL LEVELS

BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

Learn • Train • Develop • Enjoy

October 3, 2013

Issue 2

\$4.99

PASS & SCREEN AWAY

GREAT FOR ALL LEVELS

ENCOURAGE MULTI-SPORT PARTICIPATION

4 ADVANTAGES FOR YOUR PLAYERS

TEAM-BUILDING STRATEGIES

< ADAPT MIKE KRZYZEWSKI'S 3-OUT, 2-IN TO YOUR SQUAD



THE BEST PRACTICES EVERY WEEK!

UTILIZE PROPER SPACING TO DO MORE THAN RUN SET PLAYS

Seek Out the Answers



Basketball Coach Weekly Issue 2

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9325 SW Iowa Drive
Tualatin, OR 97062

Editor-in-chief
Michael Austin
michael.austin@
basketballcoachweekly.com

Contributors
Bruce Bouck, Jim Boone

Illustrations
Mike Renwick

Pictures
Action Images

Production
Matt Boulton, Julie Lifton

Designer
Jamie Leeson

Publisher
Kevin Barrow
kevin.barrow@greenstarmedia.net

Customer Services
Duncan Heard
duncanh@
basketballcoachweekly.com

Managing Director
Andrew Griffiths

To advertise contact
Elisabeth Cammell at
advertising@
basketballcoachweekly.com



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To subscribe to Basketball
Coach Weekly please
contact Duncan Heard at
Green Star Media Ltd,
Meadow View, Tannery Lane,
Bramley, Guildford
GU5 0AB, UK.

You can contact Duncan
via Skype at
basketballcoachweekly
or via email at
duncanh@basketballcoachweekly.
com

Sideline Stories

One issue down ... the rest of your coaching life to go. **Basketball Coach Weekly** is off to a rousing success already thanks to the likes of you and your coaching peers. There is no substitute for fantastic coaching advice, in-depth Xs and Os and thought-provoking pieces from the people who stalk the sidelines just as you do, especially when you consider we're with you 52 times a year. I'm confident as you

"Ask for help. Be confident enough in your knowledge to change direction when necessary"

get deeper into our issues and reports, **Basketball Coach Weekly** will become a part of your weekly team prep.

Of course, there is a fine line between confident and over-confident. I firmly believe you are receiving some of the best coaching material available but at the same time want to hear from readers about what we're doing right ... and what we're doing wrong. I'm not over-confident in that I know it all.

This idea of confidence vs. over-confidence has popped up in my coaching life right now. My oldest daughter is six and just starting to show an interest in sports. This fall she joined soccer and about a week before the season started, all the parents received an email strongly stating this team didn't have a coach. I gave it some thought and stepped up.

I know nothing about soccer but I

jumped right in and figured, "Hey, I can stay a step ahead of a bunch of six-year-olds." My over-confidence was blinding.

Little did I know coaching at the youth level is about so much more than on-the-field skills. Yes, six-year-olds need a primer in the basics, but more importantly they must understand the rules of the team, how to treat teammates and how to rally together as a group even when everyone doesn't agree on the team name voted by the majority (sadly, we have cast ourselves as the unimposing "Sparkly Penguins").

Now, I ask questions all the time. I attend free clinics. I email the league when I'm not sure of a policy. And while the sports are different, coaching isn't. As basketball coaches you know a lot, but you don't know it all. Use the resources around you to improve your philosophy. Ask for help. Be confident enough in your knowledge to change directions when necessary.

Most importantly, encourage your players to speak up and ask questions as well. You may be surprised by how much you learn from them ... even if you are leading a bunch of Sparkly Penguins.



