

CHECK OUT OUR UPDATED, CLEARER DIAGRAMS!

BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

Learn • Train • Develop • Enjoy

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'HORNS' HAMMERS DEFENSES

ATTACK FROM
ALL ANGLES

USE THE PROPER
WORDS WHEN
PRAISING PLAYERS

START SHOOTER IN
CORNER, CREATE
TOP 3-POINTER

RETHINK YOUR
PRACTICE TIME
OF DAY



< KEVIN OLLIE
STUCK WITH
'HORNS' TO
A TITLE

EXECUTE PERIMETER BALL MOVEMENT & OPEN THE MIDDLE

Rethink Your Practice Time Of Day



Basketball Coach Weekly
Issue 49

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Sideline Stories

Now is the perfect time of year for basketball coaches and people to take time and learn from leaders in other sports.

With football two-a-days upon us, I've been reading "The System," by Jeff Benedict and Armen Keteyian, which provides a deep, inside look at what they call "the glory and scandal of big-time

"No one is ever in the fourth quarter of a game at six in the morning ..."

college football." The access these two reporters were granted is unprecedented and makes for a fascinating read.

A lot of time is spent on and about Mike Leach, the former Texas Tech and current Washington State football coach. Everyone in coaching circles knows Leach as someone who doesn't fit into the cookie-cutter definition of a coach yet turns programs into winners with his electric, up-tempo offense.

One snippet of Leach's coaching philosophy caught my attention and should do the same for the basketball coaches reading this publication. During the eight-week stretch of time when coaches aren't allowed to hold official practices (in January and February), Leach, much like every other college coach, offers what he calls voluntary participation in Midnight Maneuvers.

But, it's not the voluntary vs. involuntary nature of these workouts that piqued my

interest. It's the time of day. Leach offers these conditioning sessions from 10 p.m. until midnight.

As assistant coach Jim Mastro explained, this is a unique wrinkle to the typical voluntary workout schedule. "Everywhere I've ever coached," Mastro is quoted in the book, "no one does this. People do conditioning at six in the morning. Leach's philosophy is that no one is ever in the fourth quarter of a game at six in the morning. The fourth quarter happens late at night."

Think about your first couple weeks of practices. Sure, many take place immediately after school but what about the weekend sessions? Do you require players to show up at six or seven in the morning? What kind of effort do you see and how well do the players perform?

Even at the after-school practices, players are going to respond differently. They may be hungry at 3 p.m. vs. already having eaten dinner in anticipation of a 7:30 p.m. game. This affects performance. Plus, if teenagers get in trouble, what time of day does it usually occur? You can't curb all off-the-court incidents but it's more difficult to get in trouble when in the gym.

Sure, convincing parents to allow their teenagers to practice until all hours of the night may be a stretch. And, having the gym open that late simply may not be feasible but think about the time of day you run your practices vs. when you play your games.



Michael Austin
Michael Austin
Editor-in-chief



Washington State football coach Mike Leach runs some of his voluntary workouts late at night to mimic game situations

In this issue...

3 SHRED DEFENSES FROM ALL ANGLES WITH 'HORNS'

Horns sets place the two posts at opposite elbows with two shooters in opposition corners - it all leads to creating many scoring chances

4 START SHOOTER IN CORNER, CREATE TOP 3-POINTER

Perimeter ball reversal and a well-timed downscreen allow a shooter to come free at the set's top

5 INITIAL MOVEMENT CLEAR SPACE, OPENS MIDDLE

Watch the middle open after a great deal of initial player and ball movement

6 USE THE PROPER WORDS WHEN PRAISING PLAYERS

Players respond well to praise vs. being constantly bombarded with critiques ... but choose your words carefully

QUICK HITTER UPDATED DIAGRAMS, YOUR THOUGHTS?

I've asked for input about *Basketball Coach Weekly* and you've delivered on several fronts. The one area most mentioned is helping clear up our diagrams so readers more easily can follow the movements.

Starting in this issue I've added a small number in a white circle next to each player. Based on the typical numbers coaches are used to seeing assigned to

players (1 for point guard, 2 for shooting guard, etc.), these additions, which follow the players throughout the three-diagram process we use, allow readers to clearly see the starting and ending positions of all five players on the court.

Now, you have the best of both worlds - the real-life-looking figures we've introduced you to in *Basketball Coach Weekly* with the easy-to-follow numbering

process you use in your system.

