

TEAM DEFENSE

Success in team defense depends on how well a team is able to execute certain elements that are imperative to playing defense. There are arguments to be made on which type of defense is the most successful. Various teams have won championships with different types of defense. To name a few – zone, 4 and 1; sagging man to man; man to man or a combination of all or some of these. While each of these defenses uses different concepts to accomplish their task, all of these use the same elements. **The object of defense is to control and ultimately dictate the shot by the offence allowing only low percentage shots.**

THE ELEMENTS OF DEFENSE

1. Transition
2. Adaptability
3. Protect Prime Scoring Area
4. Pressure
5. Skills

TRANSITION

Refers to the switch from offence to defense and how this is done.

There are two characteristics to this part of the game.

- Transitional control
- Rapid Transition
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Defense starts while you still have the ball offense.

Transitional control means you can complete your offence without creating an advantage for the opposition with a possession change.

Having control also means you shift to defense based on offensive strategy.

You can accomplish this by doing the following:

- Trained reaction to get back on shots
- Offensive plays with scoring possibilities
- No low percentage shots
- React back during final seconds of shot clock
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Using transitional control will allow rapid transition minimizing odd man situations and time to “set” up your defense.

ADAPTABILITY

Refers to the ability of your defense which allows you to handle situations with familiarity.

Ultimately you dictate to the offence.

This happens when your transition fails and you allow an odd man break.

This involves training your defense to identify situations and quickly determine the preferred shooter.

1. If possible force shot by a player on his wrong side.
2. If situation involves a scoring ace – deny him the shot.
3. Deny late or across the floor passes to allow your goaltender to set up.
4. Delay committing to attempt to slow break down to allow time for your team mates to get back.

Adaptability also refers to adjustments you can make based on knowing your opposition.

- Key players
- Pet plays
- Weaker players

Force the offence to rely on their weaknesses to be successful.

Being adaptable allows defense to become less predictable.

PROTECT PRIME SCORING AREA (PSA)

Very important to strong defense.

Shots outside of this area are considered low percentage shots.

Methods to protect (PSA)

- Fronting
- Walling

Fronting is an individual skill – relying on positioning defensive player, must physically minimize across floor movement.

The player plays with his back toward the lateral middle of floor and slide up and down with offensive player.

When you r whole defense does this is it is called walling.

You allow movement up and down the sides bit not through the middle.

Picks and screens are a way for the defense to break this down and get floor positioning. Everyone has different ideas on how to defend a pick.

“Clear out the pick” or “push through it” or you can “back out of the pick.”

You should have certain rules to abide by so the whole team knows what is supposed to happen.

1. Communicate – teammates must be informed that he is being picked or screened(pick left, pick right, etc)
2. Avoid switching unless absolutely necessary and do so only when there is a communication.
3. Try to stay inside on you man and at all times.

PRESSURE

Pressure can help control offense.

Minimize pressure may only be playing tighter to the ball carrier or playing him extremely aggressive.

Pressure gives defense various advantages.

1. Less time for ball carrier to take quality shots.
2. Less time to make a quality pass.
3. Pressure off ball makes it more difficult to run plays.
4. Ball carrier becomes more concerned with checker than rest of floor.
5. Increase the chance for a turn over.

A good man to man defense can create pressure by using the 30 second clock to the advantage of the defense.

If not used properly pressure can hurt a defense.

Pressure must be controlled and the coach has to decide how and when to apply it. Even though your defense may have built in pressure there are other areas that can dictate pressure and benefit in control.

1. When possession becomes possible (missed pass, dropped ball)
2. When the possibility of a shot is high (at the end of 30 second clock)
3. If the ball handler is weak (skills)
4. Slow line change, man down situation, or offense is slow advancing the ball.
5. If possession is necessary to score.

METHODS OF PRESSURE

1. Full Court Press
2. Half Court Press
3. Defensive Zone Press
4. Double team

SKILLS

Ball handling – passing and catching will minimize turnovers on offense

Loose ball skills allow you to gain and retain possession.

One on one defensive skills are very important to eliminate individual breakdowns

