

# BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

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**JOAKIM NOAH >**  
OUTWORKS  
EVERYONE ON  
THE DEFENSIVE  
END

## BRING THE ENERGY

**WATCH DEFENSES  
FLOURISH**

**10 WAYS  
TO BEAT  
A ZONE**

**READ THE  
NUMBERS  
BEHIND  
MEN  
COACHING  
FEMALE  
TEAMS**

**THE BEST  
PRACTICE DRILLS  
EVERY WEEK!**



# New Ideas Evolve Our Game



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## Sideline Stories

Ole Miss men's coach Andy Kennedy has an idea. It's a radical idea.

He never wants to see another basketball player foul out of game.

In a discussion with Inside Ole Miss Sports ([read the piece here](#)), Kennedy provided this quote to sum up his thoughts on how he'd change the game.

"We're the only sport where the best players can be eliminated from the game. Let's just make it where it really has some teeth. If you foul (after the player's fifth foul), the other team's going to get two shots and the ball. You

talk about really having to think now as a coach! It still allows the best players to be in the game

so that the fans can see what they came to see."

I love "outside-the-box" ideas. Granted, most aren't making their way into the game, but what I love is it gets people thinking and talking about improving basketball.

It appears Kennedy's thinking is fueled by the fans' viewing experience. I understand that. But, while the superstar players still may remain on the floor after the fifth foul, fans aren't going to see these stars as they normally would play.

Is the star still going to drive hard at the basket with two shots and possession going the other way if an offensive foul is called? Is a dominant

center still going to challenge shots in the lane? Plus, this universally changes how the game is played. While coaches typically instruct players to go after a player with his or her fourth foul, now the plan could be simply to attack the five-foul player over and over again. Is that interesting basketball?

Plus, it cuts down on the number of players who get onto the floor. I know college basketball isn't about participation - it's about winning - but there is something positive to be said about a coach who knows how to develop many players rather than a single star.

It also eliminates the advantage of having a deep bench and turns the game

more into an individual effort rather than a team sport.

After careful consideration, I'm

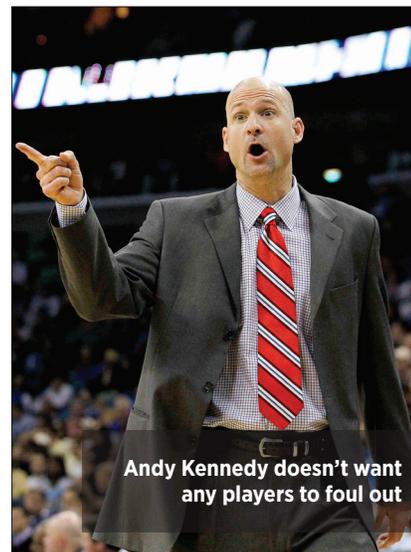
not in favor of Kennedy's suggestion. It alters the fundamentals of basketball too much ... but I love that he's throwing it out there, especially at a time when the college game is looking at reducing its shot clock and moving its 3-point line.

The game needs to evolve from time to time. The only way that happens is to spark intelligent conversations among the coaching community. I can't wait to hear Kennedy's next suggestion.

**"I'm not in favor of Kennedy's suggestion ... but I love that he's throwing it out there ..."**



*Michael Austin*  
Michael Austin  
Editor-in-chief



**Andy Kennedy doesn't want any players to foul out**

## In this issue...

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Players feed off coaches - show up with energy and enthusiasm at every practice and game, then watch it translate to your athletes and their defensive intensity

### 4 TAKE A CHARGE

Sway momentum by teaching your players how to properly take a charge

### 5 TRAP DRILL

Perfect for defensive and offensive players, this drill amps up defensive tenacity as players race to trap passers looking to make quick decisions

### 6 10 WAYS TO BEAT A ZONE

Loft passes around the perimeter? No. Shoot long 3s? No. Check out these 10 strategies for picking apart a zone defense

## QUICK HITTER

### More Men Coaching Females

"The percentage of women coached by women has declined to an all-time low," is a statement made in an April 6 article appearing in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. Despite it referring to all women's sports at the collegiate level (not just basketball),

it still caught me by surprise.

