

USE DRIBBLE PENETRATION TO COLLAPSE A ZONE & FREE PERIMETER SHOOTERS

# BASKETBALL COACH

WEEKLY

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**DESTROY  
ZONES  
WITH DEADLY  
3-POINTERS**

WICHITA >  
STATE'S  
SET PLAYS  
STIFLED  
ZONES THIS  
SEASON

**THE BEST  
PRACTICE DRILLS  
EVERY WEEK!**

**TURN YOUR  
PROGRAM  
AROUND  
FROM NO HOPER  
TO CONTENDER**

**CONTROL  
BLOWOUTS  
WITH A RUNNING CLOCK**

**PLUS: HOW A WEAK-  
SIDE POST-UP CREATES  
AN OPEN 3-POINTER**

**SHOW YOU CARE** (AND KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR TALENT) BY ATTENDING SPRING SPORTS

# Control Blowouts With Running Clock



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## Sideline Stories

There are some impossible-to-answer basketball arguments. Do you foul when up by three points in the closing seconds of a game? How long should practice be the day before a game? And, of course, how do you coach and manage your squad when leading by a more-than-comfortable amount late in a contest?

Most coaches empty their bench when they know the game is out of hand. But, a lot of debate circles around your coaching strategy. Frequent **Basketball Coach Weekly** contributor, Kurt Guelsdorf, head girls coach at Oregon City High School once told me if his team is up by 30 in the second half, he calls off his notorious full-court pressure defense.

Guelsdorf goes to his bench too but there are times when a team's backups still are better than anyone the opponent trots onto the floor. Plus, it's difficult to tell bench players simply to stand around, pass the ball and not attack as these are their precious few minutes of game time a week.

To handle a bit of the dilemma, I like how some states are moving toward a running clock during blowout situations. The Nebraska School Activities Association (NSAA) this season implemented a running clock for when one team leads by 40 points at any time in the second half. It only stops during timeouts, injuries or between quarters.

### QUICK HITTER

#### Attend Spring Sporting Events

After all the late nights, weekends and long hours you poured into your most recent basketball season, a break from athletics is necessary. Hopefully, you utilized the spring break time as a way to step back from the game a bit while reconnecting with family.

The Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) introduced a similar rule with the 40-point lead having to occur in the fourth quarter.

While the season is just wrapping up, representatives from both associations seemed pleased with how the rule played this season.

"We have not done any formal feedback but in talking with coaches on both ends of the spectrum, they seem to think it is good," says Jon Dolliver, assistant director with the NSAA.

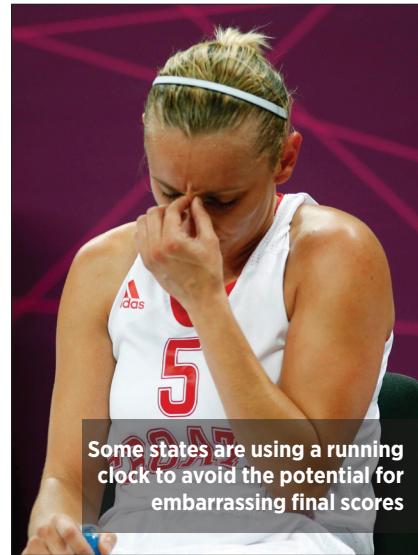
Deb Hauser, association director with the WIAA, has received early positive feedback in her state as well with a formal review coming next month when the state's Basketball Coaches Advisory

Committee meets.  
"Right now, I can say the feedback I've received has been positive."

And while big basketball comebacks are not unheard of, rallying from down 40 with eight minutes left to play just isn't possible. "Our committee felt 40 points was reasonable in that we would not have to revert back to stopping the clock if the differential got under 40," Hauser adds.

What are your thoughts on this matter? Do you like the rule? Opposed to it no matter what? Shoot me an email at [Michael.austin@basketballcoachweekly.com](mailto:Michael.austin@basketballcoachweekly.com).

Michael Austin  
Editor-in-chief



Some states are using a running clock to avoid the potential for embarrassing final scores

## In this issue...

### 3 ZONE PLAYS TO CREATE OPEN 3-POINTERS

Zones tend to deflate offenses by removing your players' aggressiveness - fight the apathy by calling aggressive plays resulting in 3-point shots

### 4 WICHITA WEAK SIDE

The Wichita State men's team knows how to beat a zone defense and in this instance, see how the Shockers push the action one way to set up a shooter on the weak side

### 5 WICHITA KICKOUT

Zone defenders tend to collapse when dribble penetration occurs, so teach your players to find open shooting windows

### 6 TEAR IT DOWN, BUILD IT UP

Find out how one coach took a team with one above-.500 season in its last 34 and transformed it into a winner

her parents - know you don't just care about their child during the basketball months but you are committed to this person's well-being year-round.

