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The Art & Science of Coaching Series

# All-Purpose Offenses for Men's and Women's Basketball

Harry L. "Mike" Harkins  
Jerry Krause



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## Dedication

*This book is dedicated to my wife, Grace, who, along with being the love of my life, has been a working partner in the books I have written. Without her meticulous efforts on the diagrams and hours spent typing, they might never have been completed*

H.L.H.

*This book is dedicated to all those who have been given unique talents to play the great game of basketball. May they acknowledge that gift by always giving something back to the game. May this basketball coaching series be a gift to basketball from the authors who have received so much from the sport.*

J.K

## Acknowledgments

Grateful appreciation is expressed to the sources of my basketball knowledge, including: Russ Estey and Mike Krino, my high school coaches; Russ Beichly and Red Cochrahe, my college coaches; Buck Hyser, who gave me my first coaching job; and the players who have played on my teams.

A final note of thanks goes to my children Mike and his wife, Diane; Patti and her husband, Ric; and Jim and his wife, Jeanne and my number one fans, my grandchildren, Shellee, Jamee, Mike, Shawn, and Walker.

A special acknowledgment goes to Jerry Krause for his diligent efforts in helping me complete this book.

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## Preface

These basketball coaching books for men and women coaches are a complete, comprehensive series of books designed to cover all prominent offensive and defensive techniques and strategies used in basketball, i.e., the X's and O's of the sport.

All coaches are reminded that all individual and team basketball is dependent upon individual fundamental skills. You need to ensure that your players are fundamentally sound in order to be able to execute offenses and defenses. Thus, fundamentals are always needed *before* the X's and O's of basketball.

Coaches at all levels will be able to utilize this complete series of men and women's books either as a complete package or as an integrated supplement to presently used offenses and defenses. There is something for every coach, from the novice to the most experienced basketball wizard. It is our intent to meet the needs of all coaches at all levels of play-develop and enjoy your special approach to the X's and O's of basketball.

## Introduction

### How All-Purpose Offenses Will Help Your Team

The techniques contained within this book are some of the most successful offensive team techniques currently being utilized in the game of basketball. These techniques are representative of the changes that have been made since the advent of the shot clock and the three-point play.

#### *The Primary Plan*

The first eight chapters contain offenses that can be used as part of a team's primary offensive plan. These offenses include quick-hitting entries like the stack, the UCLA slash play, and dribble entry plays. Offenses with multi-option continuities are also included, so that teams can develop the versatility needed to obtain a quick shot when they are trailing in the game. This versatility will also allow an offense to work the defense and kill the clock in search of a high-percentage shot when protecting a precarious lead.

#### *Special Situations*

Chapters nine and ten are designed to help an offense during a game's closing minutes. Each chapter provides an offense with ultra-quick shot options that can be used when a team is playing "catch-up" and time is of the essence. For the times when a team is protecting a close lead and faces many critical possessions, an out-and-out control game is offered to help an offense kill the clock and resort to the previously mentioned ultra-quick shot options to obtain a high-percentage shot. High-percentage shots are made possible by the fact that the control game and the ultra-quick offense are run from the same offensive set. Up-tempo teams may also use the ultra-quick offense as a primary offense.

The eight primary offenses are based on the fundamentals utilized by a player-to-player offense. A well-planned modern offense should:

1. Have potential for the three-point play in order to open up the inside game.
2. Have an inside threat that facilitates its three-point options. In other words, the offense should be built from the inside out.

3. Relieve ballside pressure with dribble entries and backdoor plays.
4. Have an offensive rebounding plan without sacrificing defensive balance.
5. Contain both quick-shot and clock-killing elements.
6. Be adaptable to use against combination, changing, and disguised zone defenses.
7. Be adaptable to double-teaming pressure.
8. Utilize the talent available to the team.
9. Encourage individual initiative with optional play variations, meaning players should be allowed to use their individual strengths within the team system of play.
10. Attack the defense in a variety of ways.

