But when the man receives the ball, the guard should retreat one and a half steps so that he can cover the pivot man and also any other opponent, cutting by for a pass. There is no advantage in playing the pivot man closely after he receives the ball and, furthermore, this is conducive to fouling. There is an advantage in playing him loosely because, then, the guard is in a better position to switch to another opponent. Of course, this leaves the pivot man free to make a one-handed shot from the free throw lane. This, however, is not a serious threat because of the poor percentage on shots of this kind.

The guard, covering the man who is breaking close to the pivot man for a pass, should run to the inside of the pivot man and guard him. He should never follow his opponent around the pivot man or bump into the pivot man.

Two Against Three

A large majority of teams use what is called the standard method of two against three. Under this arrangement, the men

retreat to positions shown in Diagram 1. When the center man, near the free throw area has the ball, guards 1 and 2 feint as though to charge him in order to bother him. But 1 or 2 cannot leave their positions because that would allow the opponent on the side to run under the basket for a fast pass and easy shot. Hence, many times the center man is allowed to take the best shot on the floor.

This weakness has been successfully eliminated in a comparatively new method which, gaining in popularity, has been tried and proved to be good. The only drawback is that it is more difficult to teach.

Assuming once again that the center man has the ball, as in Diagram 3, note the difference in the way the guards line up. Two is unusually the tall back guard; 1 is usually the small, faster guard. Now the center man does not have the same opportunity to shoot that he had under the first arrangement.

Assume that he passes to the man on his left, as in Diagram 3. Player 2 shifts to cover the man who has the ball and 1

Illustration 9—Guard 1 is playing too close to 3.

Illustration 10—Guard 1 has switched too soon, leaving 3 (Illustration 11) free to pivot and dribble to the basket (Illustration 12). Guard 1 must wait until 3 passes before making a switch.

CORRECT ONE-AGAINST-TWO PLAY

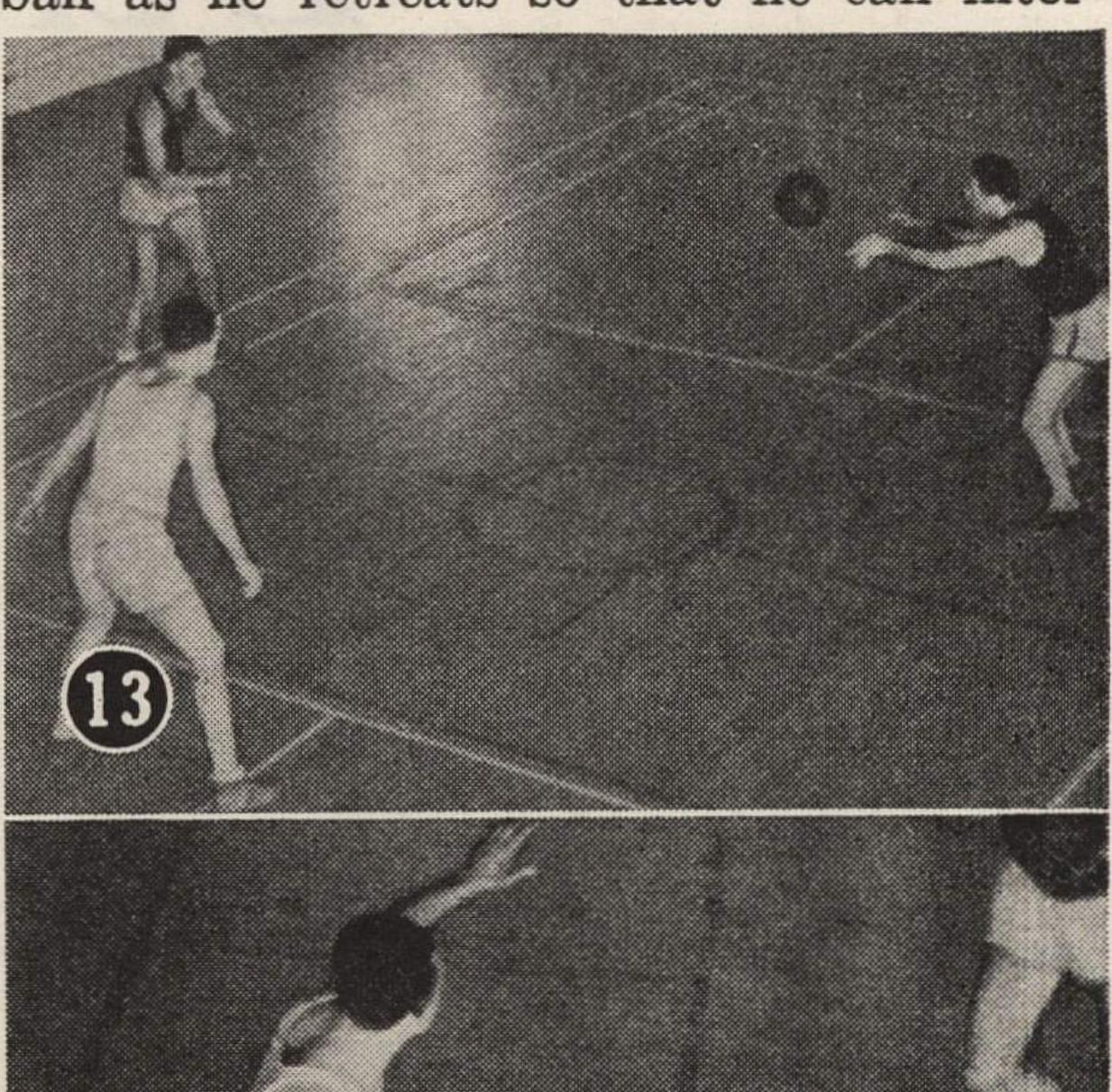
Illustration 13—The guard should stay between the men. He should retreat and feint as if to charge the man with the ball.