At the same time, athletes not part of the basketball program get to know your face. If they see you as someone who cares, maybe they consider coming out for basketball next season.

And, it never hurts to learn from coaches outside your sport. - Michael Austin



Design plays for you best 3-point shooters (such as Wichita State's Ron Baker) when facing a zone defense

# Shred A Zone With Open Shots

Rather than lazily tossing the ball around the perimeter and settling for a contested jumper, crisply move the ball and find in-rhythm shots to deflate a defense's zone

**T**here's just something about a zone defense. You can practice for it. You can discuss how to attack its weaknesses but when your opponent throws a zone at your players, it seems preparation goes out the window. Players lose their aggressiveness. They stand still. They loft passes with no purpose around the perimeter. Finally, someone chuck's a contested, long-range jumper and the possession mercifully ends.

Combat this apathy by designing plays with the purpose of putting players on the move. Sure, shifting the defense from side to side helps soften a zone, but eventually you have to attack. Place a player at the elbow. Run another along the baseline finding holes. And, above all else, if you

have talented shooters – use them!

Some coaches profess not taking a bunch of 3-pointers when facing a zone. That's not exactly the best mentality. You don't want players settling for bad 3-pointers but if your set plays result in an open 3-point look, then go for it.

The Wichita State men's team has put together a historic run this season. No matter what teams have thrown at them, head coach Gregg Marshall has an answer. Take for example a late-season game at Bradley where the Braves threw a lot of zone at Wichita. It was effective for awhile with ESPN analyst and former Tennessee head coach Bruce Pearl remarking, "This zone has been pretty good."

Of course, just as Pearl spoke those

words in the first half, Wichita struck with the play on page 4. It moves an elbow player (in this case, the team's leading 3-point shooter Ron Baker) to the top, then flares him to the weak-side wing resulting in an open 3-point look as the shot clock expires.

The Shockers shredded Bradley's zone again with Baker in the second half. In this case (shown on page 5), dribble penetration is used forcing three defenders to collapse. Baker moves from the corner into a shooting window on the wing and buries the shot. What you'll notice is how zone defenders are quick to leave their responsibilities when the ball gets deep in the zone. Take advantage of this and make the opposition pay.

**Words by:**  
Michael Austin

# Wichita Weak Side

Move the zone defense left and out of position, then flare a guard right to create an open 3-point opportunity

## WHY USE IT

Shift defenders, utilize the dribble and have off-ball players find open spaces to beat a zone.

## SET UP

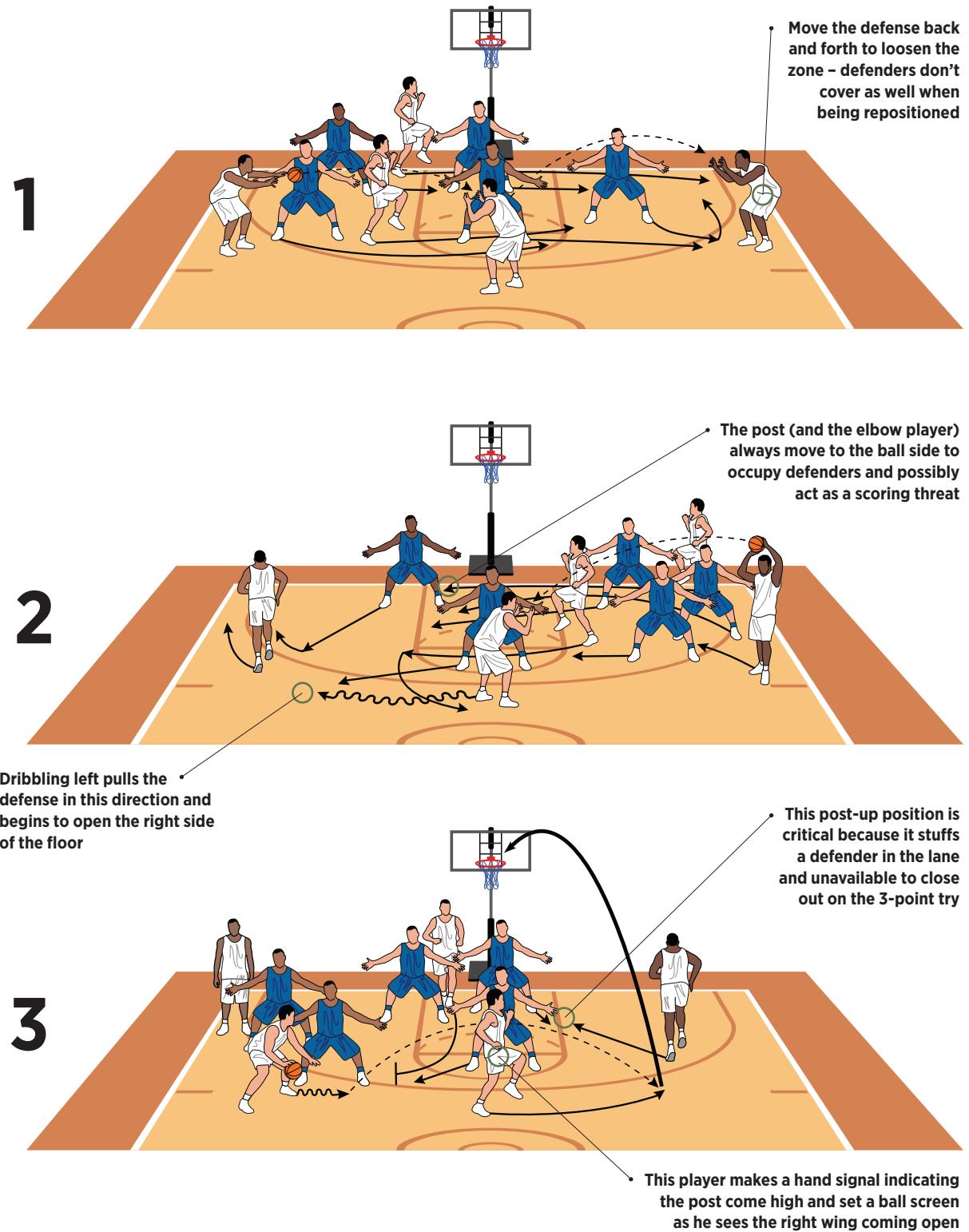
The defense is playing slightly higher than a standard 2-3 look as your team has a player on each wing, and another in the high post. After some initial movement (not pertinent to the outcome of the play), the ball is positioned on the left wing.

