

HONOR THE GAME AS DON MEYER DID

BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

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REVAMP YOUR DEFENSIVE SHELL

**CUT THROAT
DRILL REWARDS
DEFENDERS &
HUSTLE**

**LEARN
MOTIVATION
FROM A
POSITIVE
POPOVICH**

**PUSH
OFF-SEASON
'ACTIVE REST'
- NOT LAZINESS**

ENCOURAGE >
EVEN MORE HUSTLE
IN THIS TWIST ON A
RELIABLE DRILL

TRANSITION QUICKLY WHEN DRILL SHIFTS OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES

Honor Meyer, Further Our Game



Basketball Coach Weekly
Issue 42

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9325 SW Iowa Drive
Tualatin, OR 97062

Editor-in-chief
Michael Austin
michael.austin@basketballcoachweekly.com

Contributors
Mike Dunlap, Paige White

Illustrations
Mike Renwick

Pictures
Action Images

Production
Matt Boulton, Julie Lifton

Publisher
Kevin Barrow
kevin.barrow@greenstarmedia.net

Customer Services
Duncan Heard
duncanh@basketballcoachweekly.com

Managing Director
Andrew Griffiths



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To subscribe to Basketball Coach Weekly please contact Duncan Heard at Green Star Media Ltd, Meadow View, Tannery Lane, Bramley, Guildford GU5 0AB, UK.

You can contact Duncan via Skype at [basketballcoachweekly](#) or via email at [duncanh@basketballcoachweekly.com](#)

Sideline Stories

Don Meyer, who won 923 games among his time at three different schools, and was the 2009 recipient of the Jimmy V ESPY Award for Perseverance as well as the 2012 Naismith Outstanding Contribution to Basketball Award winner, passed away May 18.

Everyone in our great game seems to have a Meyer story. And, almost all of them center around Meyer's unique ability to further the basketball-coaching profession. He spoke at clinics. He started his own basketball academy in 1990. He took the time to talk hoops with anyone willing to listen.

“What I took away most from the interview was Meyer’s passion for giving back.”

Four years ago, I wanted to listen and learn from Meyer. Working at a different publication, I set up an interview with Meyer to discuss his coaching strategies, and his thoughts on practice time, program building and getting players to believe in the team concept.

Knowing all he had been through at that point (he suffered his horrible car accident and cancer diagnosis two years earlier), I didn't want to take up too much of his valuable time. In true Meyer fashion, however, he gave me more phone time than I expected. He answered everything

I asked and when we finished, he told me he'd have someone email me several packets of his coaching information.

Sure enough, later that day, the packets hit my email inbox. I couldn't believe the precision in his notes. The lists he developed for teaching motion offense, becoming a better coach, ways to avoid losing a game, the differences between “good” and “great” teams, how to evaluate your squad after a game...well, it all just blew my mind.

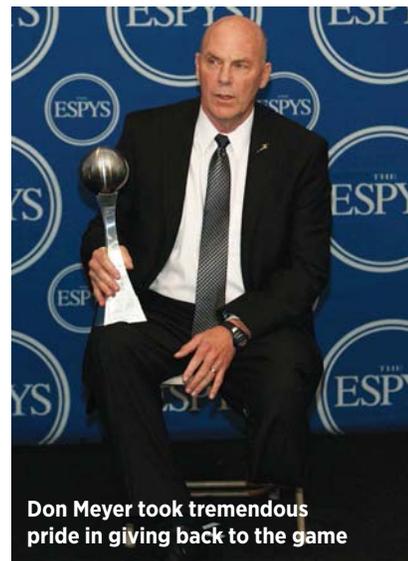
While I ate up all the hard-core coaching knowledge and dissected the intricately developed Xs and Os (which was another entire packet), what I took away most from the interview was Meyer's passion for giving back.

He probably received requests like mine all the time from young writers, and from young coaches wanting to understand basketball better. No one would blame him if by this point in his life, he started to decline these requests. The loss of a leg. Cancer. A family man. The leader of a basketball program. You think about where all his time was needed and spent, and I'm incredibly appreciative of that 45 phone minutes we had together that day.

We're all in this together. All of us love this game and have dedicated our professional lives to it. We want to see it grow. We want to give back. Thank you, Coach Meyer, for taking the time to further our game.