Michael Austin
Michael Austin
Editor-in-chief



Teach your players but listen to them too – you may learn a thing

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Run a simple version of Duke's 3-out, 2-in motion

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The Blade Offense is built around screening away when one pass away from the ball

5 TWO BLADE OPTIONS

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6 TEAM BUILDING DURING REBUILDING

Identify a team leader, work that person hard and create Shared Suffering experiences

QUICK HITTER

4 Reasons To Encourage Multi-Sport Participation

By Matthew Shomper, athletic director, Tippecanoe High School, Tipp City, Ohio

The trend today may be for basketball players to specialize just in hoops but it's to their benefit to participate in multiple sports. Here's why you need to encourage them to get off the court.

1. Improved Health. Research shows overuse injuries and burnout are reduced when athletes branch out from single-sport activities.

2. Improved Athletic Performance. Cross-training leads to better athleticism and an increased ability to develop new skills. Players improve mentally because they are challenged by new scenarios.

3. Improved Character Development. A top-notch basketball player only

may be an average baseball player. This keeps the athlete's ego in check by learning humility and relying more on teammates.

4. Improved Coaching. Learning from different coaches exposes players to a variety of personalities and expectations. Don't just pound your philosophy year-round into your athletes' heads – they have the rest of their lives to focus on one thing in their careers.

The 3-out, 2-in motion has fueled Duke's long-time success. Simplify it even further with the Blade Offense to get the most from your players



Screen for Success

Blade Offense slices the opposition with constant screens

Duke's Mike Krzyzewski has built one of the most successful college coaching careers upon the back of a dynamic, yet simple offense at its core – the 3-out, 2-in motion. Of course, with Duke's talent and top-notch coaching staff, there is so much more that goes into the Blue Devils' high-octane offense, but if you watch a Krzyzewski-led team play long enough, you are bound to see the 3-out, 2-in motion movements and the perfect spacing that goes along with it.

A championship-contending program such as Duke also throws its own detailed structure into the basic motion ... and you can too. Perfect for youth programs wanting to get players understanding the flow of the game rather than just memorizing plays, as well as for high school varsity programs looking to simplify its offense at times – the Blade

Offense works well for all age levels.

Much like Krzyzewski's 3-out, 2-in motion, the Blade (as explained by Bruce Bouck, who coaches at the youth and varsity levels in Mansfield, Mass.) features players initially screening away on the entry pass to a wing. The Blade carves its own path in that the entire offense (Bouck calls it a "freelance structured offense") revolves around screening away when one pass away from the ball handler and doesn't distinguish between guards and forwards, as everyone ends up in the five spots on the court. "I use the term 'Blade' because there always are two players slashing down setting picks after each pass. It is a form of motion offense and allows for freelance movement as long as the five spots on the floor constantly are being replaced," Bouck explains.

Why it's Effective

Bouck's experience at the youth level has shown him coaches who try complex plays, isolation plays or no plays at all. When working with younger players, it's important to have some structure but not have them thinking about every move.

"Look at the flex offense. Players continue to cut baseline off screens when they may be wide open in the first place along the baseline without making any cut," Bouck says. "Too much complexity clutters a young player's mind."

As players mature, introduce moves off the screens such as the curl cut, slip cut, backdoor cuts, flare-outs or screen refusals to allow high school players the opportunity to read the position of the defense and move accordingly. This way, they move within the flow of the game rather than running a bunch of set plays.

Words by:

Michael Austin

Activities by:

Bruce Bouck, President, Mansfield Youth Basketball Association, boys varsity assistant, Mansfield High School, Mass.

Slice the Defense

The Blade Offense's concepts are easy enough for a youth squad to grasp but can be adjusted to meet the advanced needs of a varsity high school team

WHY USE IT

The Blade Offense is the perfect balance between having too much structure, which forces players into acting like robots, and not enough structure, which leads to chaos on the court. Players get a better feel for the game when they have simple movements to follow.