These changes are a direct result of your feedback and I hope to hear more from you. Also a result of your feedback? Some fantastic drills for developing an explosive first step, as requested by a reader I'll be featuring next issue.

Keep those comments (positive or negative) coming!

- Michael Austin



UConn's men's basketball team ran several 'Horns' plays en route to a 2014 national championship

Shred Defenses From All Angles With 'Horns'

Successful against any defense, these plays utilize high-post screening action with shooters starting in the corners and cutting through the lane

Coaches always are looking for versatile offenses utilizing ball movement, screens and keeping players active within the set, which is why "Horns" plays are so popular at the NBA and college levels right now.

The University of Connecticut men's basketball team routinely showed a Horns look in its offense throughout the 2014 NCAA Tournament. Opposing teams struggled to stop it, so the Huskies kept going back to it. What's great about Horns is that despite the initial set not wavering, there are so many different ways to initiate the action and create shots that it's almost impossible to scout.

The basic Horns set begins with the

two post players located at opposite elbows with a point guard dribbling at the top of the set. The two shooters are located in opposite corners.

From there, let your imagination go to work. Common entries include: both posts coming high and the point guard selecting one side to attack off the ball screen; the point passing to a high post then running closely off the pass receiver as the corner shooters relocate and draw defenders in opposite directions; or pinch in a shooter, have a post drop low, curl around and pop back to the wing for a pass.

It's also a great transition offense because the posts only are required to

set themselves at the elbows rather than establishing lower post position. This allows the offense to get started a tick earlier. Plus, if you have a post capable of knocking down an outside shot, then it adds another layer to the offense, which becomes more difficult to defend as opposing posts typically aren't used to playing this far removed from the hoop.

James Vear, a coach who has spent time instructing players in the U.S., Canada and England, helps us out this week with these two plays. Vear has coached at the youth, collegiate and professional levels, and most recently coaching in the European Championships taking place earlier this month in Greece.

Words by:
Michael Austin

Activities by:
James Vear, head coach, Aalborg Vikings (U.K.), assistant coach, Great Britain Under-20 Men

Start Shooter In Corner, Create Top 3-Pointer

The initial movement starts right then utilizes ball reversal and a well-timed downscreen to free the shooter coming high at the top

WHY USE IT

Horns plays are great for any offense as they work well against man or zone defenses, plus the player positions keep the defenders guessing.