Michael Austin
Michael Austin
Editor-in-chief



Don Meyer took tremendous pride in giving back to the game

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Focus on communication, rotations and hustle as the Cut Throat Drill comes to an intense conclusion

6 ACTIVE REST BRIDGES SUMMER, SEASON GAP

Now is the time to allow for rest after the summer season but that doesn't mean inactivity

QUICK HITTER KNOW PERSONALITIES, GO POSITIVE

Beyond Xs and Os, great coaches have to manage personalities, understand people and get 12 to 15 high-level athletes to play as one cohesive unit.

This is part of what makes San Antonio's Gregg Popovich so incredible and it was on display again in the NBA Finals. After watching his young superstar-in-the-making Kawhi Leonard

struggle through the first two games, Popovich made it clear he needed more aggressiveness from Leonard. He got it ... and more. Leonard netted 23.7 points and 9.3 boards in the final three games.

It culminated in this quote, caught on ESPN microphones, near the end of Game 4 from Popovich to Leonard: "I couldn't be more proud of you.

You made some shots. You played good 'D' but you competed - 50/50 balls, being active, the whole deal."

Popovich sometimes is stereotyped as if he's some sort of curmudgeon due to his media interview, but he knows exactly how to handle players. He clearly understands the power of positive reinforcement. - Michael Austin

Aggressively trap the ball in this unique take on the Shell Drill ... just watch the backside cutter



Update The Shell Drill, Up The Intensity

The Shell Drill is used by almost every coach, now it's time to tweak it to get more players involved, more defensive intensity and more enthusiasm at your practice

You've seen it and run it thousands of times over – four offensive and defensive players take the court. The ball moves around the perimeter, defenders shift and react. The Shell Drill is a fantastic one to teach defensive responsibilities, movements and actions. But, updating Shell is a perfect way to encourage more defensive focus among players while building intensity within your team.

Mike Dunlap, current men's head coach at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and former coach of the NBA's Charlotte Bobcats, uses the Cut Throat Drill in place of the typical Shell.

"This continuous, fast-paced drill takes

the boredom out of the normal Shell Drill," say Dunlap. "The best thing is that this drill teaches with the whistle. The team that gets scored on or violates a simple rule must quickly rotate to the end of the line. What eventually happens is players teach players by sheer necessity and it takes you out of the drill!"

Dunlap explains there are 10 things the defense must do for success in this drill:

- > 1. Sprint out
- > 2. Keep hands high on the defensive responsibility, regardless of if that person has the ball or not
- > 3. Call man, ball and help
- > 4. Be in a low stance at all times

- > 5. Jump to all passes
- > 6. Pay attention to special rules – as the coach, you decide if you want the defense to work on a particular tactic, such as doubling all post entries
- > 7. Sprint off the floor when the whistle blows for a penalty and throw the ball immediately to the coach
- > 8. Get three stops – don't have to be consecutive
- > 9. Take a charge – this automatically wins the drill for that team
- > 10. Nail a free throw – this is required to win the drill after getting three defensive stops (if the free throw is missed, then the team loses a point and goes to the back of the line)

Words by:
Michael Austin

Only The Defense Scores In Cut Throat Drill

Defenders work on closing out, cutting down passing angles, staying low and stopping dribble penetration during the early stages of the drill

WHY USE IT

Every team runs some version of the normal defensive shell drill. Place a unique spin on yours but upping the intensity and forcing players to rely upon each other rather than looking to you for guidance.

