

Back-screening Motion: A simple, flexible and highly effective offense-- Steve Bergman, Iowa City West High School

1. What brought me to this offense?
 - A. I have always loved Motion offense
 - B. I was frustrated by the difficulty in teaching the down screen and reading the defense
 - C. For the amount of time put in at practice, improvement was slow or non-existent
2. What is good about motion?
 - A. It gives me the most flexibility in deploying my players
 - B. It allows me to work out of many formations, putting my players in optimal positions and different combinations
 - C. It will get better the longer the players do it
 - D. It will make my practices more competitive and it will make my defense better
3. What are the pitfalls of traditional Motion?
 - A. Poor screening and cutting
 - B. Settling for jump shots
 - C. Hard to feature your better players' skill sets
 - D. Floor balance and spacing get out of whack very easily
4. Why does this offense work better for me than traditional Motion?
 - A. No down screens, we set back screens, ball screens and pin screens
 - B. Decisions are pre-determined for the player based on their read of the player with the ball
 - C. All the other positives of traditional Motion (the flexibility, the constant movement, multi-player involvement, etc.) are there and we have eliminated the biggest negatives
 - D. It is a great feeder system offense--you can teach two layers and have a great middle school offense

Putting it Together

The offense is put together in five layers. Each layer is simple and we will teach it in a 5 on 0 set first. After they get the concepts, we will work on them using all possible sets (5 out, 4 out, 3 out, 3 man breakdown drills) without a defense and then adding the defense. It is my belief that you should teach the layers in the order I lay them out. The beauty of this offense is that practicing it works on all your skill work--you are killing two birds with one stone.

Universal Offensive Principals

The things we do and emphasize at all times on offense in every situation

1. At all times we try to keep optimal spacing (15-18 ft.). This makes defending your team harder for the opponent!
2. On every catch, the receiver catches in “triple threat” position and looks for passer on hard basket cut. He will then look at basket and look for drive before looking left or right to pass the ball. He will never put the ball over his head!!!
3. If you cut, you will cut at 100% every time and you will complete the cut
4. On all drives we must have four outlets filled--natural pitch, safety, 45&90 degrees
5. If you are screening you must yell out your intention of screening your teammate--your teammate will be watching the ball to tell him what to do next.
6. On all screens--back screens, ball screens, pin screens--both players need to come to a stop at the same time before making the cut--no interchanges!!!

Layer 1-Cutters + Back screens

1. Passer must cut hard--all the way to head in basket position
 - A. Cut behind defender if he jumps to the ball
 - B. Face cut the defender if he doesn't jump to the ball
 - C. Look for the ball--the cutter needs to be a scoring threat
2. Everybody fills up
 - A. If the defender denies the filler(foot on 3-point line) you must backdoor (100% all the way to head in basket)
3. Once cutters is mastered, we will add the back screen options
 - A. Back screens should be set at the wing or above
 - B. Initially, you might have to assign players to be back screeners to make it happen
4. Common faults of this layer
 - A. Players will contract their spacing as the possession goes on
 - B. Players will make soft and /or incomplete cuts and won't look for the return pass
 - C. The passer will look left and right instead of the proper progression, many will put the ball over their heads
 - D. When back screening, the cutter doesn't wait for the screen to be set and the screener doesn't communicate his intentions to screen

Layer 2 –Straight-Line Drive Reaction + Baseline Exceptions

1. On a straight-line drive to the basket all players will move one spot in the direction of the drive
 - A. A drive to the right will result in all players moving one spot to the right and vice-versa to the left
 - B. Cutters need to move quickly to their next spot--this provides great spacing and the driver a minimum of three great outlets to pass to on every drive.
2. Once the basic dribble reactions are learned we will cover the baseline exceptions
 - A. On a baseline drive, the movement will be different. The lowest player on the opposite side of the driver will fill that corner--the natural pitch
 - B. The player closest to the driver will fill behind him--the safety
 - C. The other two players will fill the 45 and 90 degree windows--one of them could be a post
3. Common faults of this layer
 - A. Cutters need to move to their next spot, not watch the driver. They need to get their hands and feet ready to be an offensive threat. The earlier they get to their spot, the more prepared they will be as a threat
 - B. Drivers will drive with the intent to pass. You need to make the drilling be realistic and have the driver go to the basket with every intention of scoring themselves. They will learn that if the drive is stopped, there will be 3-4 good passing options as most drives will draw a crowd.