SET UP

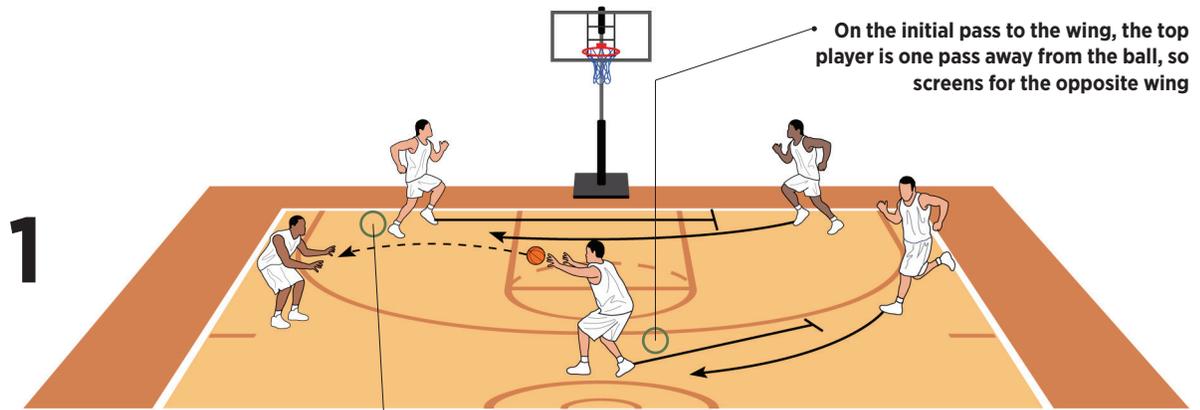
There are no guards or forwards in this offense. All five players end up at all five positions within this set. The action starts with a player at the top with the ball, two players positioned on the wings and two on the baseline.

HOW TO PLAY

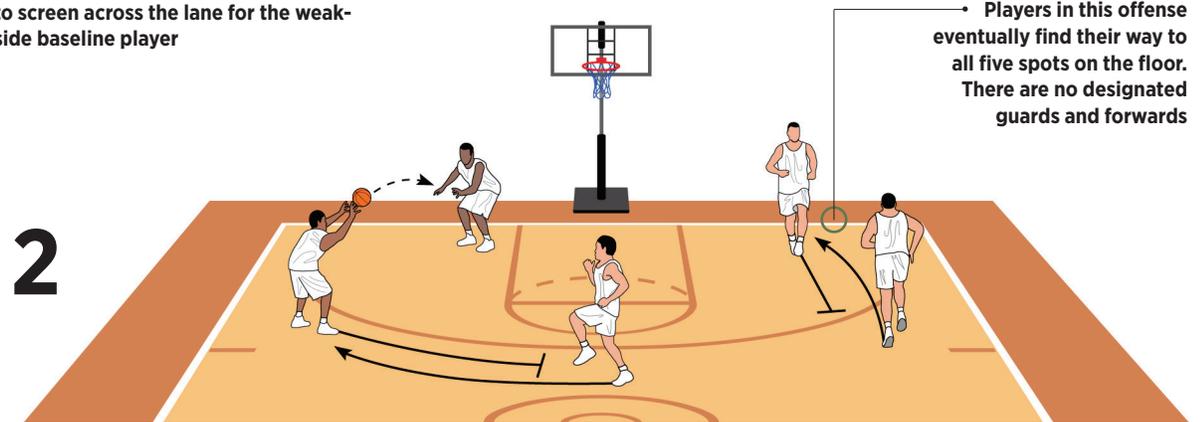
The top player passes to a wing. The passer and the player on the ball-side baseline are one pass away from the ball. This means those two players screen away [1]. Players continue to screen if they are one pass away [2] until the defense becomes tired of being screened, which allows for an open shot or dribble penetration to become available [3].