SET UP

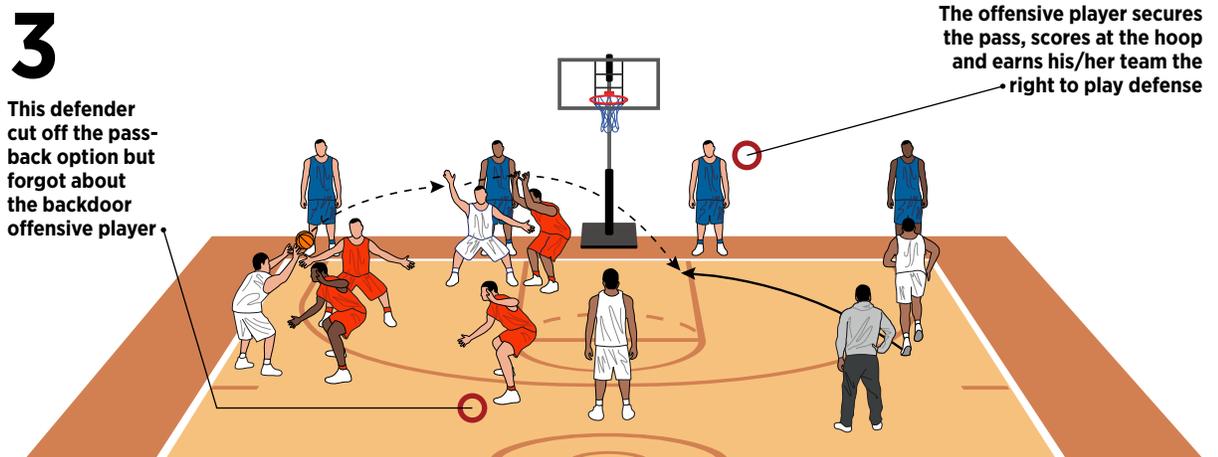
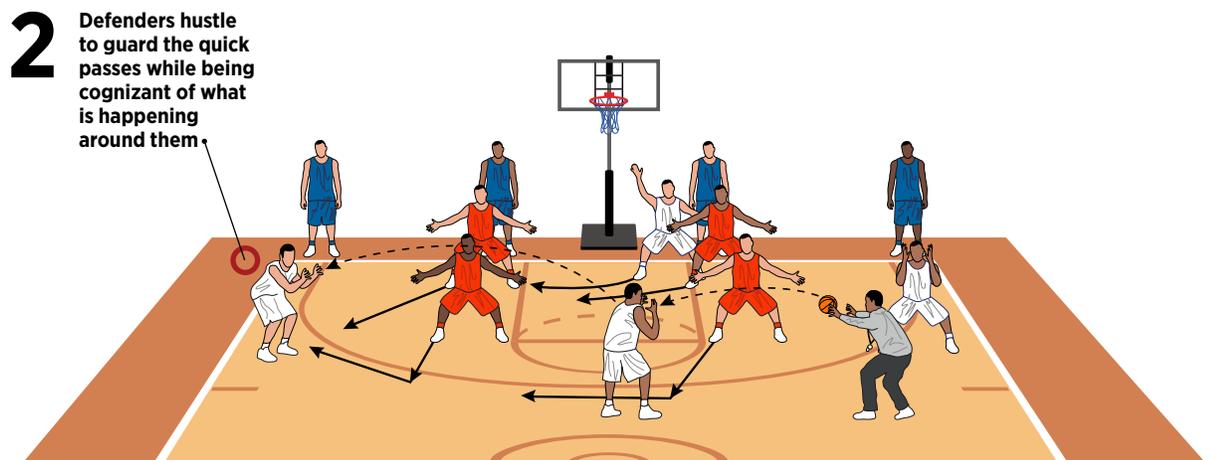
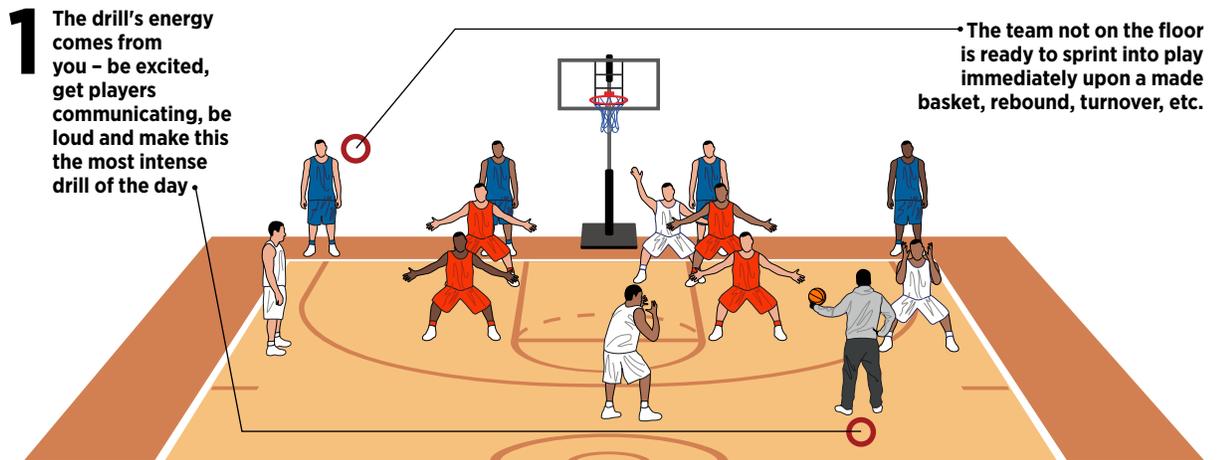
There are three teams of four players (if you have enough players then add a fourth team). The teams not in the game align along the baseline. You are situated with a ball, whistle and a lot of percolating passion near the top. The defense is in a box. The offense spreads out any way it wants [1].

