

RUN INITIAL DECOY ACTION TO SET UP HANDOFF & TOSSBACK

BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

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INCREASE YOUR SHOOTING PERCENTAGE

MARYLAND'S HORNS SETS CREATE EASY OPPORTUNITIES

STEAL POINTS FROM THE BASELINE

◀ RUN A BACKCUT TO BEAT A CHEATING DEFENSE

THE
21 IDEALS
BEHIND A WINNING CULTURE

CHART POSITIVE TOUCHES IN PRACTICE



BACKDOOR COUNTER SHREDS AN OVERPLAYING DEFENSE

Build Your Culture On 21 Ideals



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Sideline Stories

Dave Thorson is in his 21st season as the head coach of the DeLaSalle boys program in Minneapolis. He has almost 500 wins, 18 conference titles and seven state championships to his credit.

“Our program is based on relationships. It’s not a shotgun approach. There has to be communication that takes place ...”

He says a great deal of that success is due to the culture within the program. “Our program is based on relationships,” Thorson explains. “It’s

not a shotgun approach. There has to be communication that takes place. You have to get to know your players, so they know you care about them.”

Thorson spoke to coaches at the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association basketball clinic prior to the season and said he learned a lot by asking former players what they thought



Create a positive culture in which all team members buy in and watch the on- and off-the-court victories grow



Michael Austin

Michael Austin
Editor-in-chief

1. Practice is much harder than a game.
2. Perfect is the goal in practice.
3. Communication is key. It is viewed as a skill. Daily repetition in practice.
4. Dedication to excellence.
5. Selflessness.
6. Never get a second chance to make a first impression.
7. Expectations are clear. Together everyone accomplishes more. We are all part of something bigger than ourselves. Draw strength from tradition.
8. Everything has a purpose — meetings, video, drills, preparation and that purpose is shared.
9. One person can't carry it. It has to come from assistant coaches (loyalty) and former players (who articulate values).
10. Positivity and realness — sometimes it's uncomfortable to communicate but that's how you keep things real.
11. There is passion for the team and game, and we gain our purpose as modeled by the head coach with a focus on intensity and determination.
12. Our definition of toughness means never bailing on a charge, being the first person to the floor and winning every 50/50 ball.
13. We believe in the concept of “winning plays,” which are the five plays/ possessions that determine who wins and loses in championship games.
14. We have created a sense of family, which is why graduates continue to come back to the program.
15. Be a part of something bigger than yourself. Have a purpose.
16. You have a responsibility to keep our winning tradition alive.
17. Bring alumni back to practices and keep them involved.
18. Talk about the successes of former players to the current team.
19. Make the players feel as if they are playing at Kentucky — give everything a “big time” feel.
20. Operate on a daily basis as if it's a college program and playing at a high level.
21. Get “buy-in” from everyone into the culture to make it work.

In this issue...

3 INCREASE YOUR SHOOTING PERCENTAGE

Some of the top teams in the country — including Maryland — make a high percentage of the shots they take

4 ENTER HIGH, HANDOFF & SPACE FOR 3

Create a lot of decoy initial action to set up a simple handoff and tossback for a 3-pointer

5 BACKDOOR COUNTER SHREDS DEFENSE

After running the action on page 4, watch the defenders cheat high and beat them with a perfect backdoor cut

6 STEAL POINTS FROM THE BASELINE

Treat out-of-bounds situations with the attention they deserve as winning these battles leads to more victories

QUICK HITTER CHART POSITIVE TOUCHES

Boise State men’s coach Leon Rice says his team charts touches at practice. He’s not talking about deflections or getting a hand on the ball on defense — he means the taps, high-fives, fist bumps and hugs players give each other.

“Great teams touch each other and they are engaged with each other,” Rice told coaches at the Oregon Athletic Coaches Association in October.

Rice points to a study published by Michael W. Kraus, Cassy Huang and Dacher Keltner in the journal *Emotion* in which they found NBA teams that touch are more successful.

