

HIT CURLER OR SEALING SCREENER FOR HIGH-% SHOT

BASKETBALL COACH WEEKLY

Learn • Train • Develop • Enjoy

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INITIATE OFF THE DRIBBLE

HIGH BALL SCREENS
OPEN OPTIONS

PROGRAM BUILDING

RECONNECT WITH
CUT PLAYERS

'FREE-THROW
GOLF' ENFLAMES
COMPETITIVE FIRE

ENCOURAGE
TOUGHNESS
RUN 50/50 DRILL

< DRIBBLE SHOULDER-
TO-SHOULDER
WITH SCREENER



DOUBLE SCREEN FREES WEAK-SIDE SHOOTER

Reconnect With Cuts



Basketball Coach Weekly
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Sideline Stories

You have to love December. You're getting deeper into game play. Players are starting to get what you want from them. Practices seem to run a bit more smoothly. Everything seems to be hitting stride for the rest of the season.

But, think back about a month ago — remember those kids you cut? In the hustle and bustle of the season, it's easy to forget the players who didn't have the skills to make your squad. Trust me, though, they are thinking about you and the team.

“It keeps those players as part of the program and helps alleviate your workload ...”

I had a reader reach out to me asking how his son, who was cut from the team, could improve to help his chances next year and it got me thinking about if any of you reconnect with these potential players.

Sure, time is tight. Every minute matters during the season. But the players who tried out for your team last month want to get better. Reach out to them and discuss the following four things.

> **Talk To Me.** Make yourself available. Be clear your time is limited during the season but if the player cares enough to want your opinion on how he or she can improve, grant this person a few minutes of your day. Show you

care. Basketball is about more than wins and losses, it's about player improvement, confidence and being part of something bigger than the individual.

> **Volunteer With The Team.** Now that the shock of being cut has worn off, there may be a cut player or two who want to be involved with the program in any way possible. See if they want to be team managers, stat trackers, equipment managers or any other position where you need help. It keeps those players as part of the program and helps alleviate your workload.

> **Keep Playing.** Encourage cut players to find ways to get on the court. If your school has an intramural program, push the cut players in this direction. Maybe there is a town rec team playing a couple times a week. Or, even suggest finding some adult leagues that welcome teenagers. Don't waste these winter months sulking and pouting about being cut — continue working on the game.

> **Focus On Defense.** Everyone wants to shoot and score. You have plenty of those players. One area where a cut player can force his or her name back into the conversation for next year's team is on the defensive end. Defense is about skill and technique, but a lot of it comes down to heart and determination. You always can use someone who gives you a few minutes of lock-down defense during a game.



Michael Austin
Michael Austin
Editor-in-chief



Tell cut players defense is one skill always in demand on your team

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6 50/50 DRILL BUILDS TOUGHNESS
Have players battle 1-on-1 with limited dribbling and a constant live ball to encourage them to hustle all the time

QUICK HITTER IMPROVE FREE THROWS WITH 'GOLF'

Taylor Jannsen, a player development coach in Milwaukee, Wis. (pmaxbasketball.com), who works with individuals, small groups and complete teams, and who provided the information on page 6 of this issue, gives us an easy, quick drill to improve free-throw shooting.

Set up Free Throw Golf with a pair of

players at every hoop. Each player shoots 18 free throws. Players take two free throws, then rotate until they reach 18.

The scoring is simple: you get a -1 for a swish, 0 for a regular make and +1 for a miss. Just like in golf, the lowest score is the winner.

Set it up as a competition and have the winners from each hoop pair up

and go through the actions again. Keep pairing winners until the final two players play. Place the pressure on them by having the entire team watch and encourage the players.

Crown a winner for the day. Keep track of the winners throughout the season.

- Michael Austin

Dribble the on-ball defender directly into the screen so he or she either gets picked off or has to run under it



Initiate Off The Dribble

Move a defense early in your set with a high ball screen at the top as it shifts defenders out of position and creates passing lanes to get the ball to shooters

Bring a screener high, initiate off a dribble and create more space for the three lower players in your set. High-ball-screen offense comes in many shapes and sizes, but it boils to down the simple idea of moving defenders out of their comfort zones and setting up open shots.