HOW TO PLAY

Indicate to the offense what the rules are for this round (i.e. only allowed one dribble, ball must be passed four times, ball must go to the post at least once, etc.). This allows the defense to work against different attacks. Start with a pass to the point guard. The point passes to a wing and gets the defense moving [2]. If defenders overplay the perimeter, the offense knows to send a player backdoor for an easy layup [3].

TECHNIQUE

The only team that can score is the defense. Get a stop, get a point. Get three points (doesn't have to be consecutive), win the drill.



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

Rotate Quickly To Gain An Advantage

Defense is the goal but communication is a huge part of the focus in the Cut Throat Drill - when it's time to rotate, players must hustle or face being a step behind

WHY USE IT

This portion of the drill stresses communication and allows for players to work on transitioning in a half-court setting.

SET UP

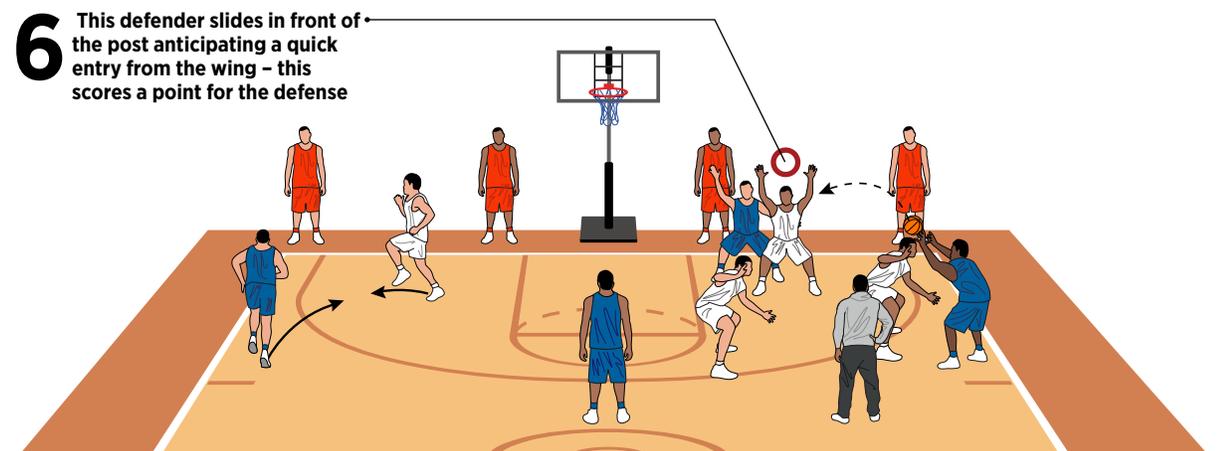
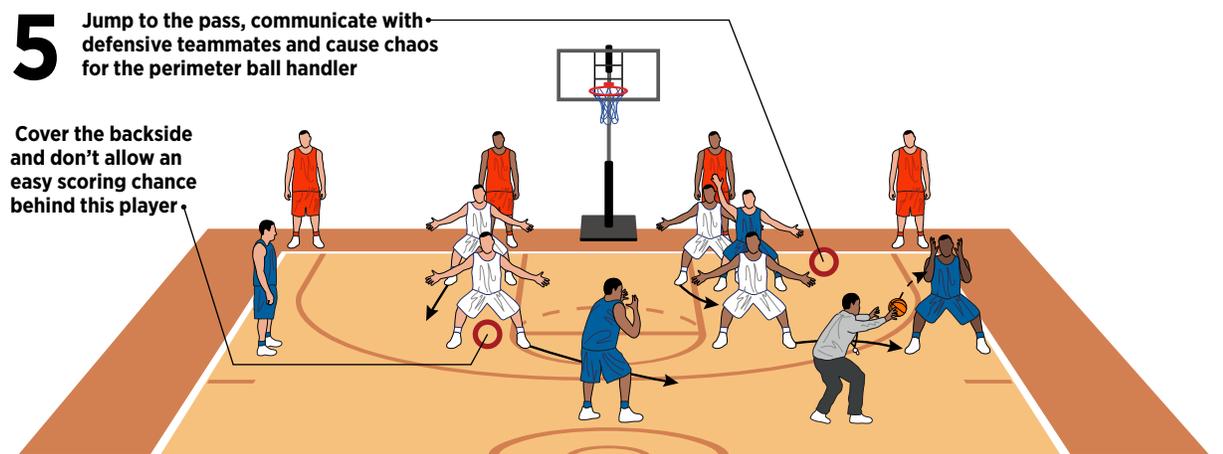
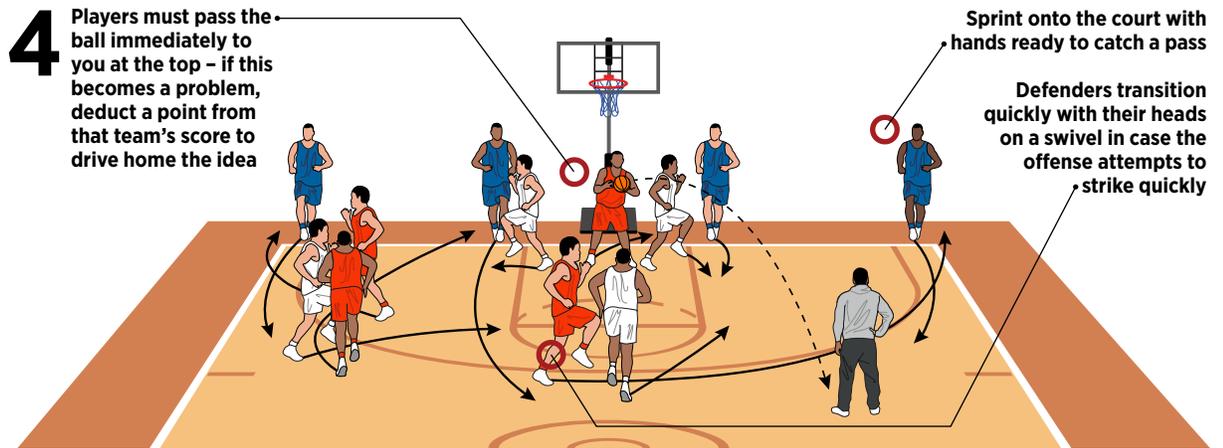
Continuing from the previous page, the offense (white jerseys) just scored so those players transition to defense. The baseline team (blue jerseys) enter the court on offense while the initial defense team (red) shifts to the baseline [4].