“It’s hard to touch a teammate and not be giving that person something positive,” Rice says, who adds they chart touches in practice to see who is fitting into their culture ... and who needs an extra (positive) push.

“You see it — the guys who aren’t touching, they are falling to the outside (of our team), so we’ll say to them they need to get 15 touches in practice today,” Rice adds. “We take pride in being a more ‘together’ teams that the ones we face.”

Rice is on the verge of his fifth 20-win season in six years as the head coach at Boise State.

Run a set play for an outside shot, then watch the defense cheat toward the perimeter the next time you show this look — exploit it for a backdoor cut and layup



Increase Your Shooting Percentage

Some of the top teams in the country — including Maryland — share one similar statistic in common ... they all make a high percentage of the shots they take

Racing up the rankings and the Big Ten standings, the University of Maryland men's basketball team currently sits second in both national polls having only lost on the road at North Carolina, Michigan and Michigan State this season (as of this writing, as are all the upcoming stats mentioned).

The funny thing is ... the Terps don't truly excel in many of the offensive statistics you'd expect from a national contender.

Maryland is just 96th overall in points scored at 77.0 and a meager 168th in the country with 36.4 rebounds per game. They rank 117th in assists per game with 14.3 (the Terps do defend particularly well and only allow 64.0 points per game, which is good for 23rd in the country).

The one stat where the Terps thrive is field-goal percentage. Maryland blisters the net at 49.7% rate, which places the school seventh overall in the country. This means the Terps are creating and making

good shots, rather than simply taking unnecessary chances.

And, maybe that single stat is more telling than we think. Consider the six teams ahead of Maryland in field-goal shooting percentage this season. They are listed in order with their overall and conference records in parenthesis:

- **St. Mary's (19-3, 10-2): 51.4%**
- **Indiana (19-5, 9-2): 51.1%**
- **Evansville (19-6, 8-4): 50.8%**
- **SMU (20-3, 9-3): 50.3%**
- **Eastern Kentucky (14-12, 5-6): 50.0%**
- **Iowa State (17-7, 6-5): 50.0%**

Every team has a winning overall mark and with the exception of Eastern Kentucky, all squads are part of the NCAA Tournament discussion (although SMU is not eligible this season).

For Maryland, making the tournament is a formality. Winning it is the goal.

En route to that goal, the Terrapins

hosted Purdue a couple weeks ago in an important Big Ten tilt.

The two plays on the following pages are sets pulled directly from that contest and head coach Mark Turgeon's playbook.

Both come from a Horns look, which means posts are positioned at or near opposite elbows with guards in opposite corners. The point guard is at the top of the set with the ball.

What's great is that the second set plays off the first. The actions of the first result in an open 3-point shot. The second play starts with the same movements but once the guard in the corner, who is about to come high for a handoff, recognizes the defender cheating toward the perimeter, he plants and cuts backdoor.

The defense doesn't have a chance to recover and the actions result in a layup. Both sets are being run at the highest levels of college basketball but work well in your playbook.

Words by:
Michael Austin

Enter High, Handoff & Space For 3

The initial action has the point guard entering the ball and running off the pass as the backside movements demand attention ... all while the play is a simple handoff and tossback for a 3

WHY USE IT

Maryland entered an important Big Ten matchup against Purdue earlier this month as the No. 4 team in the country. The Terps used this Horns set to score a 3-pointer just three minutes and 16 seconds into the game, which sets up the play on the next page.

SET UP

Start in a typical Horns set with your posts at spots just higher than opposite elbows and guards in opposite corners with the point guard dribbling at the top.