By having a post player come high and set the screen, now you are pulling a taller defender away from the hoop. These defenders typically don't want to defend 12, 15, 18 or 20 feet from the basket and it allows you to attack the rim without the threat of a shot blocker in the area.

The screener needs to keep two critical things in mind: keep a solid base and don't move once planted. A solid base

keeps an on-ball defender from sneaking around the screen. Staying still and absorbing the impact keeps referees from calling a foul on the screener.

As for the ball handler, instruct this player to dribble his or her defender right off the screener's outside shoulder. Be so tight to the screener that the on-ball defender either runs directly into the screen or is forced below it. If the defender fights through, then it's more difficult to maintain the dribble and it closes some passing lanes.

While a high-ball-screen offense lends itself to the screener rolling to the hoop (an effective strategy), today I'm focusing on sets where the screener moves low to set an additional screen. This frees a shooter moving from the

post area higher in the set.

In the first play, the screener sets the ball screen and makes a diagonal cut to the opposite block. The shooter takes a hard step toward the baseline, then curls around the screen coming free on the opposite side for an open shot. The beauty of this play is the screener is in perfect position to seal the defender as another scoring option.

The second play is designed to net you a couple open 3-point looks. Once again, the screener comes high, then rolls to the opposite side to set another screen. This time it's a double to buy your shooter a little more time coming to the perimeter. The ball handler uses a quick plant, pivot and pass off the dribble to set up the shot.

Words by:
Michael Austin

Hit Curling Shooter Off Screen

Set up a mid-range jump shot or a post-up opportunity in the lane after an initial dribble entry off a high screen

WHY USE IT

By having the ball-side guard clear opposite and low, it appears he or she is out of the play. Send the high ball screener low to pick off the guard's defender and set up an open jumper.

SET UP

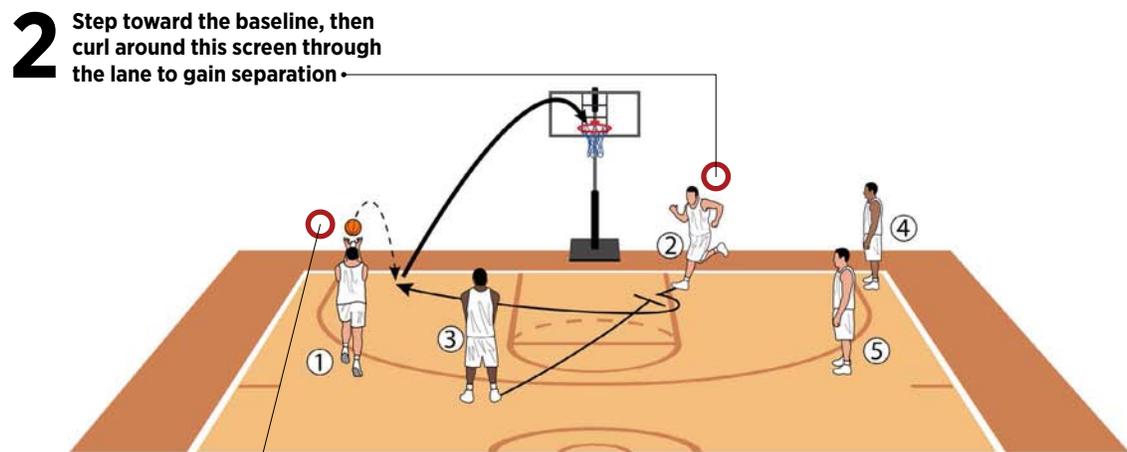
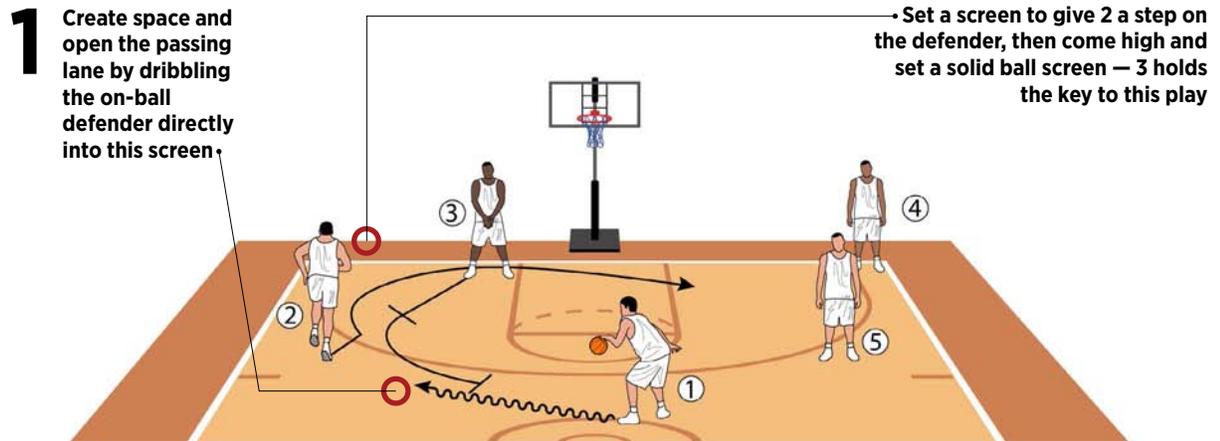
The point guard (1) has the ball at the top of the set with a shooter (2) on the left wing and the small forward (3) on the left block. Your power forward (4) and center (5) are spaced on the right side to keep their defenders away from the action.