HOW TO PLAY

The ball has been passed back to you and start the action immediately upon the new offense taking the floor. The offense looks to strike quickly after securing the wing pass [5]. It appears the offense's post player is open but the defense does a phenomenal job recovering, fronting the post and stealing the entry pass. This nets the white team a point and allows those players to remain on defense [6].

TECHNIQUE

Once action calls for a transition, the ball must be passed immediately to you to keep the drill moving. Once a team nets three points, it shoots a single free throw. Make it and win. Miss it and lose a point while relocating to the baseline.



Active Rest Bridges Gap Between Summer Ball & Season

Players are pushed hard from October through the summer, they need rest, which still involves movement but allows for proper recovery

Now that the evaluation period has ended, it is vital coaches insist and assist their players in the task of evaluating their bodies. For some, their bodies haven't had a true break since October. Most highly competitive summer teams begin practicing and forming at the end of the state tournament, so this eliminates the recovery time needed after the high school season concludes.

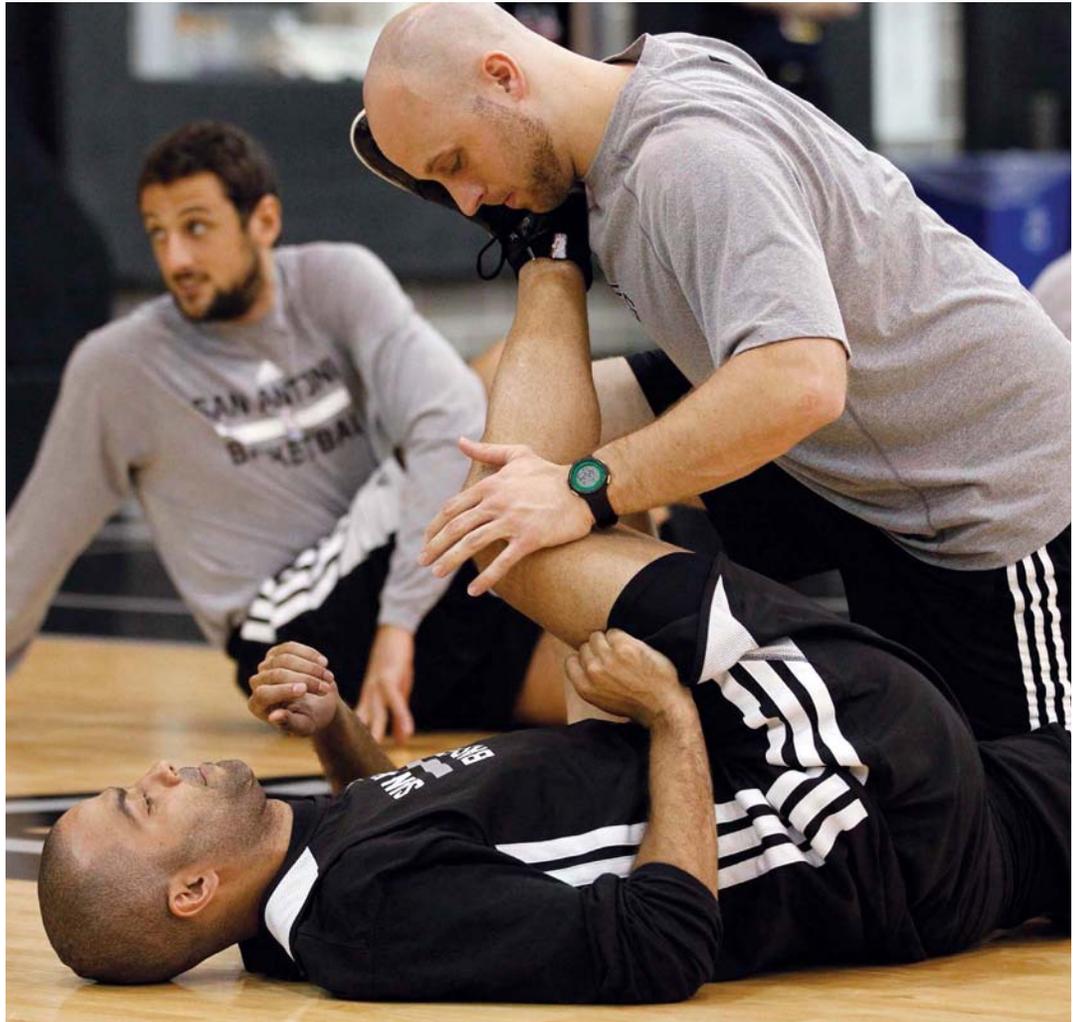
Throughout the summer, players are logging a lot of miles, travel-wise and physically. Once the summer season is over, high school coaches are ready to begin preparing for the season. The focus has to be on what is best for the athlete, not a particular program or coach. That's where a strong relationship between summer coach and high school coach is beneficial.

"No Days Off" is an awful mentality for coaches to impress on players. Most strength professionals agree that rest is a vital part of the athletic development process. The period of time from the end of the summer season to the beginning of the high school season is vital for that. Rest doesn't mean sitting on a couch playing Xbox. Active Rest is where the body repairs itself and grows. Some examples of Active Rest are:

- > Film study
- > Form shooting
- > Stretching
- > Yoga (Yoga Hoops DVD)
- > Sleep
- > Foam rolling

While these are all activities that promote player growth, they are all low impact. The body is getting some stimulation while the legs are receiving a break. Some coaches are concerned their players conditioning will suffer and they will not be ready when the season starts. That's fine. When you climb a mountain, your body isn't acclimated for the top during the first few steps. The same can be said for any season. You don't need to be your best until the end.

The most important thing for an athlete coming off a long summer season is repair. The legs need to be taken care of and



restored. When we discuss legs, we must begin with the feet. The feet take a beating in the summer. Multiple games in multiple days takes a toll on them. A great way to strengthen and repair the feet is through barefoot exercises. These exercises strengthen and repair the feet and ankles. They are a necessity and cornerstone of any successful training program.

The key element for athletes and coaches during this time of the year is this - coaches need to access what the athlete needs. Pushing during the months of the calendar when it isn't necessary often leads to the problems when it does matter. Driving on a flat tire might be fine

for the first mile, but a prolonged trip leads to preventable damage.

Taking care of the athlete has to be the No. 1 priority for coaches during this time. Everything else can wait.

Productive and purposeful training is about putting in work, but also about working smart. The most neglected area of overall performance is rest and recovery. Playing and training without proper rest and recovery can create muscles and joints to be on overload and overworked, which increases injury risk. Players taking the necessary rest and recovery as a priority will perform at a higher level.



Words by:
Paige White,
owner, Rule The
Court Training

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