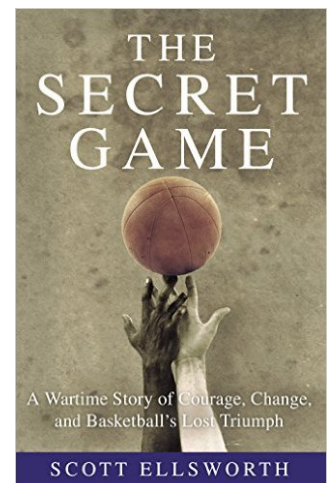
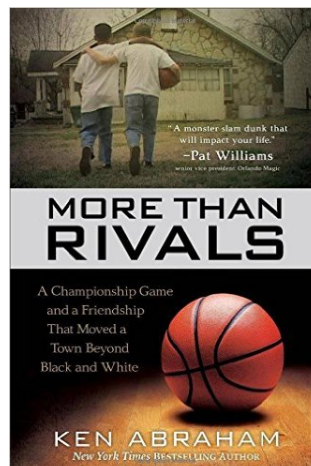
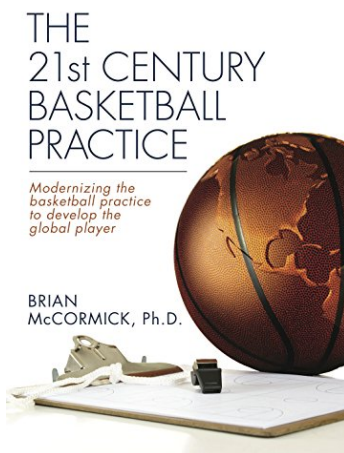
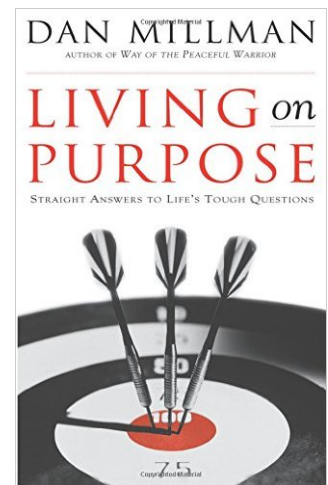
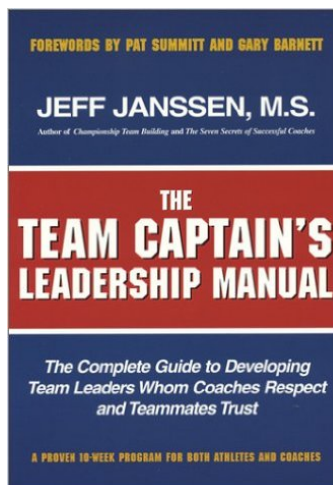
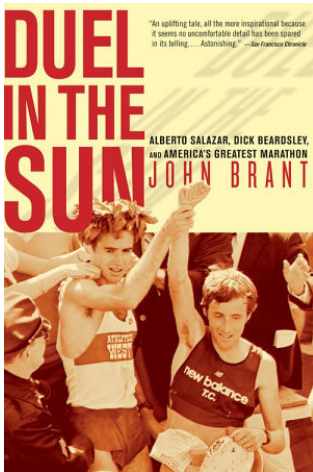


6 Recent Reads:

1. Duel In The Sun – By John Brant
2. The Team Captain's Leadership Manual – By Jeff Jansen
3. Living On Purpose – By Dan Millman
4. The 21st Century Basketball Practice – By Brian McCormick
5. More Than Rivals – By Ken Abraham
6. The Secret Game – By Scott Ellsworth



The design of every practice will have a direct outcome in your team's improvement. Coach Karl would remind the Denver Nuggets on a frequent basis that we only have to get a little better each practice and the rest will take care of itself.