HOW TO PLAY

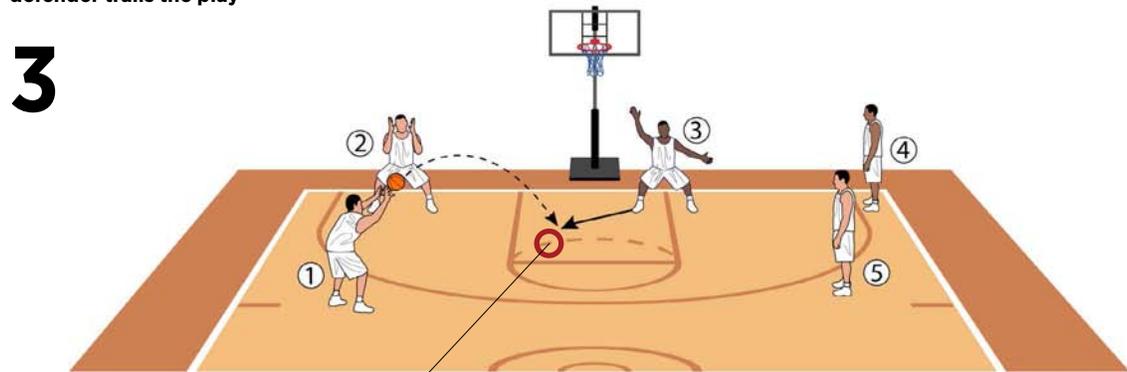
1 dribbles left as 3 comes high to set the ball screen. 3 first sets a screen for 2, who moves from the left wing to the right block [1]. After setting the ball screen, 3 moves low through the lane and screens for 2 again. 2 fakes toward the baseline, then curls around the screen in the opposite direction. 1 passes to 2 for the open jump shot [2]. If 2 isn't open, 3 seals the defender and posts up in the lane [3].

TECHNIQUE

1 doesn't stare down the area where 2 is about to move, otherwise it's a tip-off to the defense where you want the shot. With right-side spacing, if the pass goes to 3, then 3 drop-steps right and scores.