The article references the 2013 study conducted by the Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sports at the University of Minnesota. That study found only 40.2 percent of women's college teams are coached by women. That number rises to 60.5 percent when broken out just for basketball.

My hope is that at the very least

those male-led teams have a female presence on the coaching staff for three reasons: 1) To allow players to have someone they can approach who speaks their language; 2) To serve as a role model for players who may want to coach someday; and 3) To gain experience and hopefully lead her own program in the future.

What do you think? Email [michael.austin@basketballcoachweekly.com](mailto:michael.austin@basketballcoachweekly.com)

You can win with a bunch of high-energy, defense-first players such as Joakim Noah



# Bring The (Defensive) Energy

Inspiring players to excel on defense begins and ends with the energy you bring to every practice, drill and defensive teaching moment

Much like many schools outside the top-tier basketball conferences in America, the University of Wyoming isn't winning games with top recruiting classes. Yes, the Cowboys do draw some talent to Laramie, but to compete at Wyoming, head coach Larry Shyatt knows it comes down to intellect, work ethic, conditioning, attitude and strength – all of which are controllables and are part of a strong defensive team.

“Hard work and teamwork will defeat talent when talent fails to work hard,” is a quote Shyatt lives and coaches by. He knows if his players give their all during a game, they have an opportunity to compete. If not, there is no chance. But, to get players pushing to 100 percent in game situations, they first need to do the

same in practice.

So, from where does that energy and enthusiasm come? Some players simply are born with it. Most of your team, however, needs a push. This doesn't mean they are lacking in motivation, but it's not easy to give it your all day-in, day-out.

Shyatt says the head coach sets the tone for the team. If you aren't capable of bringing energy, then don't expect the players to do it.

This leads into the defensive side of the ball. While Wyoming only scored 65.2 points per game, which ranked the Cowboys 305th in the country, the squad only allowed 61.7 points per contest, which ranked them 17th in the nation and enabled the team to go 18-15 last year minus five-star talent.

Shyatt, obviously, places tremendous focus on defense in practice and has seven rules for you to do the same:

1. There are no fouls in practice unless the head coach calls it.
2. There are no lines – play defense even if the offense steps out of bounds.
3. Stress team vocabulary and be sure players and staff are on the same page.
4. Chart hustle stats – diving, deflections, blocks, charges and proper screens.
5. Be flexible – allow players to have success.
6. Always show defense first in film sessions, regardless if it was good or bad.
7. Practice pressing everyday, even if you don't press in games. It builds conditioning and ball handling, and every team faces a press at some point during the season.

#### Words by:

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Larry Shyatt, head men's coach, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyo.

# Take A Charge

Taking an offensive foul typically shifts momentum as defenders love rallying around the knocked-down player – instill this tough defensive mentality in your practices

## WHY USE IT

It takes practice to stand in front of an oncoming offensive player and not move. The first few times, defenders generally shift backward or take a half-step out of the way.

## SET UP

Stand under the backboard with a ball. Position three offensive players around the perimeter. The defender is facing out toward the offense and doesn't know where the ball is about to be passed [1].

## HOW TO PLAY

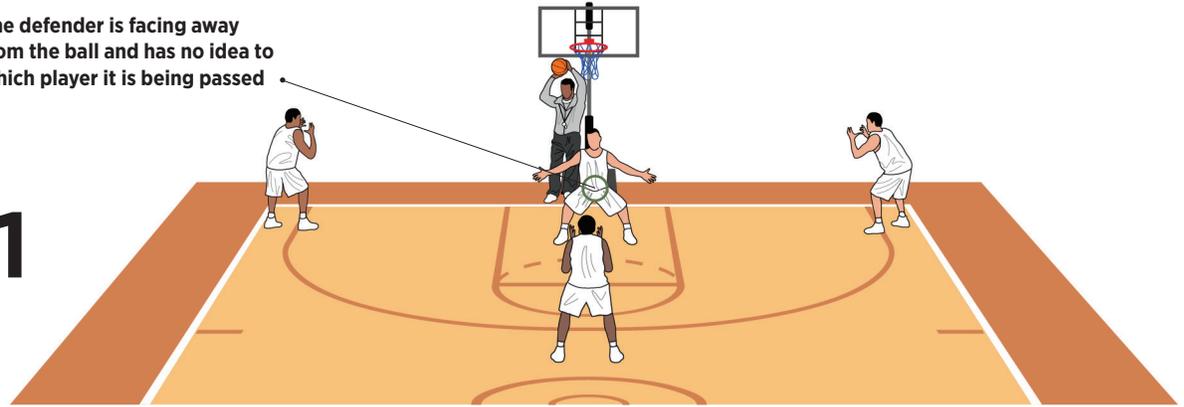
Throw a pass to any of the offensive players. The defender reacts and steps in that direction [2]. The offensive player drives to the hoop as the defender shifts into position, stands still and takes the charge. The ball goes back to you under the basket, the defender resets and run through the same actions again [3].