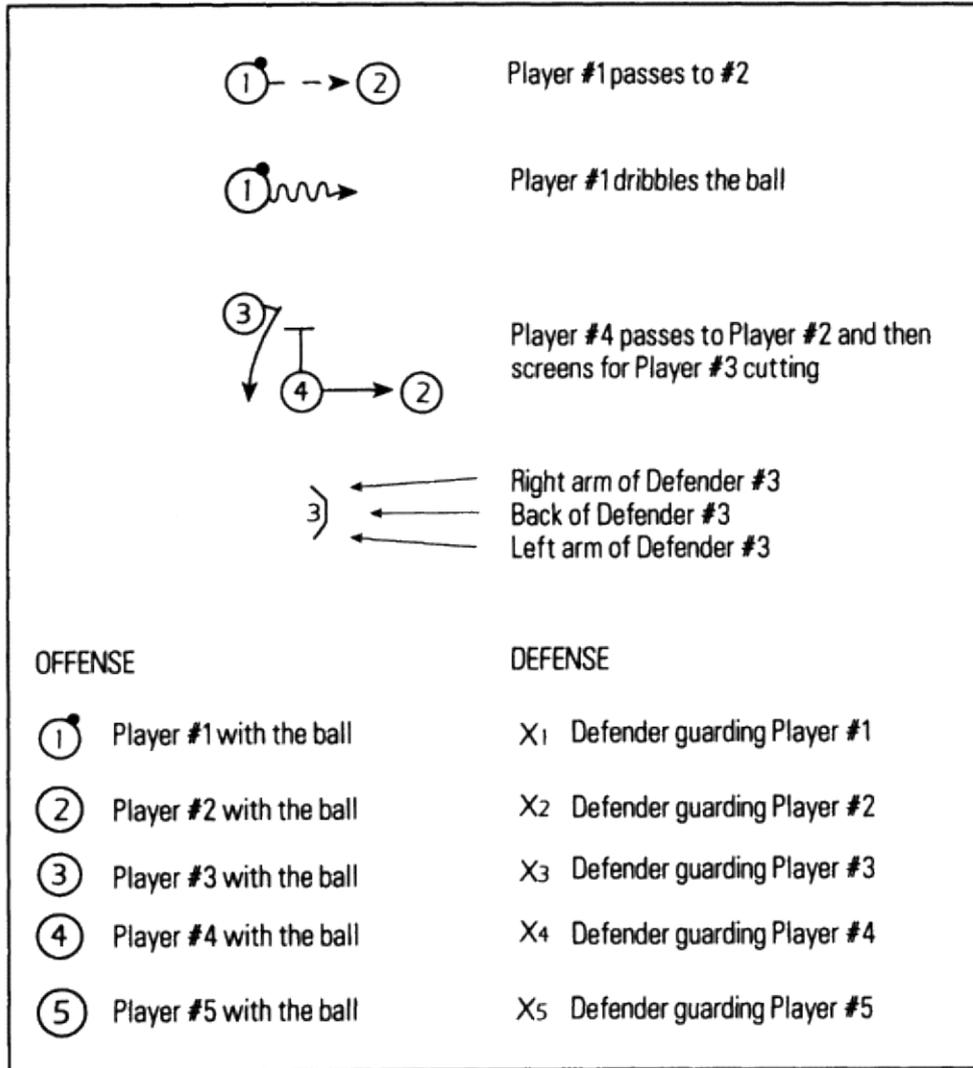
The eight offenses are subdivided as follows:

1. Basic Playthe heart of the offense.
2. Play Variationan optional phase.
3. Pressure Relieverbmethods of relieving ballside pressure.
4. Secondary Playsextra plays that may be added when and if needed.
5. Zone PotentialHow the basic player-to-player offense may be adapted to be run against zone defenses.

Explaining all the X and O material found in purpose offenses will help coaches clarify their offensive philosophies and evaluate their present plans from offensive and defensive standpoints. We are positive that coaches will find several ideas to utilize as key ingredients in their future offensive plans.

MIKE HARKINS AND JERRY KRAUSE

## Diagram Key



## Chapter 1

### The Passing Game Plus

One of the most effective ways to utilize the passing game is to coordinate it with other patterns. This chapter shows how it may be used, along with the shuffle, the pivot pull-out pattern, the double screen play, or the reverse action pattern.

#### The Mixer Passing Game

The passing game used in this chapter is a very simple one. We call it "the mixer." It is run from a 1-2-2 set and initiated from a double stack on the "block" area of the free throw lane. As (1) brings the ball up to the head of the key, the two underneath stackers ((2) and (3)) pop out of the downscreens of their respective top players ((4) and (5)). They will end up in the formation seen in Diagram 1-1. (1) passes to either wing, and two simple rules are followed: (A) a point-to-wing pass calls for screening away, and (B) a wing-to-point pass keys a double downscreen.