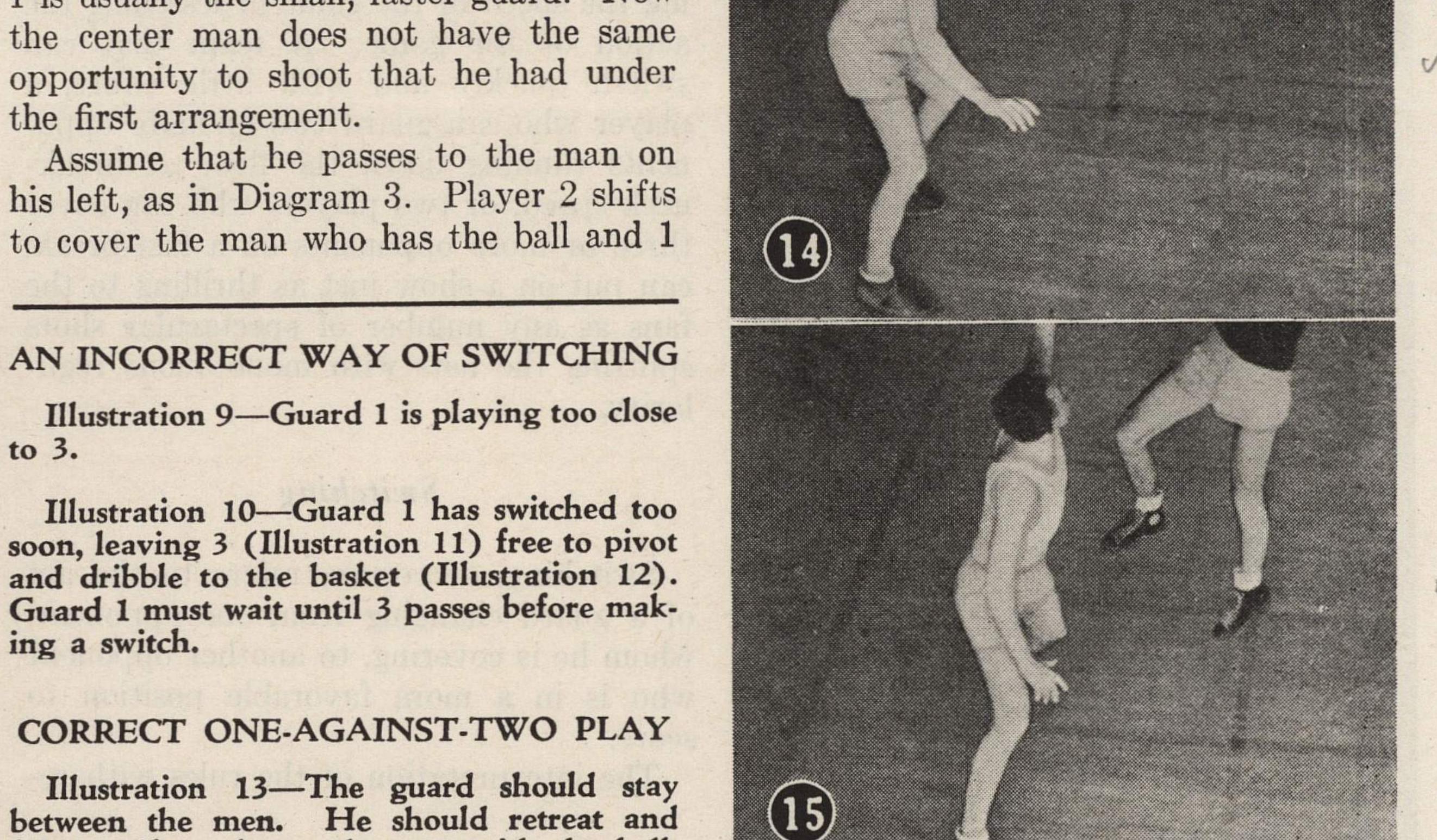
Illustration 14 — The guard under the basket shifts laterally to the left to stop the dribble.