## TECHNIQUE

The more time the defender goes through this drill, the better he or she gets at moving into proper position at the correct time. Great defenders begin to read the eyes of the offensive players and react quicker to the pass. If there are players waiting to take their defensive turn, have them be boisterous communicators and cheer for the defender.

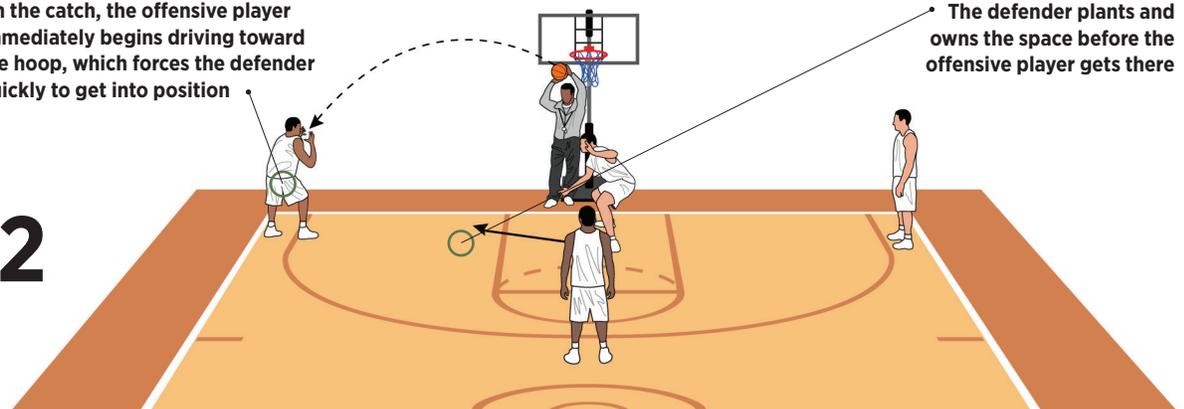
The defender is facing away from the ball and has no idea to which player it is being passed

1



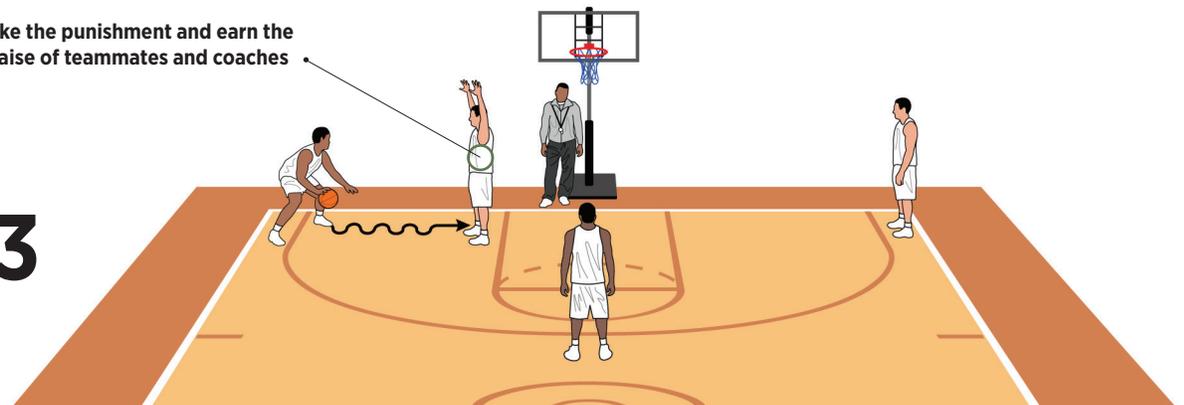
On the catch, the offensive player immediately begins driving toward the hoop, which forces the defender quickly to get into position

