FIND FOCUS AT THE RIM WITH THE FINISHING SERIES

DRILL THE VEER REVERSE & SCORE MORE HIGH-PERCENTAGE SHOTS

START PREPARING FOR PRESEASON CONDITIONING RIGHT NOW

3 WAYS TO GET YOUR DAY OFF TO A SUCCESSFUL START

USE A PROTECTION LAYUP TO SHIELD THE BALL FROM DEFENDERS
Plan For Preseason Conditioning

Sideline Stories

We’ve reached a critical point in the year for basketball players - summer leagues are complete and the scholastic season still is a few months away. This timeframe provides a perfect opportunity for “active rest,” which was covered three weeks ago by one of our athletic-trainer contributors, Paige White.

White is a revered trainer who is based in Arkansas, but who works with high school and college players around the country (she just recently spent some time in California training several teams on the west coast). Based on her intricate knowledge (see Quick Hitter below for another sample of her areas of expertise) and ability to present information to audiences such as ours, we’ve enlisted her to tackle a giant project for you.

In the coming weeks, be on the lookout for a preseason conditioning guide to use with your players. Whether they took your advice and worked out on their own this summer, or if they slacked a bit, this eight-week strategic plan will have them in shape for the season’s opening tip.

White is tackling a new topic for each week of the plan. Rather than waiting until those first few practices to see where players stand in regard to fitness, now everyone will be on the same page when you institute this plan starting eight weeks prior to the official start of your season.

Topics include:
• Pre-habilitation - dealing with ACL prevention and hip strength
• Overall strength
• Building the core
• Basketball conditioning
• Power and vertical
• Agility
• Flexibility
• Strength for the season

These eight areas of training perfectly mesh with your players’ focus with each week leading up to the season.

“The central purpose of this training program is to decrease the occurrence of injury. Basketball is very physically demanding and is most certainly a contact sport. Making the muscles, ligaments, and tendons of the body stronger will lessen the chance and/or severity of an injury (such as a pulled groin or rolled ankle), and keep a player on the court where they belong," explains White. “In addition, a properly implemented training program can improve overall performance. A player will be able to run faster, jump higher, and box out stronger! Therefore, they will be able to perform their basketball skills at a higher level, with more efficiency and perform them for longer (without the onset of fatigue).”

We will have more detailed information on ordering in the coming weeks. This is a book you don’t want to miss leading into your season - be the best prepared team you can and have your players performing in mid-season form from the get-go.

In this issue...

3 CONVERT HIGH-PERCENTAGE CREATIONS
Your players are masters of creating shots at the rim ... but can they finish the play by scoring the layup?

4 SHOW STRENGTH AT THE RIM
Teach the Protection Layup so players keep the ball close to them, away from defenders and in a position to score

5 USE THE OPPOSITE HAND TO SCORE
The Veer Reverse shows players how to dribble with the right but score with the left hand

6 FOSTER LONG-TERM HOOPS LOVE
Encourage multi-sport participation to keep players loving the game of basketball

QUICK HITTER

3 WAYS TO START THE DAY

Wake up and make sure you do these three things to get your day off on the right foot from a nutritional standpoint, which sets the table for a players to achieve peak performance.

> DRINK WATER. Water keeps players energized, flushes out toxins and waste, increases metabolism and helps the body assimilate vitamins and minerals. Keep water handy at all times.

> PROPER BREAKFAST. One of the best breakfasts you can have is a bowl of all-natural, no-sugar-added oatmeal and berries with a hardboiled egg on the side.

> LEMON. Squeeze the juice of half a lemon into a cup of water. This improves digestion, immunity and helps shed toxins.

> LEAVE. Balance your meal with fruits and vegetables for a balanced meal and leave feeling satisfied.

> PRIME YOUR TONGUE. Use a tongue scraper to remove built-up bacteria that can cause bad breath and make you feel lethargic:

> BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

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Convert High-Percentage Creations

Players love using the dribble to fake, move and break down a defender, but if they miss the layup, then the actions weren’t worth the effort.

Toss out those tired layup lines and encourage players to focus on high-percentage, game-like shots. Blowing a shot at the rim ranks right up there with not hustling and turning over the ball when it comes to pushing your frustration levels to new heights. While players want to show off how flashy they are with the basketball, you know it’s the two points on the scoreboard that count more than how many times a ball handler “breaks the ankle” of a defender.

To encourage and maximize effort at the rim, use the Wing Finishing Series shown in part on the following two pages. Page 4 showcases the Protection Layup, which is utilized in all phases of the series. Page 5 looks at the Veer Reverse, which provides the proper way to move the ball from the dribbling to the opposite shooting hand.

Luke Meier of Mike Lee Basketball (a basketball training company based out of Milwaukee, Wis.) provided the specifics behind the series. In addition to the two shown in detail (starting at the elbow, starting in triple threat and starting in triple threat facing a cone) Meier says have players complete three additional specifics to finalize the series (players complete each specific in the same way - starting at the elbow, starting in triple threat and starting in triple threat facing a cone - five reps for each)

> INSIDE HAND. Take a dribble with the right hand (starting on the right side of the court), then turn the back into the defender and finish with the inside hand.