TECHNIQUE

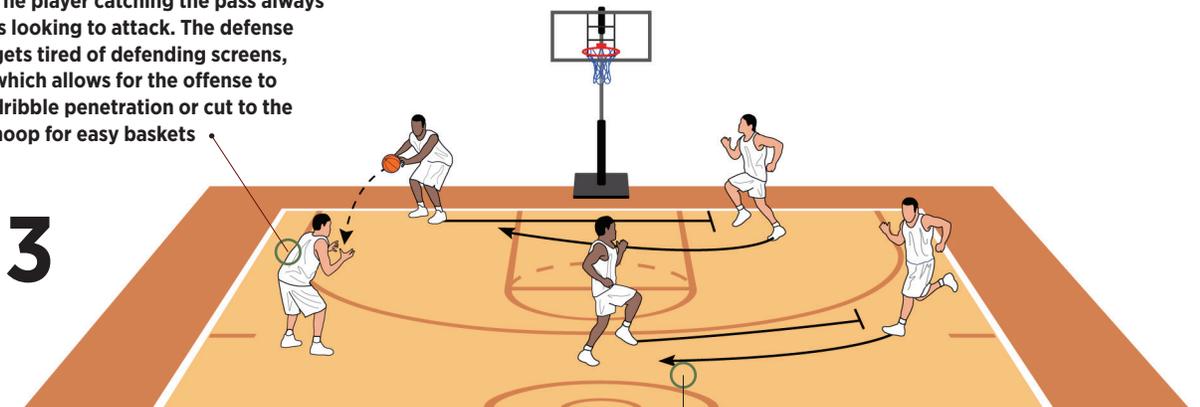
In its purest form, this is a motion offense that allows freelance movements as long as the five positions on the floor constantly are being replaced.



The ball-side baseline player is one pass away from the ball, so the movement is to screen across the lane for the weak-side baseline player



The player catching the pass always is looking to attack. The defense gets tired of defending screens, which allows for the offense to dribble penetration or cut to the hoop for easy baskets



Two Blade Options

After the defense sees the Blade a few times, work in some wrinkles to take advantage of the open lanes created for easy scoring opportunities

WHY USE IT

If the defense knows what's coming, it's easier to stop. By adding a couple of easy movements off the base offense, the defense remains on its heels and your players start understanding how to read the defense to take advantage of weak spots.

SET UP

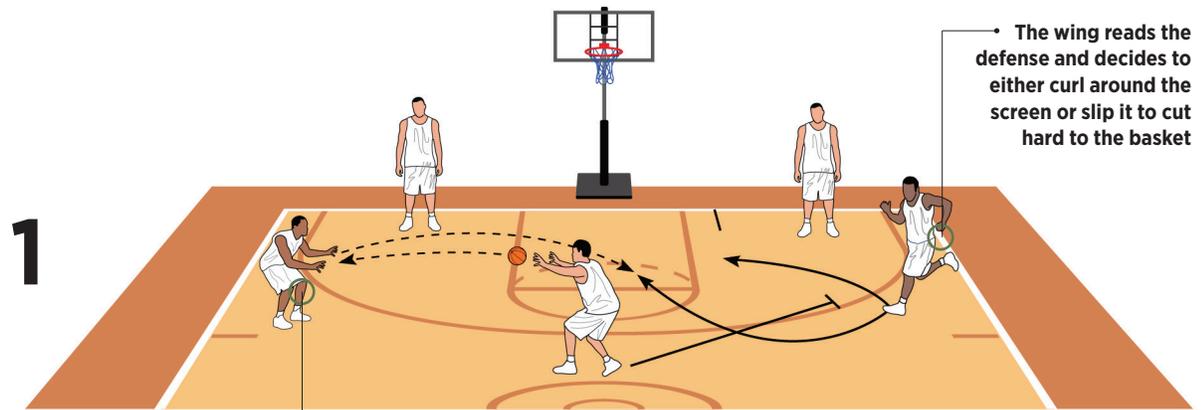
The Blade always is run from the 3-out, 2-in look. The initial pass goes to the wing, which is a signal for the two players who are one pass away from the ball to screen away. In the second option (Diagrams 2-3), have the point guard hold up a fist to indicate a double screen is coming.