## HOW TO PLAY

Reverse the ball by passing to the top, then to the right wing. The post crosses the lane and ends on the ball side. The elbow player moves to the ball-side elbow [1]. Shift the defense again with a pass to the top. The new ball handler dribbles left. The left wing moves to the corner. The post comes across again. The elbow player shifts to the new ball side, then pops to the top [2]. The elbow player (now at the top) signals for the post to come high. The post sets a ball screen and the ball handler moves right. The right wing relocates to the post and occupies a defender. The original elbow player flares right, catches the pass and shoots [3].

## TECHNIQUE

The dribble penetration draws the top defender and leaves the right wing uncovered.



Player movement →

Ball movement →

Dribble →

Shot →

# Wichita Kickout

Dribble penetration forces a zone to collapse and allows your shooters to find open perimeter shooting pockets left unguarded

## WHY USE IT

Zone defenders typically move in the wrong direction on dribble penetration. Most defenders instinctively go to the ball rather than contain their responsibility area.

## SET UP

Three of your players are positioned low forcing the defenders to remain near the basket. Position a good ball handler on the right wing.

## HOW TO PLAY

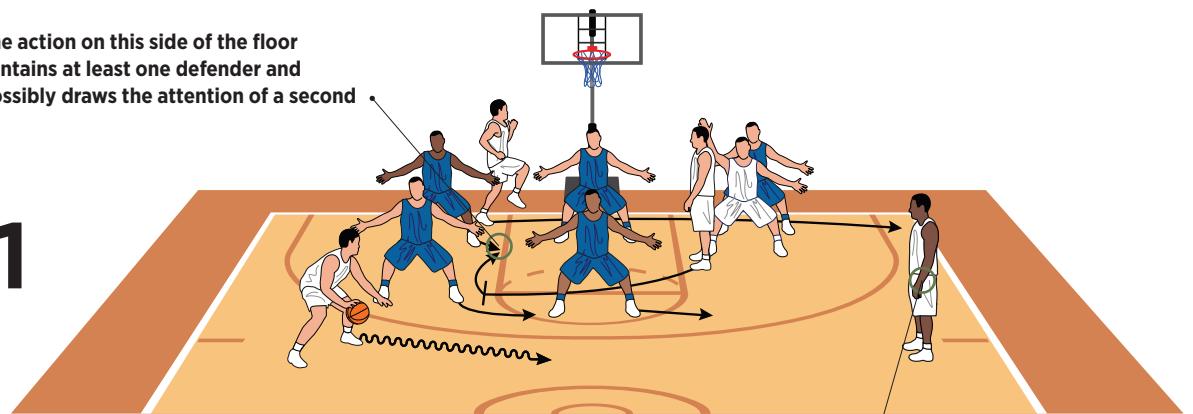
An opposite post player comes high and sets a ball screen as the ball-side post relocates to the right corner. The only player left near the right block posts up to contain that defender. The ball handler dribbles right [1]. A pass is made to the right wing. The ball-side post comes high and positions for a ball screen [2]. The ball screen is executed and the ball handler penetrates near the lane. Three defenders collapse leaving the wing unguarded. The right-corner player moves into a shooting window, receives the kickout pass and nails the 3-pointer [3].