#### Basic Pattern

##### *Screen Away*

When (1) passes to (2) in Diagram 1-1, this point-to-wing pass tells (1) to screen away for (3), who cuts to the point. It also keys (4) to screen away for (5), who cuts to the ballside post area. Both (3) and (5) are scoring options and they should be prepared to catch the ball in an all-purpose position. This is best accomplished by using a jump stop in a low stance. The players should be taught to say to themselves, "ball in the air, feet in the air," in order to *catchall* passes with their feet in the air and *make* all passes with their feet on the floor. When practiced enough, this prevents the players from catching the ball in a stride stop and then traveling by pivoting on their front foot to face the basket.

Note also that perimeter players need to get open from the defender to receive a pass. This can be done with a V-cut or an L-cut as shown in Diagram 1-1. The rule is to go to the basket or the defender before you cut quickly to get open, i.e., get close to get open.



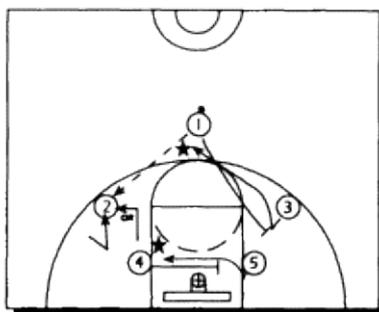


Diagram 1-1  
Screen Away

### *Screen Down*

If (2) passes to (5) in the post, (5) usually shoots the ball. When (2) passes to (3), a shot may be taken, but it is better to continue to move the defense. This is done by having (2) and (1) downscreen for (4) and (5), who pop to their respective wings. See Diagram 1-2.

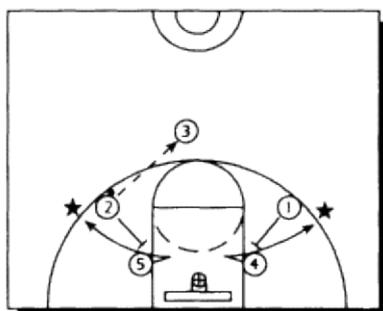


Diagram 1-2  
Screen Down

The mixer process is repeated until a high-percentage shot develops.

This motion has had a recent revival of popularity, but it is now being combined and/ or alternated with other types of motion. This provides the variety that is needed and, in turn, makes it harder to defend.

### *The Mixer Plus the Shuffle*

For this offense, the mixer is alternated with a lob shuffle motion. The mixer portion is run with its screen down and screen away rules. It is keyed as before with the two inside stackers popping to the wings. See Diagram 1-3. The shuffle phase is keyed when the two top stackers ((4) and (5)) pop to the wings. See Diagram 1-4.



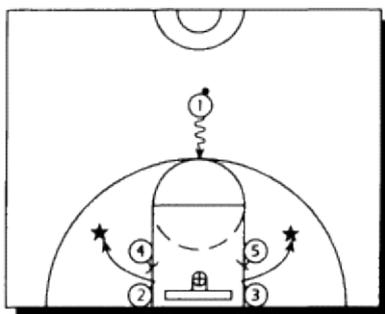


Diagram 1-3

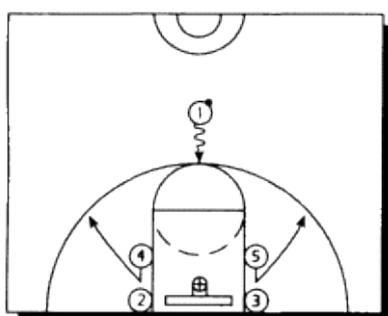


Diagram 1-4

## Basic Pattern

### *The Shuffle Phase*

The shuffle portion of this offense begins when the big players ((4) and (5)) at the top of the stacks pop to the wing positions at the free throw line extended. (1) passes to one of them (as to (4) in Diagram 1-5), and screens opposite for the other wing player (5). However, (2), in the ballside post, does not screen away. (2) moves to a position half-way to the ballside corner (short corner) and (3) cuts to the ballside high post.