2



Take the punishment and earn the praise of teammates and coaches

3



Player movement → Ball movement - - - → Dribble ~~~~~ → Shot →

# Trap Drill Creates Havoc

On one side create confusion, induce panic and force a turnover while the other side attempts to remain calm, build confidence and pass out of an aggressive trap

## WHY USE IT

Trapping and double-teams are part of most coaches' defensive philosophies these days. As players execute these actions more often, they can become lax in forming the trap. This drill forces them to hustle, otherwise, the offense has a marked advantage.

## SET UP

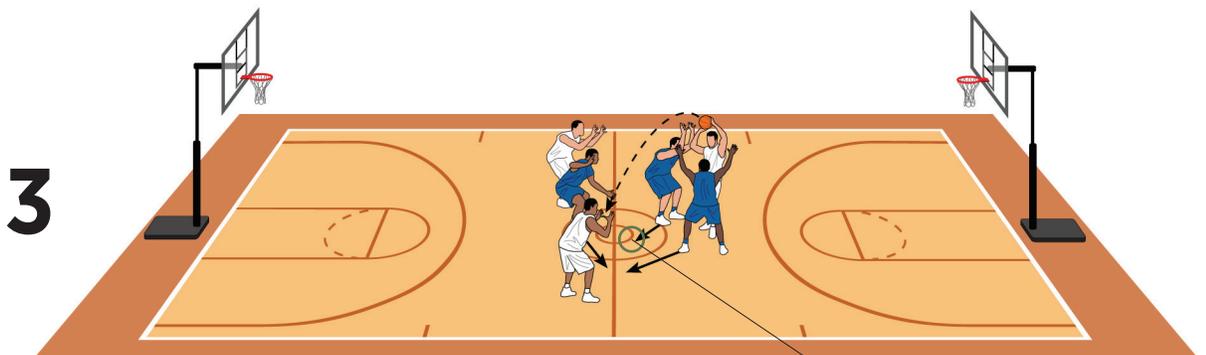
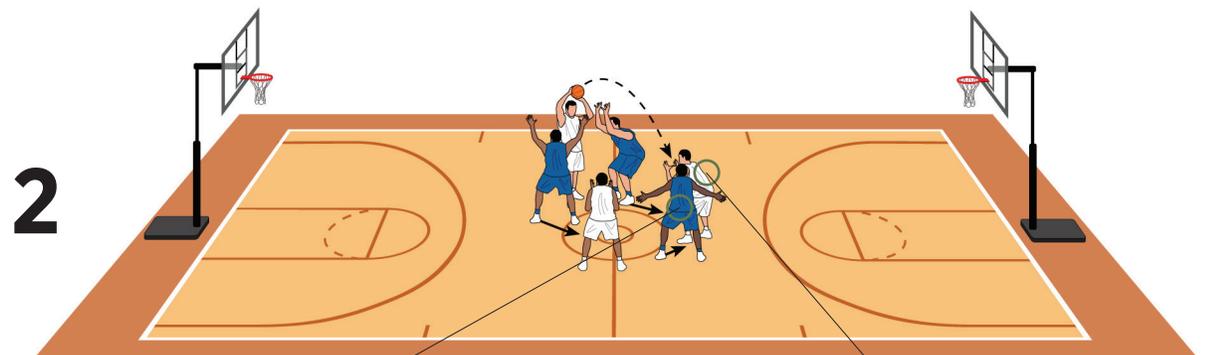
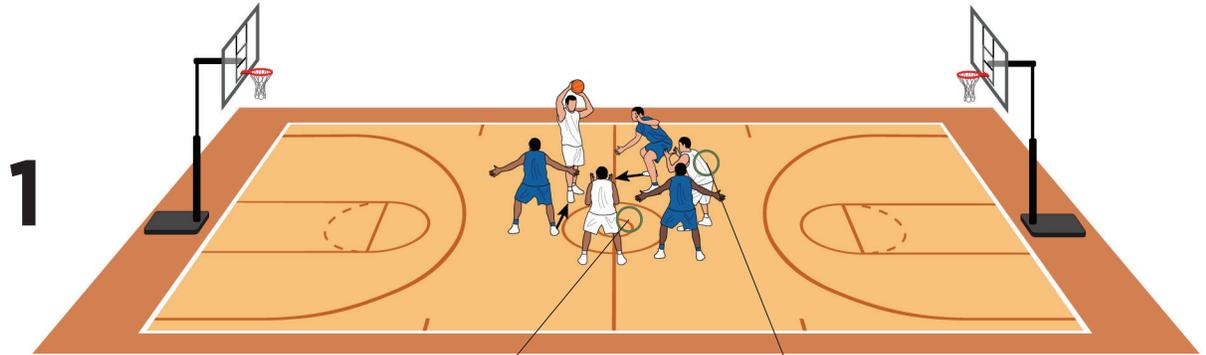
Use the area around the half-court center circle. There are three offensive and three defensive players. The only foot movements the offensive players are allowed are pivots. Defenders are allowed to run through the circle and the goal is to trap the ball on every pass [1].