SET UP

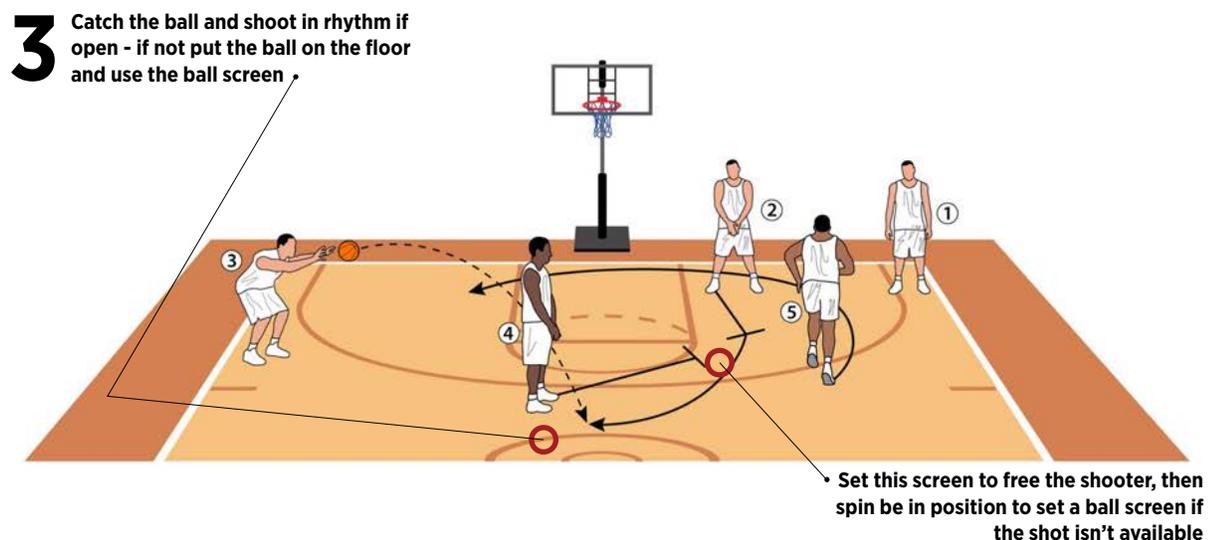
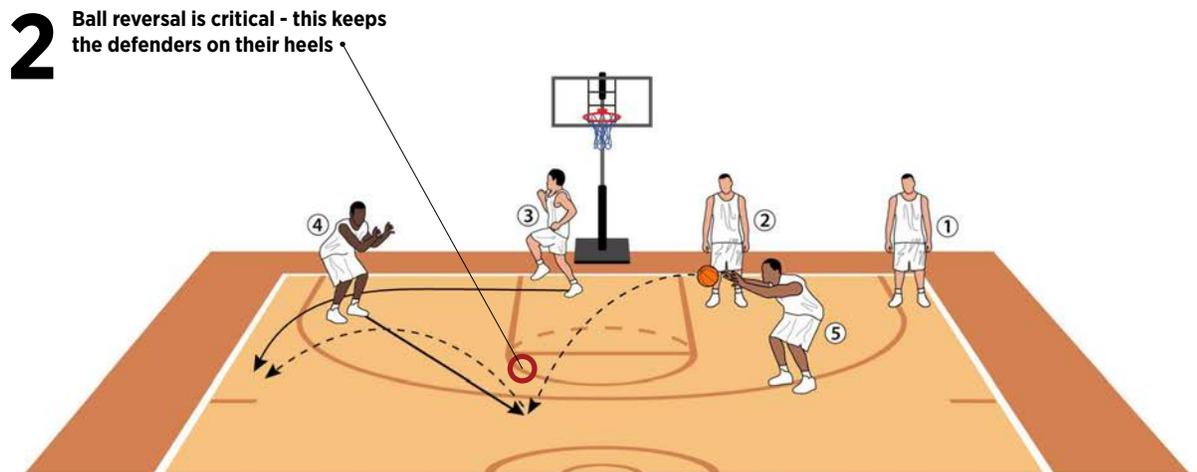
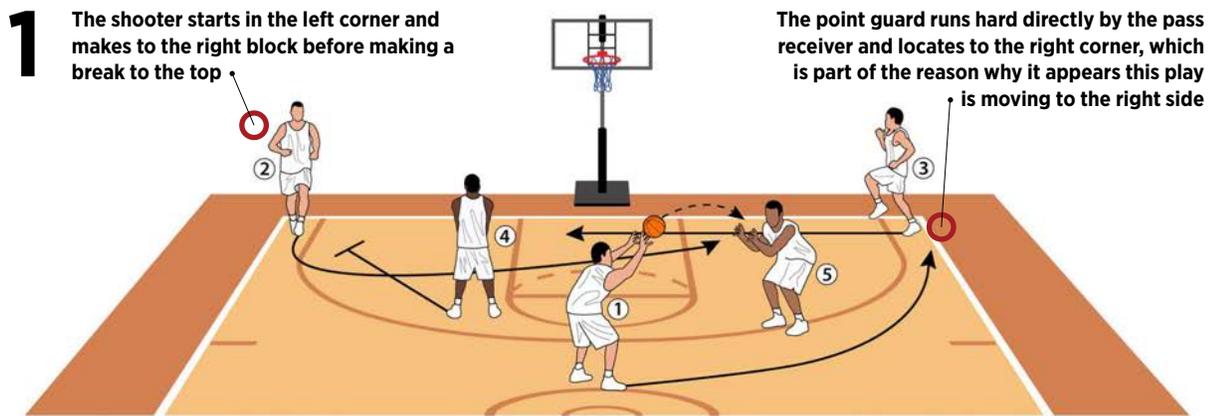
Start from a standard Horns set with a post player near each elbow and a shooter in each corner.

HOW TO PLAY

The point (1) passes to the right-side elbow (5), then relocates to the right corner as 3 cuts under the hoop. 2 (who is the shooter) moves from the left corner and curls around a downscreen set by 4 [1]. As the play looks to move right to the defense, ball reversal begins. 5 passes to 4 who has popped to the top. 3 continues running the baseline and receives a pass on the opposite wing [2]. 2 comes high and screens for 5 who cuts to the ball-side block. 2 pops to the top off a screen from 4 and receives the pass for the open 3-pointer. 5 also could be open on the block [3].