Layer 3--Post Reactions on Straight-Line Drives

One of the best things about this offense is the way it uses posts. The flexibility of using your posts is endless. In three years, we have used the following alignments regarding post players:

1. 4 out-1 in high post--he was a primary screener
2. 4 out-1 in low post--he was a scoring option so he posted up strong side
3. 4 out-1 in low post--Non scoring--he rotated to the weak side
4. 3 out- 2 in, 1 low post, 1 high post
5. 3 out-2 in, 2 in the low post
6. 3 out- 2 in, 2 in the high post
7. 5 out--no post player

You can see that the combinations are pretty extensive. It is imperative that all your players learn the post reactions. If they are cutting and a player drives while they are in the lane they need to react like a post. Secondly, the more players that can play in the post, the more flexibility you have as a coach.

Rules for Post Reaction

1. If there is a straight-line drive above the post, the post will slide to the short corner area
2. If the ball is driven above the post, the post will slide to the elbow

Layer 4--Post Feed Cutting

1. On any post feed (high medium or low post), the passer must execute one of the following four cuts. The cutter will look for the return pass and the post must look for the cutter
 - A. Laker High--hard cut to the high side of the post at least 6 feet from the post
 - B. Laker Low--hard cut to the low side of the post at least 6 feet from the post
 - C. X-cut--the passer will set a pin screen for the closest perimeter player and then basket cut
 - D. Relocation cut--the passer will cut hard to the closest spot on the floor(likely the corner) and look for a return pass
1. Common faults for this layer
 - A. The passer will stand and watch
 - B. The passer will do the same thing every time--varying the cuts is optimal
 - C. The post player won't give the ball up

Layer 5- Dribbling at Another Perimeter Player

We have talked about direct drives to the basket, but drives that go side to side can also be effectively incorporated in this offense. We will talk about two types of side-to-side drives, the Dribbles at and the Power Dribble and how they are used in the Back Screen Motion.

1. Dribble At is a hard, direct drive at a perimeter player next to you
 - A. If you are on the perimeter and someone dribbles hard at you, you must back cut and complete the cut in the same way as if you had made a pass
2. The Power Dribble is a deliberate, crab-like dribble at a perimeter player next to you
 - A. If you are on the perimeter and someone Power Dribbles at you, you must take one step back door and then accept a handoff from the person Power Dribbling at you. The person handing the ball off must cut to the basket in the same way as if they had made a pass
3. Common faults for this layer
 - A. These seem to be "feast or famine," either they are never used or they are overused--again the key to this offense is variety and unpredictability
 - B. Players will not set up their defender on the handoff for the Power Dribble

Drills

Layer 1

1. 5 on 0 work towards adding back screens
2. 4 on 0 work towards adding back screens
3. 3 man drills
 - a. 3 player face cut
 - b. 3 player back cut
 - c. 3 player defender denies--back cut
 - d. 3 man bad close out, sweep and go

Layer 2

1. 5 on 0--all drives--add baseline exception
2. 4 on 0--all drives--add second ball
3. 3 man drills
 - a. Natural pitch
 - b. Pitch or dish
 - c. Pitch or dish cross court
 - d. Safety valve
 - e. Pitch or safety valve
 - f. Baseline exception

Layer 3

1. 5 on 0--3 out, 2 in--all drives
2. 3 man drills
 - a. Ball side drive
 - b. Weak side drive

Layer 4- This is a layer we start with the 3 man drills to introduce the rule

1. 3 man drills
 - a. No defender--Laker High, Laker Low, X-Cut, and relocation cut
2. 3 out-2 in--post feeds
3. 4 out- 1 in--post feeds

Layer 5- Another layer we introduce with 3 man drills

1. 3 man drills
 - a. 3 player dribble at
 - b. 3 player power dribble

Blending the Layers

1. 5 on 0--all layers in
2. 4 out, 1 in vs. no defense
3. 5 on 5 shell--no dribble, 1 dribble--5 out
4. 5 on 5 Shell--2 dribble--4 out--1 in