## TECHNIQUE

The shooter finds the perfect spot so the ball handler has an easy passing lane to utilize. Be sure the screener rolls toward the hoop pulling the defender away from the right-wing area.

The action on this side of the floor contains at least one defender and possibly draws the attention of a second

1



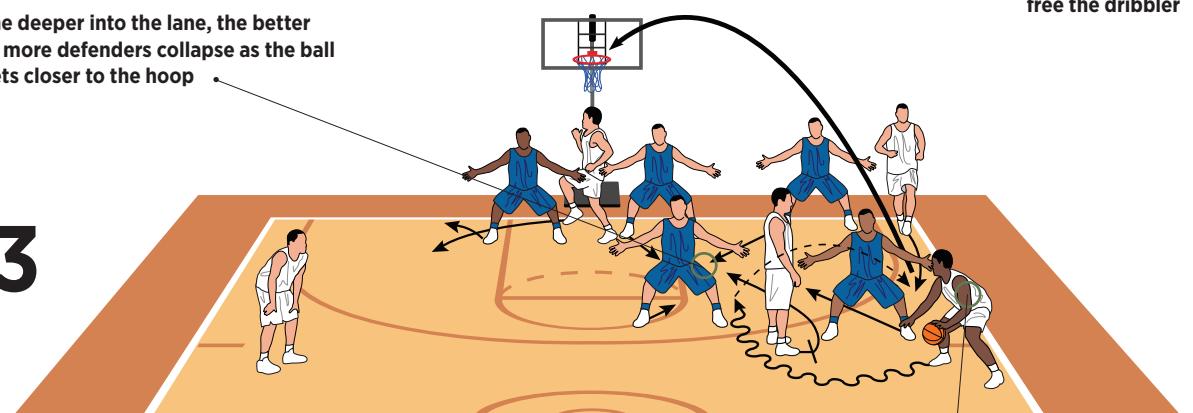
This is a good ball handler and someone who has the ability to penetrate the zone into the lane

2



Come as high as needed to set a solid ball screen and free the dribbler

3



Find an open shooting window and good passing lane for the ball handler

Player movement →

Ball movement →

Dribble →

Shot →

Struggling programs aren't turned around overnight - it takes a strategic plan and the time to implement it



# Tear It Down, Build It Up

When you enter a dire coaching situation, formulate a long-term plan with immediate actions to show your commitment and stay on task

I arrived on the Aurora Central Catholic (Ill.) campus in 2008 to coach the varsity girls basketball team, which featured a single winning season in its previous 34. Since then, we have three consecutive winning seasons including an Illinois 2A fourth-place state finish last year. Here is what I did to turn the tide.

## CALL A MEETING

I called a meeting in mid-April of everyone in the program so we could put faces to names. I had three meeting goals.

**1. Appreciation.** Let every player know how hard it had been for them previously (team just concluded 1-26 season where the coach didn't show up for the state playoff game). I told everyone I respected their commitment.

**2. Big Changes.** The entire culture needed a change. I told the players the plan of bringing in new, winning coaches at every level of the program. I asked them to

change their expectations and bought everyone inexpensive bracelets reading "Expect Victory." This was to become our mantra no matter the opponent.

**3. Be In Their Corner.** I informed players I was on their side and never would let them down. We discussed my 18-year coaching career and how anyone who has played for me is a part of my basketball family.

## ESTABLISH SUMMER PROGRAM

We needed a strong summer program to assess the overall talent and see the new freshmen in action. On the first day of the summer program, we only had seven players on hand. We were dismayed but stuck to our plan. We worked players had but had fun as well.

We stayed positive and consistently told them how things were going to be different. We asked players to tell their friends about the new program focus.

Practices started growing in numbers and we eventually had 32 players participating. I knew we were on to something.

The goal that summer simply was to boost confidence. We didn't drill them to death and still managed to take second place in the league, albeit against not tough competition, but it still gave them a hint of success.

## SHOW SUPPORT

I got to know every varsity player to build a relationship of trust. Plus, I learned what other sports they played and made sure to attend as many of those activities as well. I wanted parents to see I was willing to put in the time to build a winner and that I cared about their child.

With that initial success, change in attitude and my constant patrolling of the hallways talking to players who previously had quit the program (and getting eight of them back), we were on our way.

**Words by:**  
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