TECHNIQUE

If the top shot isn't available, have 4 turn around and set a ball screen so 2 has the option to dribble right and create, 2 then looks to attack the rim or hit 4 rolling to the hoop.



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

Initial Movement Clears Space, Opens Middle

Use a downscreen then a low screen to create space for a talented ball handler to secure a pass, use a pick and score at the basket

WHY USE IT

The screening and ball movement action is a lot for defenders to follow - watch the middle open up during these actions.

SET UP

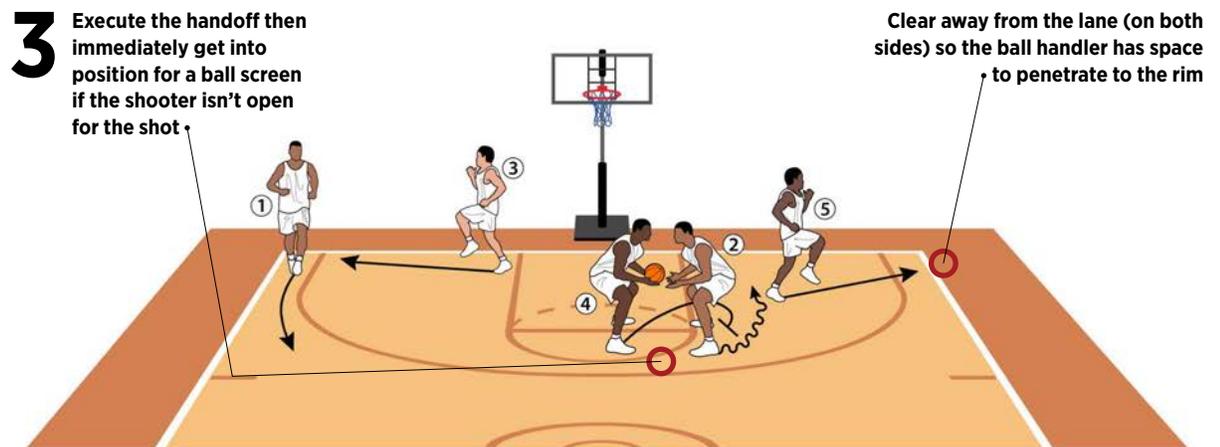
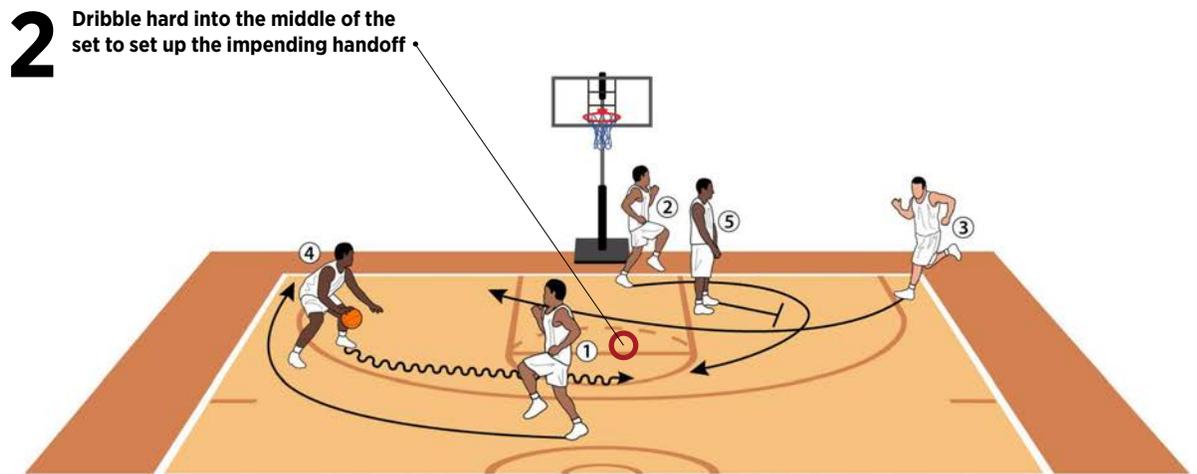
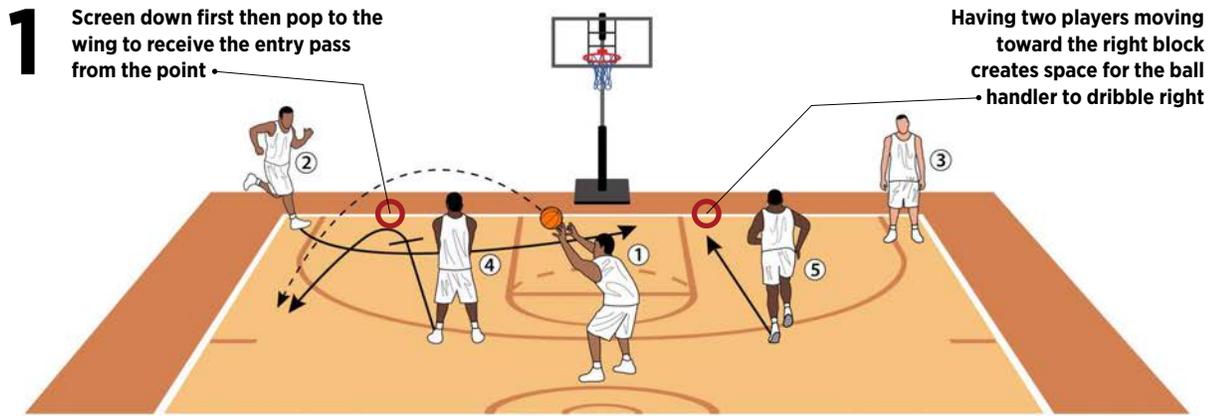
Start from a standard Horns set with a post player near each elbow and a shooter in each corner. The entry is a bit different this time as the high post moves low first, then circles high.