As the head coach, you must guard against pulling out practice #6 from last year and duplicating that practice plan. Why? Because each team is different! Yes you will use those fundamental building blocks from one practice to the next, yet there will also be blocks of time scheduled to address an immediate need that last year's team may not have had.

I believe there are some basic concepts that help you structure each and every practice. The net result of most poor practices originates from a hastily designed practice plan and when it goes in the toilet just look in the mirror.

Some Simple Concepts:

- 1) Rewrite the practice 3 times,** each time really thinking about addition by subtraction. can set camera at one end of floor and walk away. The pluses far outweigh the hassle. then you are on the hop and give it up, in spite of all outside challenges.....
- 2) No talk drills,** I call these automatics where the drill is short in duration, a stated expectation must be met, and it requires very little teaching. For example the Superman drill is a full court layup exercise that runs for 2 minutes, where the team must make 38 layups. If the team falls short we either run a suicide or do it again... no fuss, no muss. **6) Architecture,** the practice plan should include emphasis of the day, a quote, time duration, subject matter, and emphasis column (see practice plan). **9) Use your voice as a tool and echo teach,** this means you regulate your voice....sometimes you let it rip with loud praise that reeks of enthusiasm and other times you pull a player aside and quietly share your disappointment. Additionally, whisper to one player and he distributes the signal to others....I call this a ripple effect and this is exactly why huddles are so important in practice and games.... teaching players to take responsibility for calls and a way to transfer information....look at how Duke does this....looks good, feels good, and IS good!
- 3) Teach slow early,** very simply, any new drills, material, or corrections should be introduced before we get going. A quality practice is like a drum roll..... think "flow." **7) Part whole method,** whole, part, whole method: whole part method: or all whole method. I have seen practice done ALL ways....key point is to be consistent with method and predictable set up so team knows what is coming....makes for a better learning environment. As an example, the legendary Ralph Miller had the same 6 drills each and every practice...keep it simple, simple, simpleJohn Chaney says it this way, "simplicity with detail"
- 4) All drills and time blocks short,** in duration (5/10 mins.), score kept, and a reward/penalty that makes sense. **8) Energy,** more energy. Enthusiasm! You lead and they follow. You must step on the wood each and every time loaded for greatness. You want them on point
- 5) Film all practices,** no excuses. Please don't tell me you don't have a person to do that as you **10) Praise, prompt, and leave,** this technique means you highlight what the player/team is doing right, correct what needs to be better, and walk away. This takes practice but it is most efficient and reduces the gridlock.

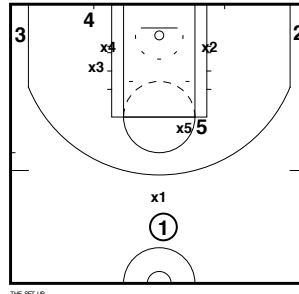
Hopefully I have whetted your thought process about practice. Yes, many more points to make.....good hunting!

Smother Drill

The following defensive drill allows you to address four key offensive actions: the high and side pick and roll; the step up pick and roll; and finally, the dribble handoff. I am not advocating a specific type of defensive scheme; I will leave that up to you.

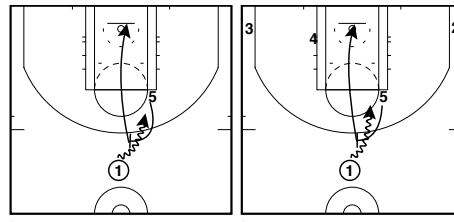
1) The Set Up:

- a) 5 on 5.
- b) A defensive drill.
- c) The offensive set is as follows; a 1-1-3 set, with point guard handling ball in the middle alley, while the 5 man standing on either elbow, and the 2 & 3 in corners, while 4 on baseline short corner spot.