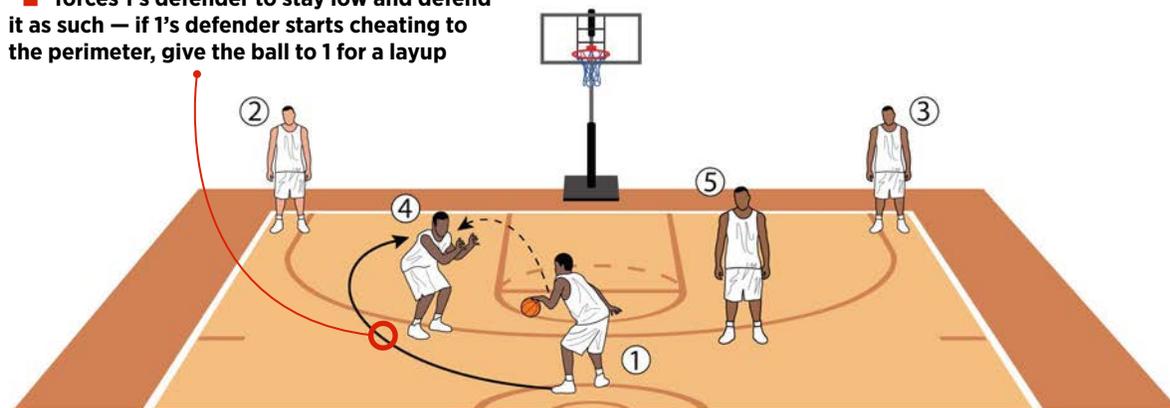
HOW TO PLAY

1 throws an entry pass to 4. 1 then runs off the pass, which gives the threat of a possible handoff, which forces the defenders to play under the actions [1]. 1 continues low and through the lane. 5 moves low and screens for 3. 3 comes out of the corner and runs off 5's screen. 3 moves to the right wing. 4 dribbles left. 2 comes out of the corner. 4 hands off the ball to 2. 2 takes the ball and dribbles toward the top. 4 spaces to the left wing [2]. 2 passes back to 4 for the open shot on the left wing. 5 crashes the boards [3].

TECHNIQUE

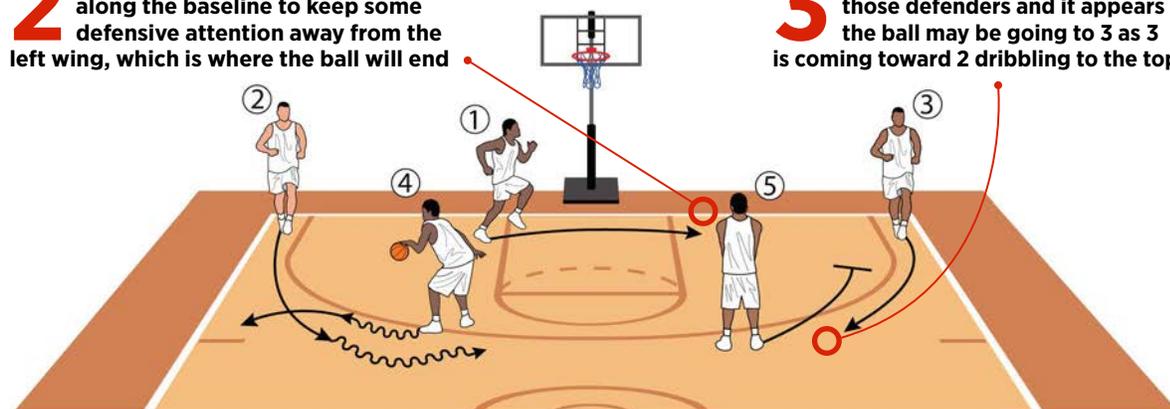
The initial point-guard action and backside screen force several defenders away from where you eventually want the ball to go, especially as 2 dribbles toward the top and 3 is curling around the perimeter toward the ball.