HOW TO PLAY

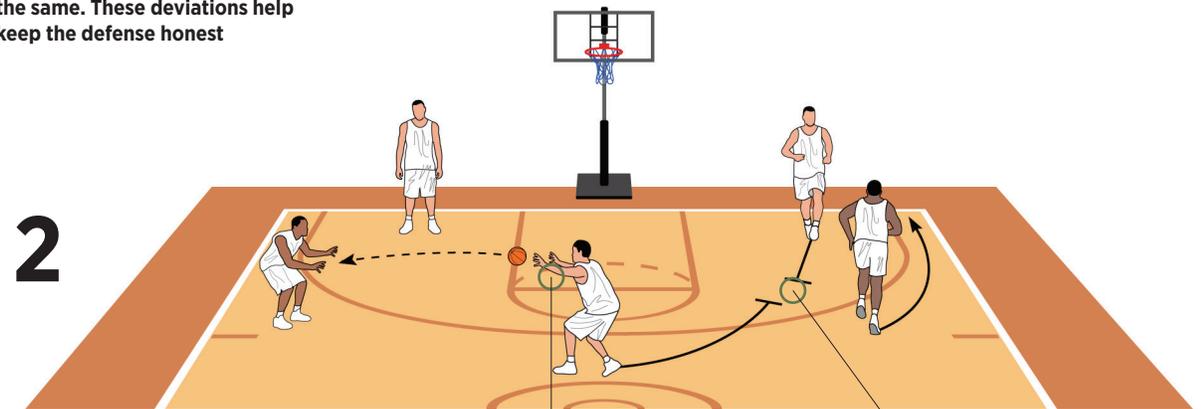
Diagram 1 shows the curl or slip option instead of running off the screen and coming to the top. The Blade keeps the offense spread, so if the defense cheats to the top thinking the wing simply is replacing the point guard, it creates a lane for a curl cut or slip to the hoop. Diagrams 2 and 3 show the progression of running a double screen and utilizing dribble penetration to create three opportunities for open shots.

TECHNIQUE

Don't have players jump too soon to the new movements. Let the defense believe it's still seeing the basic Blade and watch the lanes open.

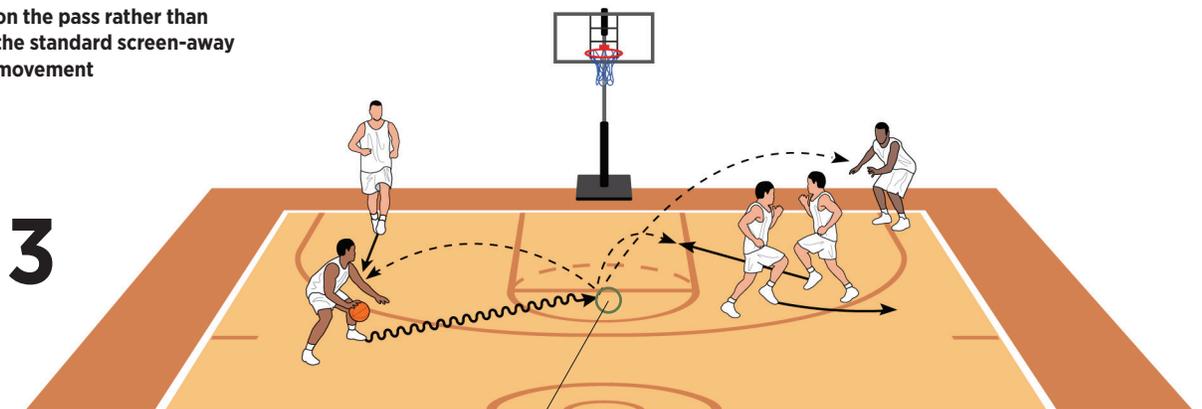


1 The ball handler must pay close attention and not simply expect the movements always to be the same. These deviations help keep the defense honest



2 The point guard raises a fist to indicate that a double screen is to occur on the pass rather than the standard screen-away movement