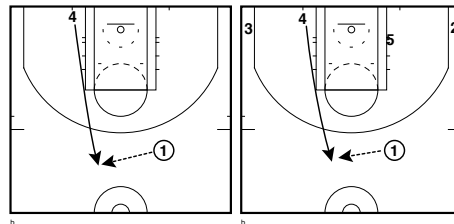


2) The Offensive Flow

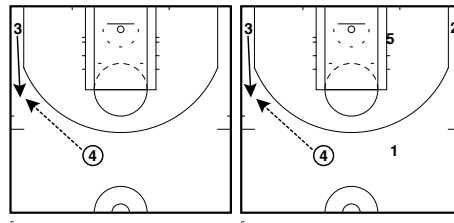
- a) 5 sets a mid pick and roll for 1.



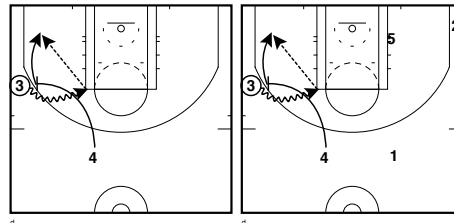
- b) 1 throws back to 4 who lifts up through the opposite pro slot outside the 3 pt. line.



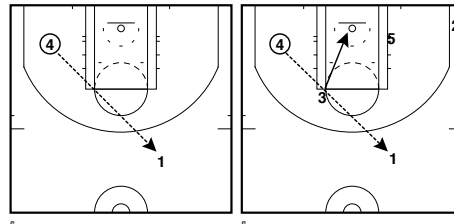
- c) The 4 swings the ball to the corner who lifts to the wing slot.



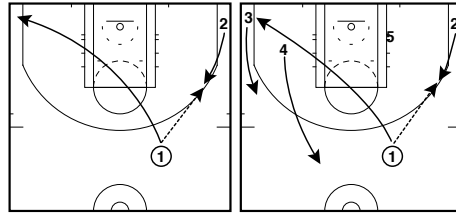
- d) The 3 uses the SP/R and dribbles the ball middle, throws back to the baseline roll man (4).



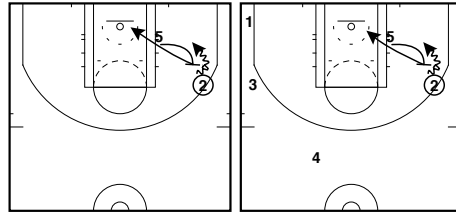
- e) The 4 skip passes the ball back to the pro slot, finding the 1.



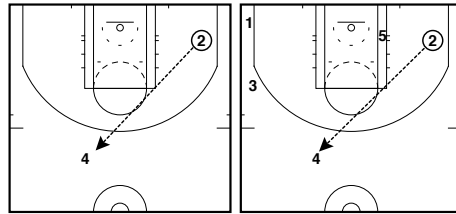
f) The 1 swings ball to the wing who lifts just inside bend of 3pt line.



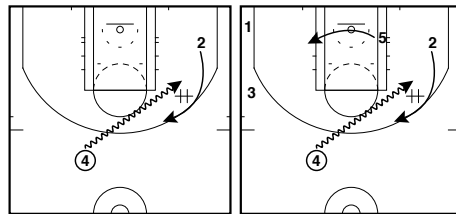
g) The 5 sprints just outside the pro slot to set a step up pick for the 2... and he/she drives ball baseline.



h) The 2 throws the ball back to the ball side pro slot which is the 4 who has exchanged the 1 who now in the weak side corner.