## HOW TO PLAY

When trapped, the offensive ball handler looks to pass to an open teammate. On the pass, the two closest defenders trap the new ball handler while the third defender attempts to cut off the passing angles to the two other offensive players [2]. The ball handler cannot panic and uses pass fakes to move defenders. The defenders double-team every pass [3].

## TECHNIQUE

The defense uses moving hands, loud voices and fast feet to create chaos and confusion – anything to force the ball handler to pause or hesitate.



Player movement → Ball movement - - - → Dribble ~~~~~ → Shot →

Force a zone defense to move and communicate constantly – you'll eventually wear it down



# 10 Ways To Soften A Zone

Zone defenses work to slow down an offense, take it out of rhythm and force low-percentage jump shots – use these 10 strategies to pick them apart

Every team faces its fair share of zones throughout a season. Be strong in the following 10 areas and dissect this type of defense.

**1. Ball Reversal.** Make it quick and consistent so the defense constantly is moving and out of position.

**2. Inside-Out.** Make sure passes move toward the block and not just around the perimeter to keep defenders moving.

**3. Dribble Penetration.** This forces two defenders to guard the ball handler. Look for open 3-pointers when the defense sags.

**4. Hit The Glass.** Grab offensive rebounds against a zone and create put-back chances, get fouled or kick out for open 3-pointers.

**5. Full Reversal.** Extend ball reversal so the ball makes it to the corners, rather

than just the wings. This flattens the zone and frequently exposes the center. It also opens the zone's top for a shot or penetration.

**6. Cut & Replace.** Excessive cutting is easier to guard than a well-timed cut-and-replace action because offensive players aren't attacking when cutting excessively ... all they are thinking about is cutting. Go with a 1-3-1 look against a 2-3 zone, space out far, and use quick and "full" reversals rather than a continuity attack. You want players attacking and thinking about scoring – not just the next cut.

**7. Screen.** One quality screen is worth three poorly executed screens. The zone does not like to be screened. This especially is true of the zone's weak side.

**8. Run Set Plays.** When you run sets in practice, you gain confidence. Zones

attempt to rattle your offense and disrupt confidence, so having some zone sets provides players security in knowing where they need to be positioned. At time, it's comforting for players to know they are making movements to create a specific shot for a certain player.

**9. Dribble Chase.** Dribble into different areas of the zone and force defenders to communicate. Most defenders don't do this well.

**10. Rip The Big Box.** If a defense extends the zone into a big box with four players situated closer to the perimeter, or even goes with all five players outside the lane, show a 2-1-2 offensive set with your center at the middle of the free-throw line. Then move the center straight out beyond the 3-point line, move the ball and get into your attack set.

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