> INSIDE SHOULDER. This involves taking a couple dribbles toward the rim, jump stopping, putting the shoulder into the defender and shooting the layup. The feet and shoulders are pointing at the baseline on the landing of the jump stop. After completing five reps of each of the three movements, do the same thing only have the two dribbles go toward the middle of the lane.

> HIPS ACROSS. Take two dribbles toward the middle of the floor, pick up the ball off the second dribble and bring it to the outside shoulder, then shoot the layup. On the finish, be sure the shoulder is in and the ball is out.

Words by: Michael Austin
Activities by: Luke Meier, Camp Director & Lead Skills Trainer, Milwaukee Division, Mike Lee Basketball

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Show Strength At The Rim

The Protection Layup portion of the series teaches players how to keep the ball close yet still in a position to score on the drive.

**WHY USE IT**
Players love putting their heads down and getting to the rim. But, rarely do they practice actually finishing the shot.

**SET UP**
The player holds a ball at the elbow for the first portion. The player moves back for the second phase and add in a cone in the third segment.

**HOW TO PLAY**
Start with the player taking a hard dribble toward the hoop. On the dribble the player “pops” the ball off the dribble to the shoulder (this avoids the “rhythm swing” players typically use and is a better way to protect the ball). The player extends and finishes the layup. Do this five times [1]. The second phase has the player begin in triple-threat position and sweeps the ball, then attacks with a straight-line drive. Use one dribble into a protection layup. Do this five times [2]. Add a cone as a defender. Start in triple threat. Attack the middle with one hard dribble. Get cut off by the cone, dribble between the legs, attack the hoop with a protection layup. Do this five times [3].

**TECHNIQUE**
Go at a fast pace - no walking through the motions. Have players anticipating contact while scoring at the rim.

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**Player movement** ➔ **Ball movement** ➔ **Dribble** ➔ **Shot**

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Use The Opposite Hand To Score

The Veer Reverse shows players how to start with a right-hand dribble but finish in the middle of the lane with a left-hand layup.

**WHY USE IT**
Solid defenders cut off a player’s strong hand. Only repetitions with the opposite hand drive home the muscle memory to score at the rim with the “weak” hand.

**SET UP**
The player starts with a ball at the elbow. In Diagram 2, he or she begins a little deeper - outside the 3-point line on the wing.

**HOW TO PLAY**
Take one dribble with the right hand, bring the ball to the left, extend the ball in front of the body and score the layup with the left hand. This is not a crossover dribble. Do this five times [1].

Now start in a triple-threat position. Attack with a straight-line dribble and shift the ball to the left quickly while veering away from an imagined defender on the right. Score the left-handed layup. Do this five times [2].

Start again in a triple threat. Attack the middle with one hard dribble. The cone serves as a defender. Dribble between the legs at the cone, take two hard dribbles toward the rim, veer and score with the left hand. Do this five times [3].

**TECHNIQUE**
Watch how players finish with the left. After many reps, it should start to look natural.

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**Player movement** ➔ **Ball movement** ➔ **Dribble** ➔ **Shot**

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Not to be overlooked are the significant social implications of early sport specialization. Sociologist Jay Coakley of the University of Colorado calls this one-dimensional self-concept that many athletes attain a developmental dead end, where children feel trapped in a role and identity completely associated with their sporting success. When they burnout and quit, or simply become less successful athletes, their whole social structure may crumble, and their self-worth may diminish. The pressure and stress can make them quit far before they ever achieve their athletic potential.

According to Dr. Joseph Baker, one of the world’s leading sports scientists, children need three things to continue with athletics for the long term. These factors are so significant, that without them, there is little chance your young athlete will ever perform at his or her very best. They are:

1. **INTRINSIC MOTIVATION**
   Baker calls intrinsic motivation the “currency of athletic performance.” If your child does not have it, not only is it very hard to instill, but your athlete will never have the drive, grit and mental fortitude to train and play hard enough. I see many parents who are the ones leading the charge when it comes to going to training, doing extra work on the side, and finding opportunities for the athlete to challenge himself and get out of his comfort zone. This does not bode well for the future of that athlete.

2. **ENJOYMENT**
   For some reason, there are a number of misguided coaches and parents who think that competitive sports and enjoyment are mutually exclusive. They are not. In fact, if an athlete does not love her sport, if she does not enjoy the experience, she will never hang around long enough to be good. This does not mean that every single moment has to pleasurable, as I know many top athletes who might not consider conditioning training to be enjoyable. But the experience, taken as a whole, must be fun, it must keep them coming back, and it must be something they look forward to doing.

3. **AUTONOMY**
   Your athlete must have ownership over his or her sports experience. The goals pursued must belong to them. As coaches and parents, we can suggest some goals and encourage athletes to aim higher, but ultimately we must release them to their game, and their goals. They have to drive the bus, and we must be the navigator who helps them find the way. We can encourage, we can push them and hold them accountable for their ambitions and dreams, but ultimately, if it is you and not your kids in the driver’s seat, the trip will be a short one.

There are too many tales of burnout among youth players - understand why it is happening and how to foster a love of basketball.
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