HOW TO PLAY

The left elbow screens down for the eventual ball handler in the left corner (2). 4 then comes high and receives a pass from the point (1). 5 shifts to the weak-side block [1]. 4 dribbles right. 1 relocates to the left corner as 4 dribbles across the set. 5 screens and frees 2 coming high as well as 3 curling across to the left side [2]. 4 hands off to 2, then sets a ball screen for him. 2 uses the screen and penetrates into the middle as 3 and 5 clear to the corners creating more open space [3].

TECHNIQUE

3 and 5 must clear or the lane becomes clogged and 2 has nowhere to go. 2 must allow 4 to shift into screening position after the handoff. 2 looks to attack the rim or kick out a pass to 1 circling into an open window.



Duke's Mike Krzyzewski knows the precise moments of how and when to praise players and inspire them



Use The Proper Words When Praising Players

Positive reinforcement goes a long way in player development but choose what you say wisely or the message may be lost

Your praise should come in the form of encouragement for your players and should be specific, clear, and focused on the process. “Good job today” is nice, but it’s not action-, effort- or goal-specific.

On the other hand, “You’ve really been training hard, and today you put it all together. You could not have done that last year,” encourages the player for their effort, their perseverance, their progress and their competence. It gives them ownership and control over the result and demonstrates that you have been paying attention to their effort throughout the year. It activates the child on multiple levels and sets the stage for further improvement, additional goal setting and continued improvement.

Try not to over-praise. We all know

parents who are afraid that their child’s self-esteem will suffer if they are not encouraged and praised for every outcome, and this is not true. Over-praising can be a negative on two fronts:

1 Children can become apathetic to praise, since they hear it all the time. You will run out of superlatives and be unable to discern real achievement from the everyday norm.

2 Kids are smart, and they soon catch on if everything they do is “fantastic” or “brilliant” or “awesome.” It’s not, and your players eventually know a good performance from a bad one. They will grow cynical to your words if everything is incredible.

Do not attempt to praise a player by comparing them to others. There are better ways to encourage your child than to constantly remind them “you are the best

player on your team.” Maybe they are, and if so they probably know it already. They don’t need you to put down their teammates or opponents. This is also not process-specific because in the grand scheme of things the process is all about things you can control, and teammates and opponents do not fit that category.

Finally, be very careful about sarcastic praise, such as “You really tore it up out there today,” after a player goes three for 20 from the field. Some players respond to sarcastic comments made at opportune times, but such comments are not appropriate before, during or after an event or game. All sarcasm has a hint of truth, and youngsters are so emotional that it is difficult to know if it will go over well with a young athlete. It is best to find other ways to encourage and motivate your athletes.

Words by:
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