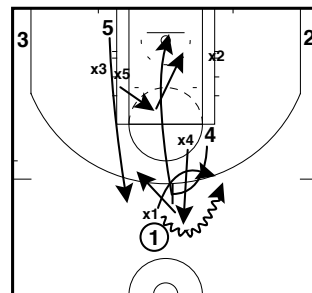
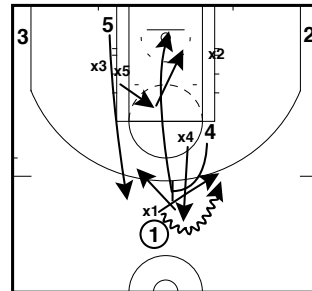
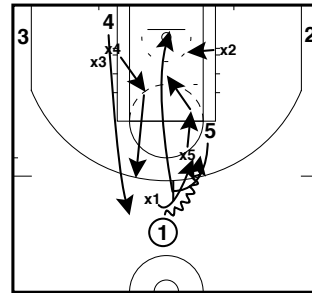
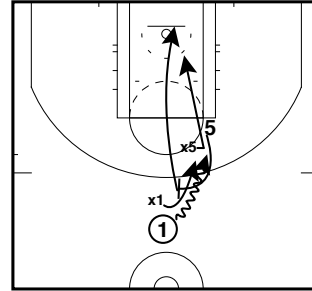


i) The 4 dribble right back at the 2 for a DHO (dribble handoff).



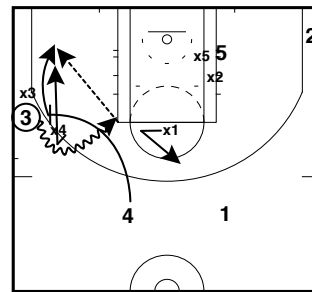
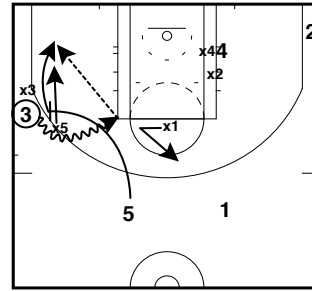
3) The Defensive Scheme for the Mid Pick and Roll:

- a) The X5 "zones up" the mid pick and roll. This means he/she plays to the side of the screen where the ball handler is going; one step back off the screen...and he will give the ball defender 1 to 2 lateral slides of help before returning to his own man.
- b) The X1 fights over the top of pick unless it is set well outside shooting range of the ball handler (KTP... know thy personnel). If the X1 goes under the pick: it is his job to make ball handler USE the screen and get back to the ball.
- c) The X2, X3, and X4 cheat up the to the ball, squeezing in, so the X2 & X3 tilted towards the blocks, while the X4 is several big steps above his man.
- d) **WE DO NOT ROTATE** out of this scheme and give very little help to the roll man. This allows us to stay at home and puts absolute responsibility on the X1 and X5 to make this work.
- e) This is where it gets fun....any mid pick and roll between players 1 through 4 is a "hard hedge." In brief, the high pick defended with the "hard show" meaning on top of screen, feet pointed to sideline, and uses 2 slides before going back to his/her own....the ball defender uses an over-under technique, where he/she fights over pick and under the hedge man, unless, of course, the pick is set really high....he go under both the screener and hedge defender.
- f) Should the pick be between the 1-4, the X5 will zone up at free throw line and take the roll man while the 4 shows high and stays high/switch off with the 5.



4) The Defensive Scheme for the Side Pick and Roll:

- a) When the X5 involved in the side pick and roll he/she will "contact show" meaning that plays level with screener and gives wing defender 1 or 2 slides middle and then sprints back to his own.
- b) The wing defender points his/her feet to half court and makes the ball handler drive middle or to the help of X5...yes...no baseline drive. Why? Because ball swings too quickly for an "ice" or "down."
- c) The 1 through 4 side pick and roll will be "hedged" middle while help defenders stunt but stay home.



5) The Defensive Scheme for the Step Up Pick:

- a) When there is a step up pick the screen defender "contact shows" or is level and just outside the screener: he will stay with ball handler 1 or 2 slides and get back to his own.
- b) The ball defender forces the dribbler baseline...yes his feet are pointed to the sideline.
- c) The help defenders tilt the floor (cheat to ball) and the off ball big will hit the roll man and get back to his own. The rule of thumb here is that bigs help bigs, and perimeters help perimeters so the mismatch doesn't bite us.

