

by Steve Witty

Witty was head coach for thirteen years at Ben Davis High School in Indianapolis, Indiana, where he had an 80% winning record. His team won two State Championships and he was voted Coach of the Year three times in Indiana. Witty is presently serving as the Executive Director of the 3000-member Indiana Basketball Coaches Association, the largest basketball coaches group in the US. He has published eight technical books on basketball.

Traditionally, teams that incorporated the fastbreak as a part of their offensive attack normally ran the traditional break where the ball was outletted to a guard. The ball was then passed or dribbled to the middle of the court and the first players to get there filled the two outside lanes.

TRANSITION FASTBREAK BASKETBALL TO SECONDARY OFFENSE

The object was to outnumber the transition defense, establish a 3-on-2 situation, and get a lay-up before the defense could get back in place. This is very basic, high-percentage basketball. But then the three-point shot was added to the game.

As a result the (fastbreak) transition game as we know it was changed forever.

It has been generally accepted that the quickest way to get a three-point shot is in transition.

Spotting up the three-point shooters in transition, designating one outlet player to advance the ball up the floor and one player posted down low on the block has put more pressure on the transition defense.

Besides stopping the ball and protecting the basket, transition defenses now have to defend the spotted-up three point shooters.

The numerous three-point scoring opportunities available in transition has added more excitement to the game.

The following are some thoughts on the transition game to secondary offense.

WE WILL DISCUSS

1. Transition games rules
2. Personnel characteristics and assignments
3. Some examples of various secondary offenses
4. Various drills to teach the transition game

TRANSITION GAME FASTBREAK RULES

A. Player 1 always receives the outlet pass to lead the break. He creates diagonal or vertical passing lanes to receive outlet passes, not horizontal (diagr.1).

B. He should receive the outlet pass at the free throw line extended or higher, unless the outlet area is in the middle of the floor (diagr. 2).

C. He should call for the outlet pass the same way each time. Use only the term "outlet".

D. He should look to pass the ball to the first open teammate.

E. His passing options in order of preference are:

- First: 2 or 3 spotted up
- Second: 4 or 5 posted

F. He should advance the ball in the middle of the floor, if at all possible.

G. The rebounder is allowed a maximum of two dribbles to create a passing lane.

H. Players 2 and 3 always sprint to spot up point at the free throw line extended, above the arc to the right or left of the basket.

They must talk to each other and communicate which lane each will occupy (diagr. 3).

I. 2 and 3, when receiving the pass, are looking for the three-point shot. They can drive to the basket if they feel they have an open lane for a lay-up, or feed the low post.

J. If player 5 rebounds, he becomes the trailer on the play. The trailer always stays behind 1.

K. Player 4 sprints to post up on the ball-side block, as you can see on the diagr. 3.

L. If 4 rebounds he becomes the trailer and the roles are reversed with 5.

M. If someone other than 4 or 5 rebounds, they outlet the ball and use their rules.

N. 4 or 5, whoever gets there, first posts on the ballside block, and the other becomes the trailer. Again, the players must communicate.

FASTBREAK TO SECONDARY OFFENSE FLEX

1 passes to 2 and holds his position. 4 cuts to the ballside block and 2 looks for shot or to pass to 4 in the low post (diagr. 4).

If 2 cannot pass to 4, he dribbles to the right to improve the passing lane and set up low post defense (diagr. 5).

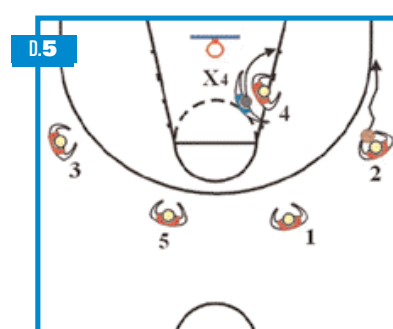
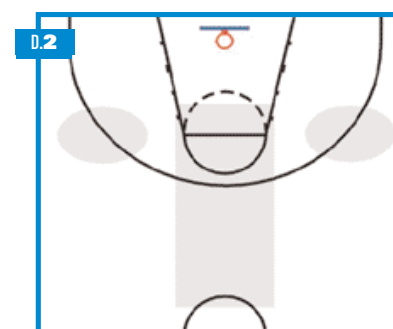
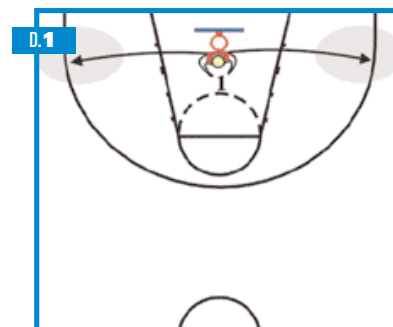
After two dribbles, if 2 cannot pass into low post, he passes to 1. 4 tries to seal his man to receive a pass from 1 (diagr. 6).