1 Be sure 1 runs off 4's shoulder to give the illusion of a potential handoff, which forces 1's defender to stay low and defend it as such — if 1's defender starts cheating to the perimeter, give the ball to 1 for a layup



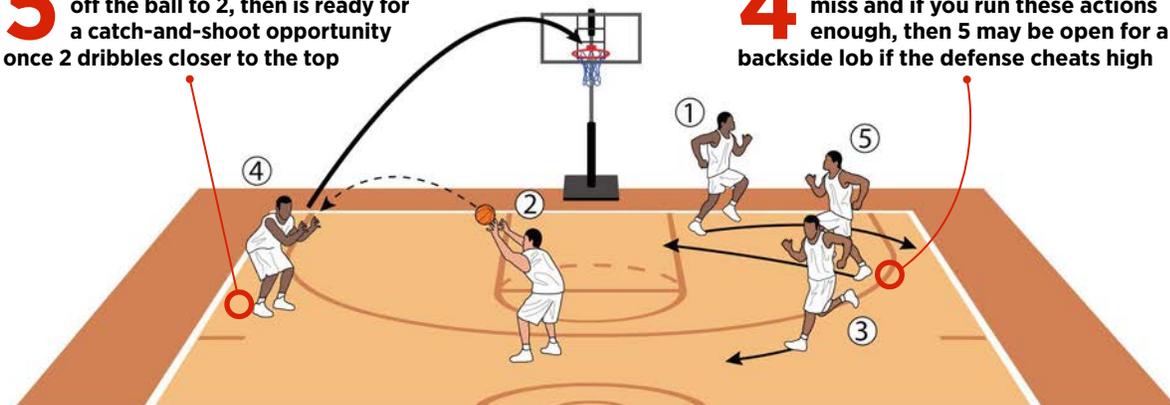
2 1 continues through the lane along the baseline to keep some defensive attention away from the left wing, which is where the ball will end

3 The backside action contains those defenders and it appears the ball may be going to 3 as 3 is coming toward 2 dribbling to the top



5 4 spaces to the wing after handing off the ball to 2, then is ready for a catch-and-shoot opportunity once 2 dribbles closer to the top

4 5 crashes the boards for a possible miss and if you run these actions enough, then 5 may be open for a backside lob if the defense cheats high



Player movement → Ball movement - - - → Dribble ~~~~~ → Shot →

Backdoor Counter Shreds Defense

Run the action on the previous page, then watch how the defenders try to cheat to get into better positions — a simple backdoor cut gives you a layup and keeps the opposition honest

WHY USE IT

Two minute and 10 seconds after running the set on page 4, Maryland came back with a Horns look and started running through the same actions (albeit it on the right side instead of the left). Once a corner defender cheated high, the Terps took the play to the backside for an easy layup.

SET UP

Start in a typical Horns set with your posts at spots just higher than opposite elbows and guards in opposite corners with the point guard dribbling at the top.

