

Coaches Corner; Defence:

I think every coach understands that a basket stopped is every bit as important as a basket scored and that in any given match you spend approximately half the time in defence.

So with that in mind ask yourself this, how much of your training do you dedicate to defensive skills?

Whilst I am not suggesting that defensive basketball takes up 50% of a training schedule neither should it be something that we ignore. At a minimum all players should be able to make a strong defensive stance, be able move with and turn the opposition ball carrier and how to play pass denial defence.

As a first step run some drills teaching correct 'defensive slide technique'. (Wide to wider, don't cross heels, don't skip and stay low). Incorporate this skill into the offensive practise. For example partner a defensive player with an offensive player that will run a series of cross-overs. In the initial faze of teaching it is very important that the players realise it is a defensive drill, so the offensive player needs to go through their moves predictably and a pace that allows the defender to build confidence and maintain good technique. Once this is achieved then training can move to a more competitive nature.

Players should also know how to close out an opposition ball carrier. When deep in the defensive half a player should run hard at the ball carrier but make short choppy steps as they get close, this allows for an easier change of direction. If the ball handler has not dribbled (or is in the act of dribbling) the defender needs to stay low if however the opposition has already completed their dribble then the defender should stay tall, to make the shot as difficult as possible.

So when writing your next training plan, look at dedicating some of the session to defensive skills, it may very well win your next match.