If 1 cannot feed 4 in the post, he reverses the ball to 5 and the "flex" cuts begins (diagr. 7).

If no one is open for a shot, 5 passes to 4 and the flex cuts continue (diagr. 8).

FAST BREAK TO SECONDARY OFFENSE (KANSAS)

The set and movements are the same (see from diagr. 4 to diagr. 6).



If 1 cannot pass to 4 in the low post area, he reverses the ball and passes to 5, who passes to 3 (diagr. 9).

When 5 passes to 3, 4 flashes to the ball-side block to post (diagr. 10).

While 4 posts, 2 sets a back screen for 5 and steps out. 3 should look for 5 for the lob pass or 2 stepping out for the jump shot (diagr. 11).

DRILLS

FIVE-MAN WEAVE TRANSITION GAME

1 with the ball, 2, 3, 4 and 5 run five-man weave to the other end of the floor (diagr. 12).

After the lay-up is scored, the ball is taken out of the net and an outlet pass is thrown to 1.

All five players then use their transition rules (diagr. 13).

The coach tells players ahead of time what transition options he wants them to execute before the drill begins.

Example:

- 2 or 3 spotted for a three-point shot
- 4 inside - out
- 4 on reversal inside series

The players execute all these options from one end of the floor to the other end before the drill ends. Players must think and communicate with the teammates the transition options to be executed.

FIVE-ON-FIVE TRANSITION DEFENSE TO OFFENSE

1. Line up five offensive players, A; B, C, D and E, on the baseline and five defensive players 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, facing them at free-throw line extended (diagr. 14).

2. The coach has the ball and will pass to one of the offensive players and a fastbreak to the other end of the floor begins.

3. When the coach passes the ball, he calls out 1, 2, or 3 numbers. The players assigned those specific numbers must sprint and touch the baseline before they get back on defense.

4. In containment transition defense, the first priority is the basket, the second priority is the ball and the third is to fan out and play defense against shooters that are spotted up. The players, who are running back on defense, must communicate (diagr. 15).

5. If A, B, with the ball, C, D, and E, do not score in transition, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 will rebound and work on their transition game and A, B, C, D, and E will work on transition defense.

TWO-ON-TWO BLOCK OUT AND OUTLET

1. B passes to C or D, who receives the pass and shoots (diagr. 16).

2. B and A close out to block out D and C.

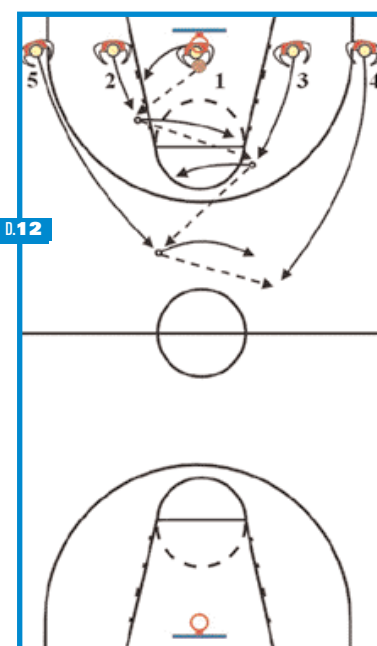
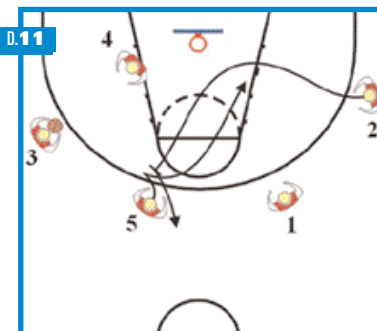
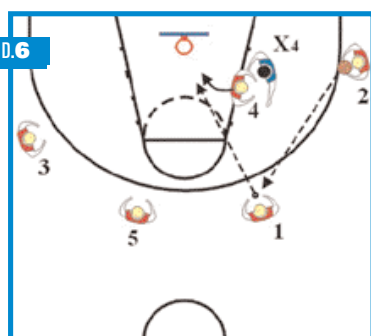
3. If B or A successfully rebounds the ball, they outlet the ball to 1, who has created the passing lane (diagr. 17).