The double screen allows the wing to flare to the corner



3 The ball handler penetrates to the middle and looks for open shooters in the corner, slipping to the basket or back to the wing where the play originated



Team building goes beyond going to movies or a team weekend. Push players to their breaking point to see them lean on each other



Team Building During Rebuilding

Identify your team leader, then schedule a boot camp day to generate camaraderie

Going from the security of coaching at just four institutions during a quarter-century stretch, I recently led three different Division II schools during three successive seasons. Yes, “chaotic” is the first word that comes to mind, but constantly transitioning forced the re-examination of my team-building skills.

As high school and youth basketball coaches, you are facing an ever-changing rotation of players coming through your program. It’s imperative to understand the personalities of the individuals on your team, then figure out the best way to mold them into one cohesive unit.

Two Keys to Team Building while Rebuilding

There are two absolutes when it comes to team building in a rebuilding environment.

1. Identify the best leader on your team. This sometimes requires the input of others, depending on your situation. The hope is

this person is your best or most important player. Get this person to “buy in” 100 percent.

2. Coach the identified leader harder than anyone else in your program. Hold this player to a higher standard. Create hardships for the team. Be sure the leader allows no push back from players. This is called Shared Suffering.

Boot Camp Suffering

Some of the aforementioned Shared Suffering occurs just prior to the first official practice of the season. Hold a three- to four-day boot camp (each session begins at 6 a.m.) in your gym. You don’t need to go off campus and extravagant team-building exercises aren’t required.

The plan is simple – place your players in a position where they mentally and physically rely upon each other to outlast the opponent and eventually survive. Here are just a couple of boot camp exercises:

1. Run Ladders. This is a series of timed sprints. Each team member must beat the specified time for the set distance to move up or down to the next step of the ladder. If just one member doesn’t accomplish the goal, the team keeps running.

2. Iron Man Day. Get outside and host a series of events such as pushing a football blocking sled a set distance, flipping tires the length of the field, completing a specified number of stadium steps and pushing a Jeep for a set distance. Break the team into groups of three or four. Each group must complete the task to move to the next event. Make it a big deal when all groups have completed every station. It’s important to accomplish this ultimate goal together. You then can reference it during difficult times during the season – “Remember boot camp. We didn’t cave in. We didn’t quit. We outlasted our opponent and we are going to do the same thing right now!”

Words by:
Jim Boone,
head men’s
coach, Delta
State University,
Cleveland, Miss.



100 Club BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

Thank You, Basketball Visionaries

Many, many thanks to everyone listed below – the latest members of the **Basketball Coach Weekly 100 Club**. You have shown that you are true visionaries in the world of basketball coaching. You are part of a select group of people who have chosen to do all they can to become better coaches and together we will make basketball coaching a more enjoyable, more rewarding experience for thousands of basketball players across the USA and around the world. The 100 Club is growing fast and I'm delighted that you are all joining me on this exciting journey.

Mustafaa Abdallah, Temecula, Calif.
David R Allenson, Sugar Grove, Pa.
Penny Anderson, Melfort, SK, Canada
Anthony Angotti, Woodbury, N.Y.
Debbie Cadee, Condell Park, NSW, Australia
Claudette Charney, Hillsdale, Mich.
Jason Damjanovic, San Jose, Calif.
Daniel Fischer, Coogee, NSW, Australia
Robert Fugate, Kadoka, S.D.
Ken Fujii, Eureka, Nev.
Marco Gagliardi, Lawton, Okla.
Arthan Gilder, Irving, Texas
Joseph Gouveia, Wakefield, Mass.
Karen Hicks, Harrisburg, Pa.
Lori Liles, Eldon, Iowa
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Marshall Wandrei, Shelby Township, Mich.
John Wiley, Redmond, Wash.
Mike Yance, Ky.

NEXT WEEK:
**COACH YOUR PLAYERS
TO SHOOT LIKE RAY ALLEN**