Catch the ball, square to the hoop and shoot as the defender trails the play



Seal the screened defender, stick a target hand up and call for the ball if 2's mid-range jumper isn't available

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

Double Screen Leads To 3-Pointer

The high ball screener executes the initial action, then moves low to join a double screen in freeing a shooter coming to the weak-side wing

WHY USE IT

Starting low, move both of your better shooters toward the perimeter when you need a 3-pointer. A weak-side double screen creates the separation your shooter needs.

SET UP

The point guard (1) has the ball shaded to the left side of the court. The center (5) starts at the free-throw line. Both of your shooters (2 and 3) are positioned on opposite blocks.

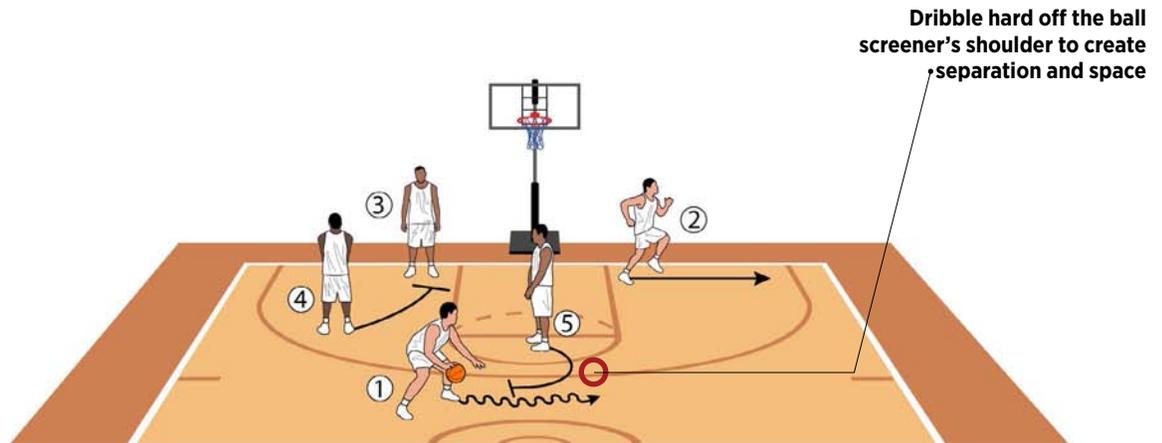
HOW TO PLAY

5 moves high to set the ball screen while the left-wing player (4) shifts low to start the double screen to free 3 [1]. After setting the ball screen, 5 moves low and joins 4 in a double screen. 3 uses the double screen to come free on the left wing. 2 has shifted from the right block toward the corner [2]. 1 has dribbled right and looks back left for 3 coming open. Also take a look at 2 moving up from the corner as a potential open shooter as well [3].

TECHNIQUE

1 doesn't turn back left until the double screen is being executed. Turning early allows the defense to read the play and jump the wing. Have 2 seem out of the play in the corner and possibly his or her defender sags off, which creates an opening.