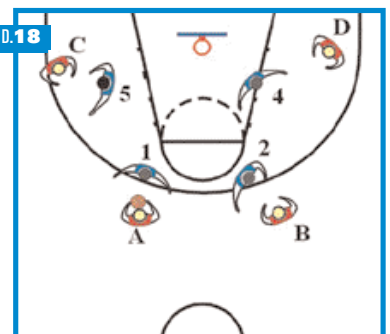
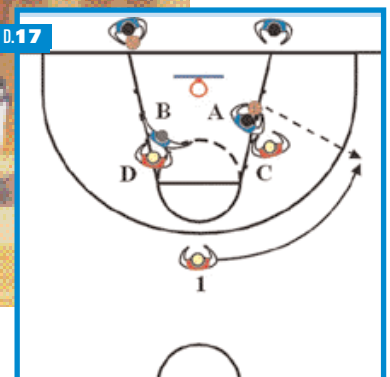
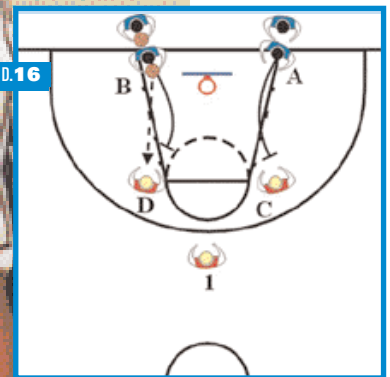
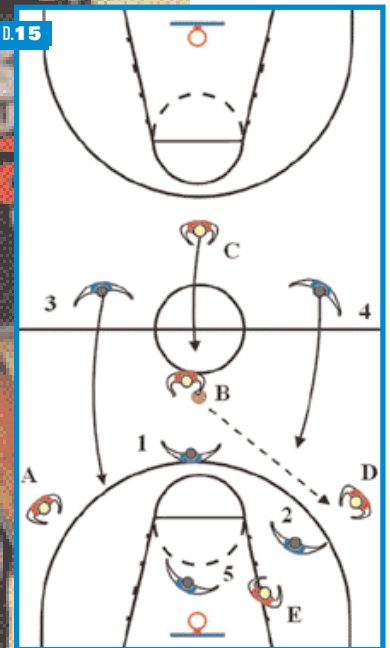
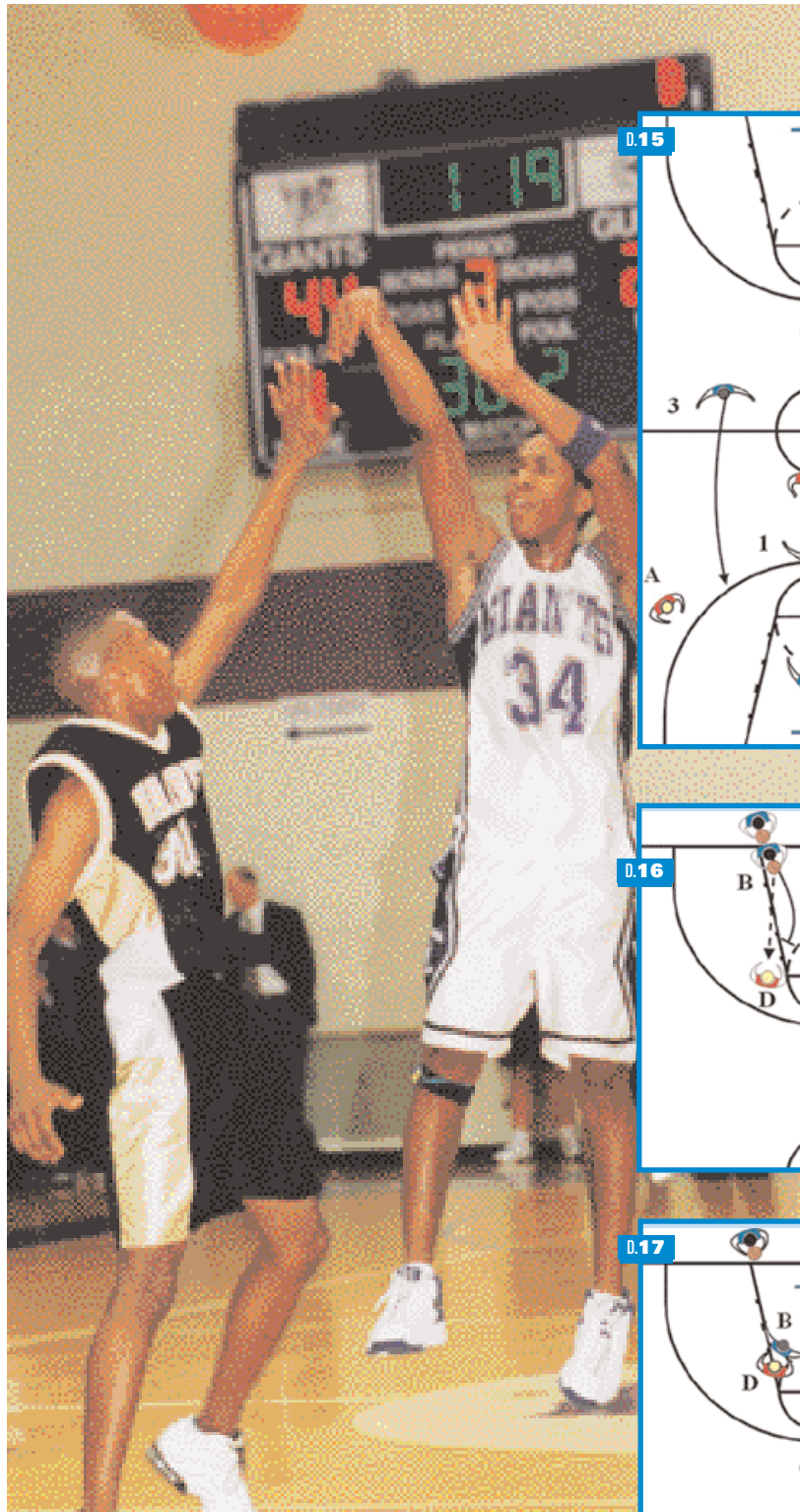
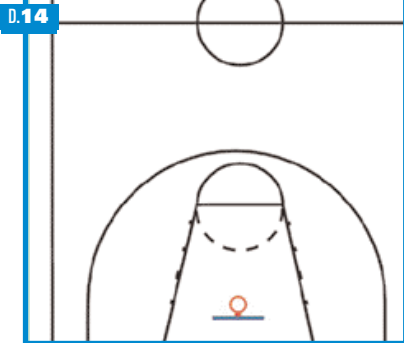
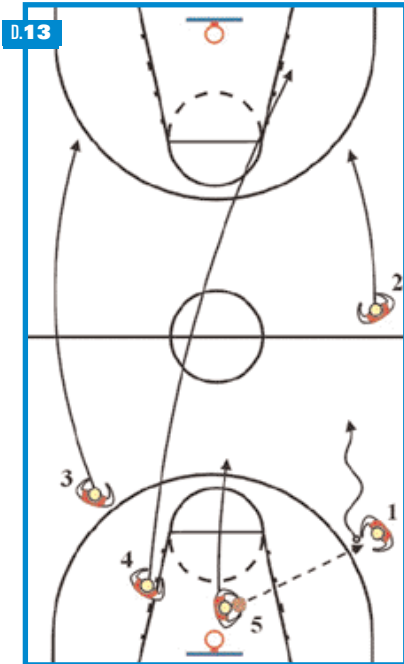
4. If C or D scores, B or A must take the ball out and inbound to 1, who has created the passing lane for the outlet pass.

5. If C or D scores, they both stay on offense and B and A go to the end of the line.

6. If C or D does not score, A and B, after outletting the ball, go from blocking out to offense at the elbow. C and D go to the ends of the rebounding lines.

7. Rotate different players at 1 spot.





8. Run the drill for two minutes. At the end of two minutes, all players in the rebound lines do 10 fingertips push-ups.

FOUR-ON-FOUR SHELL DEFENSE TO TRANSITION GAME

1. Four defensive players 1, 2, 4, and 5, will run break on a steal or missed shot (diagr. 18).

2. Team getting back on defense does not deny the ball to 1 man, but they must concentrate on getting back.

3. 1 creates passing lane to receive the

outlet pass.
4. 2, 4, and 5 use their transition rules.

5. Since there are only four players breaking the transition, the players will have to make decisions about what position will be unoccupied, spot up, post or trailer.

SUMMATION

The transition game and the three-point shot have added excitement to basketball. Secondary offensive ideas are numerous and limited only by the imagination and creativity of the coach.