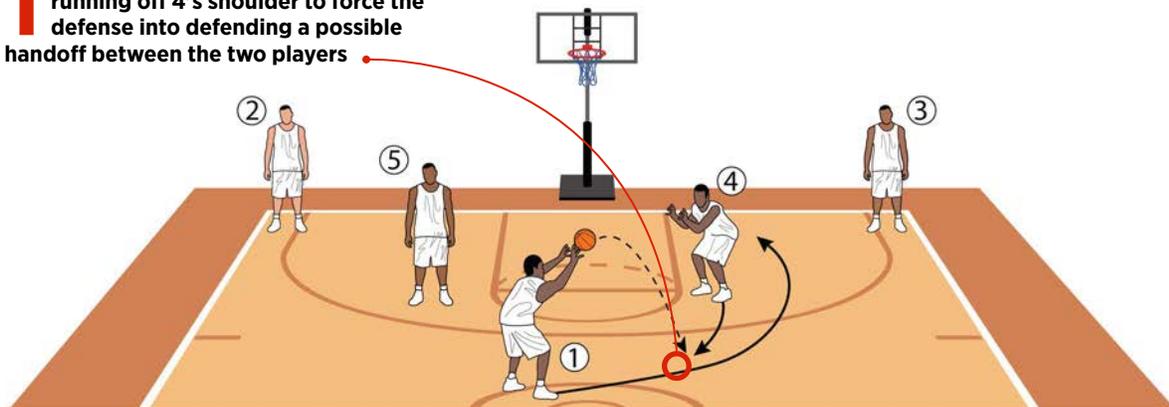
HOW TO PLAY

1 throws an entry pass to 4, who is near the right elbow this time and steps out to meet the pass near the 3-point line. 1 runs off 4's shoulder again as if a handoff is coming [1]. Just as in the previous play, 1 continues low, then runs through the lane to the weak side of the floor. 4 takes a dribble toward the corner as 3 takes a step high out of the corner [2]. 3's defender has turned to face the baseline and is a step higher than 3 as the defender tries to deny the potential handoff between 4 and 3. So, 3 plants, then makes a hard backdoor cut. 4 fires a bounce back to 3 in stride for a layup [3].

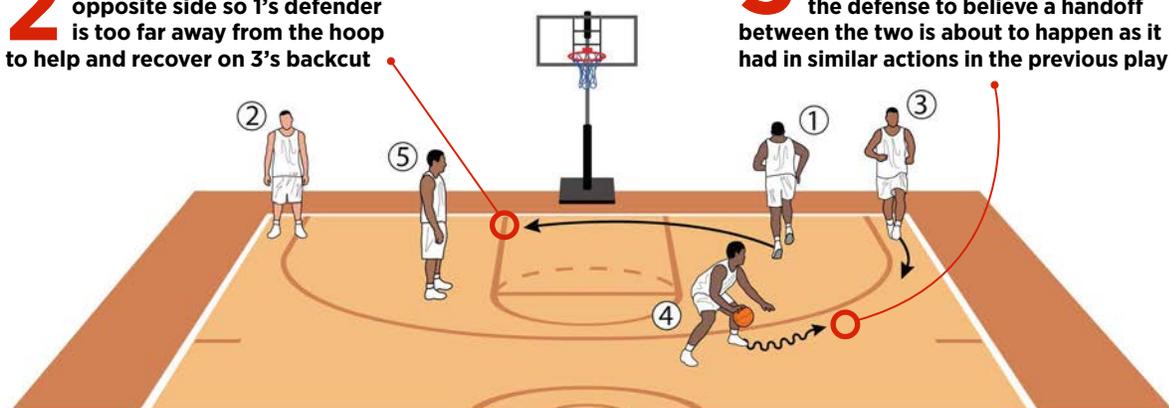
TECHNIQUE

The key is once 3 notices the defender cheating high, 3 understands to make a backdoor cut rather than trying to force a perimeter handoff.

1 The same initial action has 1 running off 4's shoulder to force the defense into defending a possible handoff between the two players