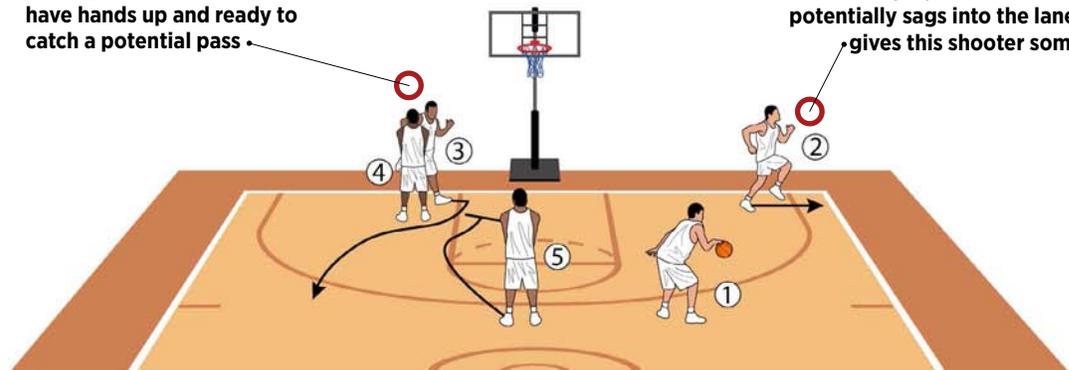
1



Dribble hard off the ball screener's shoulder to create separation and space

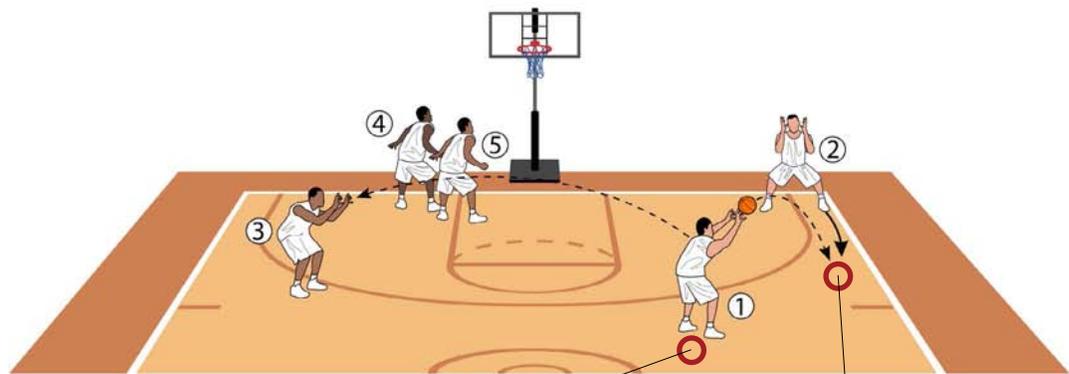
2

Use both screens to fight hard coming to the left wing — have hands up and ready to catch a potential pass



Space to the corner and appear out of the play a bit so the defender potentially sags into the lane, which gives this shooter some space

3



Look for 3 coming off the double screen but be sure to wait until the screens are executed — look left too early and the defense jumps the pass

Move into a shooting window as a second 3-point option

Player movement ———> Ball movement - - -> Dribble ~~~~~> Shot ———>

50/50 Drill Builds Toughness

It's a 1-on-1 battle in the paint to see who is the strongest, toughest and most determined player when it comes to tracking down loose balls and scoring while contested

WHY USE IT

The 50/50 Drill forces players to leave it all on the floor to achieve success.

SET UP

Start the drill with one player holding a ball at the free-throw line. The opponent is positioned in front of him or her and serves as the initial defender. All shots must come from inside the painted area.

HOW TO PLAY

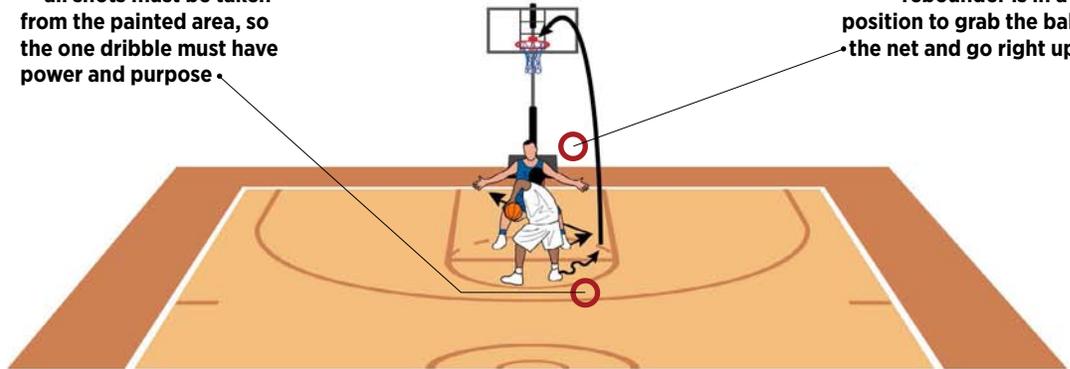
The player with the ball only is allowed one dribble to get into the paint. Once in the paint, the player shoots as the two players battle for the rebound [1]. In this instance, the shot is missed and bounces outside the lane. The opponent boxes out the shooter and tracks down the ball [2]. With the ball outside the paint but inside the 3-point line, the blue-jersey player has one dribble to get back into the lane and shoot [3].