Illustration 15—The left arm should be raised and the left leg extended, when blocking a shot off the left side. The player's back should be kept parallel to the backboard. If the ball is passed to a team mate on the guard's right, he should shift laterally to the right.

Illustration 16—The player's back is parallel to the board and his right arm and leg are extended.

retreats in the opposite direction toward the basket as shown. One watches the ball as he retreats so that he can inter-







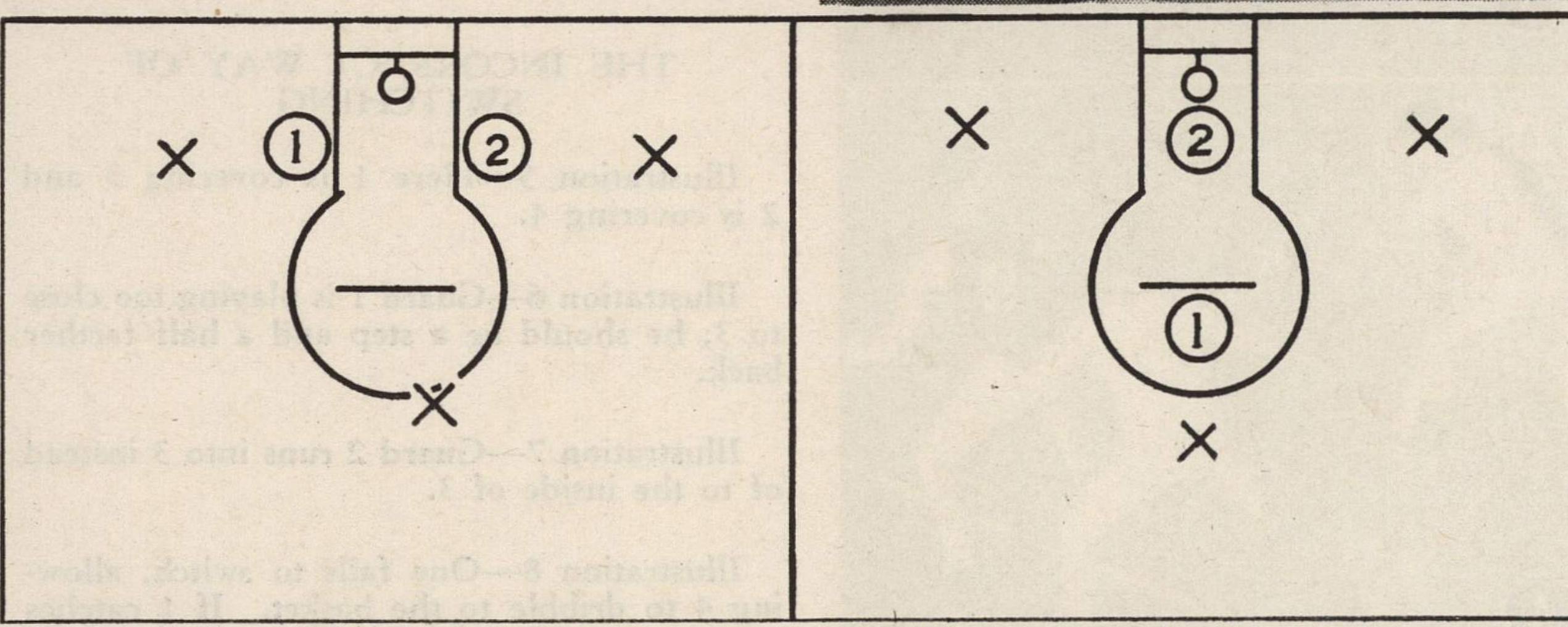


Diagram 1. Standard way of playing two against three.

