

It's Fundamental Time!

By *Everett S. Dean*
Director of Basketball, Stanford University

IT'S fundamental time again for the most-played sport in this country. It is hoped that the graphic picture on the opposite page will assist the new and inexperienced coaches in starting off their season with a plan. The chart sets up a series of fundamental drills covering four divisions of fundamentals, namely, basket shooting, passing, footwork, and drills for co-ordinating fundamentals and parts of the offense. At the end of each lateral column the reader will find a general recommendation as to the proper time for practice on those fundamentals (columns should be read from left to right).

Shooting Drills

Diagram 1 shows a simple formation for the two-hand shot. One ball to three players makes a satisfactory arrangement for good basket-shooting practice. This formation lends itself to three phases of basket shooting, the first of which is a stationary shot about twenty-two feet from the basket. In learning shooting form, it is best for the player to be fairly close to the basket and to make the shot unopposed.

The second or third week of practice calls for the second phase of basket shooting from this formation. The squad should move backward ten feet toward the middle of the floor, thus giving the players room to dribble forward to their original positions. There, they come to a running-stride stop, maintaining good body balance and from that position taking the two-hand shot. This type of practice more nearly approximates game conditions.

The third phase of shooting from this formation comes from the original position where one of the three players on one ball takes a shot and follows it. Upon recovery of the rebound, he passes to his team mate, and immediately assumes a defensive position against him. This gives the shooter practice against opposition and gives both men good practice in rebounding. The defensive man keeps that position until he recovers the ball. This is an actual game situation and can be worked into the daily basket practice after the players have had sufficient practice without opposition.

Diagram 2 illustrates the old-fashioned and most commonly used short-shot drill and pre-game warm-up exercise. It embodies much passing, running, and shooting and is simple in execution.

Diagram 3 is a drill designed to teach correct maneuvering to shoot behind a block. It takes good co-operation between

the shooter and the blocker to obtain efficiency in this play. Footwork is important in this play, and practice on it should be delayed until after the third week. This play might be used as a play possibility in the bottom column of the chart.

Diagram 4 shows the follow-up triangle. Players 1 and 2 are the shooters while the 3 men in the triangle follow up the shots and practice the skill in follow shots, but maintaining the triangle position. Players will necessarily have to change positions, a fact which calls for alertness in keeping the formation balanced. Later, one and two guards should be added to the drill to present game conditions.

Passing and Ball-Handling

Diagram 5 shows a formation which is an "Old Reliable" for early season work because it is full of fun and action. Fundamentals of passing, eye deception, and individual defense can be taught in a short time. The defensive man in the circle takes the place of the player whose pass he deflected.

Diagram 6 is a peripheral vision and passing drill. Six men form a straight line facing one man who stands about ten feet in front. The drill calls for two balls, one in the line and one in the hands of the player in front of the line. The balls should be kept separated as much as possible in order to give the player in front more peripheral vision practice. This drill is a fine push-pass developer and, at the same time, develops strong finger and arm muscles.

According to Diagram 7, two columns of single file line up on either side of the floor. Player 1 passes the ball to player 2, goes to the right, and joins the rear of the opposite line. Players on either side change in this manner and keep on a continuous run. Various passes may be practiced.

Diagram 8 illustrates the five-man weave or criss-cross, which is a good ball-handling and passing drill. Timing is a major fundamental, and no drill offers more practice in timing. This drill might be delayed until the second or third week. It, however, possesses a "kick" or motivation that helps the boys enjoy practice.

Footwork

Practice in footwork should be started gradually until the players' feet become toughened. After the second or third week, the players should be able to take

their footwork in stride.

Diagram 9 illustrates a mass drill which we often use to teach the fundamental offensive positions and defensive footwork. The encircled X is the leader of the squad. All members of the squad "follow the leader" and go through every movement made by him. Correct body balance and good form may be taught in this mass formation. This drill provides an excellent opportunity for the coach to observe fast and slow reactions of the players.

Diagrams 10, 11, and 12 illustrate the stop and turn, the pivot and change of direction. Note the combination of two forms of footwork in Diagrams 11 and 12.

Co-ordinating Fundamentals and Parts of the Offense

After practice has been under way two or three weeks, it is well for a coach to start putting his offense together by using some fundamental drills which are segregated parts of his offense. Thus, while practicing certain fundamentals, the players are learning play possibilities at the same time. The coach may place the emphasis upon whichever department, fundamentals or play options, that needs the more attention at that time.

Diagram 13 shows the side screen and the resultant one-hand shot in the free-throw ring. This fundamental drill is extremely practical and simplified for effective teaching.

Diagram 14 illustrates the next progressive step by the addition of a pivot man to the play, thus making a three-man play possibility. This drill should be used considerably because of its real game conditions.

The four-man weave, shown in Diagram 15, is a maneuver which requires good timing. After two- and three-man play options have been practiced, it is wise to give some practice to this four-man weave because it is the framework around which this type of offense will be built. The continuity of movement, if well timed, makes more defensive problems for the opponents.

Diagram 16 is an example of 5 against 5. The pivot man has been added to the four-man combination. Team fundamentals as timing, floor balance, shooting balance, offensive and defensive balance, follow-up formations, and other fundamentals, can be practiced in the drill of 5 against 5.

(In diagrams 15 and 16, the path of the ball is indicated by the letters a, b, c, d, e, f.)

THE ATHLETIC JOURNAL

Dismissed it

9-59