TECHNIQUE

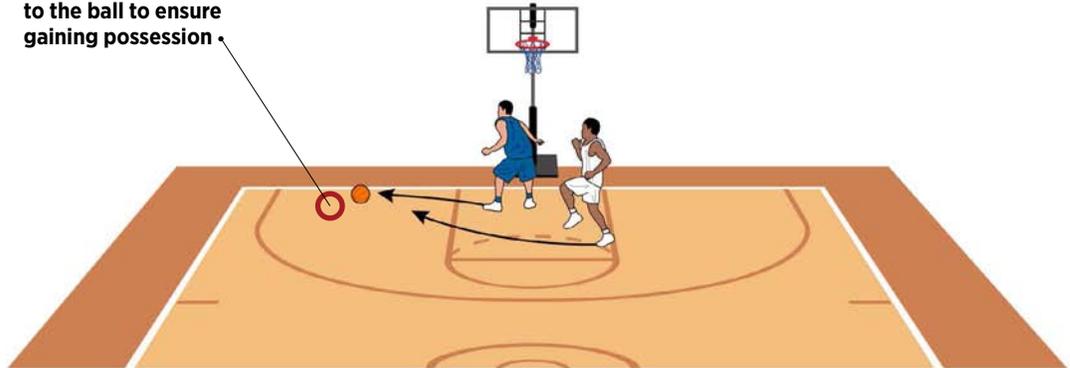
The ball always is live, even on made shots. Award one point for a made shot. On a miss, if the ball is secured in the paint, then the rebounder does not have the use of a dribble. If the ball is rebounded outside the paint, the player has one dribble to get to the lane. If a long rebound is tracked down outside the 3-point line, then the rebounder has two dribbles to get to the lane. Set a clock and keep score.

1 The first player has just one dribble to get into the lane — all shots must be taken from the painted area, so the one dribble must have power and purpose.

All balls are live so if this shot goes in then the defensive rebounder is in a perfect position to grab the ball out of the net and go right up with it

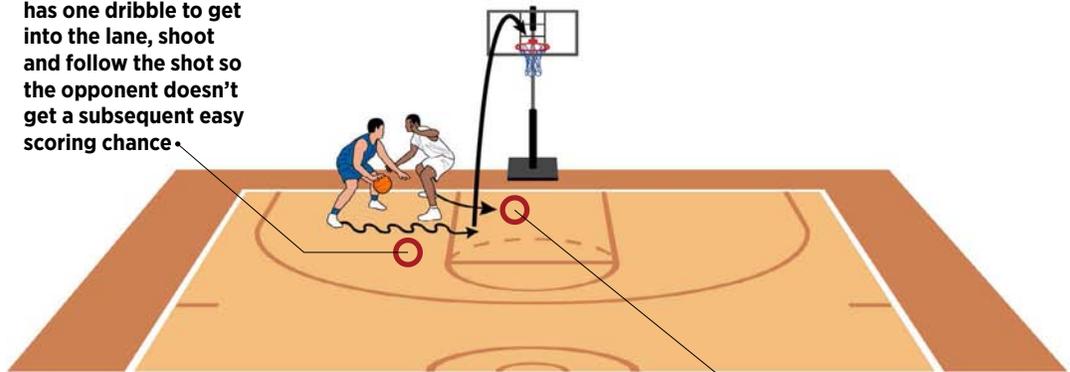


2 On a miss, the defender must box out all the way to the ball to ensure gaining possession.



3 Once again, the player has one dribble to get into the lane, shoot and follow the shot so the opponent doesn't get a subsequent easy scoring chance.

The defender plays an aggressive defense but switches immediately to an offensive mentality on the shot



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