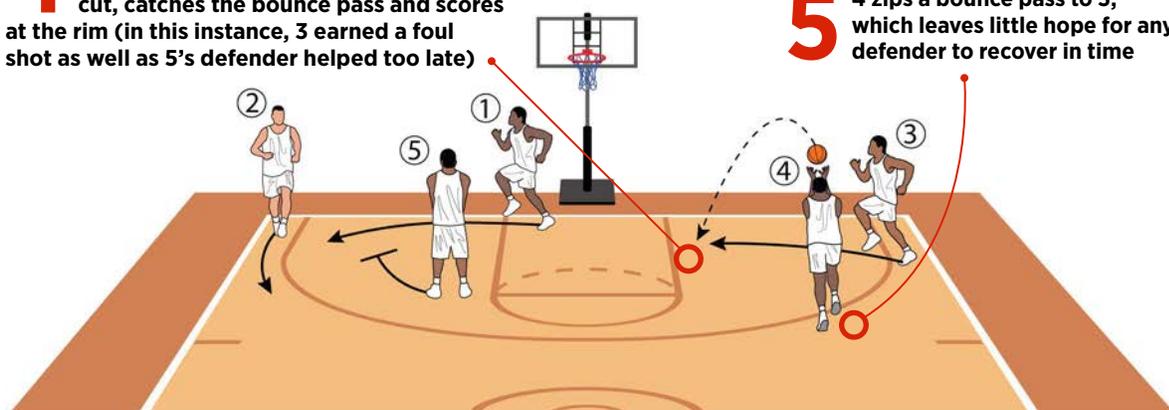


2 1 continues spacing to the opposite side so 1's defender is too far away from the hoop to help and recover on 3's backcut



3 4 starts to move toward 3, and 3 takes a step toward 4 — this causes the defense to believe a handoff between the two is about to happen as it had in similar actions in the previous play

4 Once 3 recognizes his/her defender is too far high, 3 makes a hard backdoor cut, catches the bounce pass and scores at the rim (in this instance, 3 earned a foul shot as well as 5's defender helped too late)



5 4 zips a bounce pass to 3, which leaves little hope for any defender to recover in time

Player movement → Ball movement - - - → Dribble ~~~~~ → Shot →



Whether you are on offense or defense in a baseline out-of-bounds (BLOB) situation, be sure you have the proper personal on the floor

Steal Points From The Baseline

Treat out-of-bounds situations with the attention they deserve as winning these battles leads to more victories for your team

I've spent this winter traveling New England observing several college basketball teams. One thing has stood out: good teams score and defend on their baseline out-of-bounds (BLOBs) plays.

Even at the NBA level, the statistics do not lie. The Golden State Warriors are the league's best team in scoring 1.15 points per possession (ppp) on BLOBs while the Lakers are a miserable 0.64 ppp. Defensively, the Cleveland Cavaliers are the stingiest, allowing just 0.56 ppp while the Hornets give up a league-worst 1.07 ppp (stats provided by Synergy and current as of Jan. 21).

Where is your team regarding offensive and defensive efficiency when it comes to BLOBs and do you emphasize their importance?

Start by tracking your production. It's easy enough — add up the total points scored on BLOBs divided by the total number of BLOB possessions (note: there is a more complex formula to calculate ppp, but this will do for tracking purposes).

Once you're tracking, then keep in mind the following that have helped my teams win the BLOB battle.

OFFENSE

BE DYNAMIC. Use creative alignments to keep the defense off-balance.

SAME BUT DIFFERENT. Start from the same set so that it makes scouting more difficult.

DON'T USE CALLS. Do not use vocal calls. If you trust your captains enough, have them call it or use discrete hand signals. This keeps the defense guessing and gives players ownership and accountability. But, be sure you have taught them in the practices leading up to the game the things you want to expose.

PLAY THOSE WHO KNOW. Simply stated, play the players who know the sets. If your starters do not, for example, then consider substituting them during BLOB situations.

DEFENSE

HAVE A PLAN. Telling your players to “figure it out” when defending BLOBs is not coaching. Set the course from your team.

DO NOT BE CONFUSING. Be consistent in how you defend BLOBs. Changing from game to game creates confusion and leads to mistakes. Although there may be times to switch screens, chase, jam, etc., start with a solid foundation and build upon it.

GIVE UP WHAT YOU CAN LIVE WITH.

You'll never be perfect in these situations so play to your team's strengths and live with the consequences. Consider making defensive substitutions to place better defenders on the floor who understand your expectations and scouting report.

I consider BLOBs (and SLOBs), as well as ATOs (after timeout) as comparable to special teams in football. Football coaches always are preaching winning all three phases of the game (offense, defense and special teams) and you should do the same.

Expect to get a four- to 10-point advantage between points scored and points saved, which makes all the difference in the outcome of the game and ultimately the outcome of your season.

Bert DeSalvo, former Division I men's assistant, Division II and III women's head coach, on Twitter @CoachDeSalvo