This alignment puts two big (and often awkward) defenders (X4 and X5) on the perimeter, which is usually out of their element. (4) reverses the ball to (1) by way of (5) at the point, and makes a shuffle cut off (3) to the ballside low post area. This cut leads to a lot of baskets because X4 is not used to getting through perimeter screens and X3 probably will not "hedge out" to help defend the cutter (4). See Diagram 1-6.



(2) replaces (4) at the wing, as (3) moves up to set a screen that allows (5) to cut to the offside lay-up area for a possible lob pass. See Diagram 1-7. Again, X5 is not well versed in perimeter defense and (5) might be wide open.

These are two excellent scoring options and they also return the team to its basic set with the big players ((4) and (5)) in the posts and the smaller players ((1), (2), and (3)) on the perimeter. See Diagram 1-8.

From there, they can resume the mixer motion.

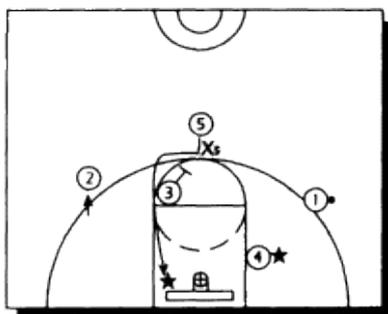
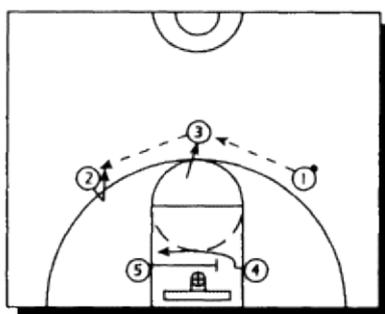


Diagram 1-7

Diagram 1-8  
Mixer Motion

## Pressure Reliever

### *The Backdoor Play*

The shuffle phase was keyed when big players (4) and (5) cut to their respective wings from the initial stack set. This put two big defenders into areas usually covered by smaller, quicker players. To further take advantage of this alignment, a backdoor play is included. As (4) and (5) reach their wing areas, the two offensive players now in the post positions break up and one of them ((2) in Diagram 1-9) receives a bounce pass from (1). At that time, the defenders on (4) and (5) are usually attempting to deny the point-to-wing pass

in a less than functional defensive stance. The pass to (2) tells (4) to backdoor X4 and very often leads to an easy lay-up shot. (3) adds a second option by wheeling on the defender and looking for a pass from (2) or from (4) along the baseline, i.e., provide a "baseline release" for all the baseline ball penetration from the opposite side. This happens if X3 helps X4 on the backdoor move. The best pass for (2) to use to the backdoor cutter (5) is almost always a two-hand bounce pass, i.e., catch the ball with feet in the air at the elbow and make the two-hand pass with your back to the basket.

If no one is open, (2) returns the ball to (1) then (2) and (3) cross to use (4) and (5)'s downscreens to pop to the wings. This puts the team back into its original set, and the mixer may be run. See Diagram 1-10.

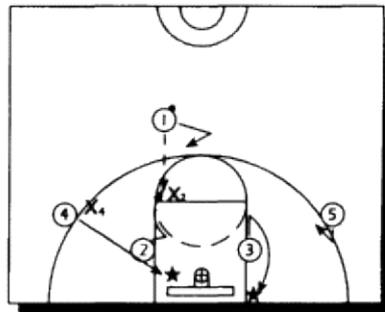


Diagram 1-9  
Shuffle Backdoor

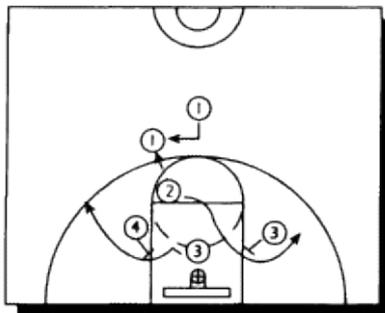


Diagram 1-10

This idea of coordinating the passing game with other types of motion probably received its major impetus from Dean Smith's TarHeels, and is now being widely used. Following are some other offensive motions that combine well with the mixer.

#### The Mixer Plus the Post Pullout Motion

The same keys that were used to differentiate between the mixer and the shuffle are used again for this offense. When the small inside players pop out of the stack, it calls for the mixer (see Diagram 1-11). The post pullout motion is keyed when the big players cut to the wings. See Diagram 1-12.

