

# the Coaches Office



January 2008

Volume 1, Issue 1

## Basketball4ALL Roundtable

### Monthly Features:

- **Locker Room** - Philosophy and Team Culture
- **Pre-Game** - Preparation, Scouting
- **Half Time** - Motivation & Quotes
- **Between the Lines** - Execution, Strategy and Technique

### Highlights:

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- ...and another thing!

**WELCOME** to the first issue of “the Coaches Office”. I’ll try to bring some fresh ideas each month and will have some regular features. While there will be some strategy and X’s & O’s I’m hoping this monthly newsletter offers something different for the coach to use “outside the lines” and in “the Coaches Office” to make you think a bit and take your programs from good to great.

### Care-Think-Try

Coaches are always looking for the secret to a teams success, and I, along with others, have developed long laundry lists of qualities and attributes that we want the team to strive to develop. Over time I’ve tried to simplify that long list to the lowest common denominators. I now believe that if players truly CARE about their teammates, THINK about their actions and TRY their best, the team will grow into a unit, and begin to be the best that they can be - on and off the court.

**CARE.** When teams begin to work together and go thru the everyday effort they develop a certain camaraderie that forces them to truly CARE about their teammates. When that happens, they will do everything that they can, so as not to let their teammates down. Everyone must accept teammates and coaches as they are and mold themselves into whatever is necessary to make US successful. As a group remember the goodness required to enjoy each other and have fun while participating in this great game. In our off-the-court lives, it means contributing our time to others, to good and worthwhile causes, and to the welfare of our families and our loved ones.

**THINK.** Players and coaches must strive to have knowledge of the system and the fundamentals of the game of basketball, inside and out. Strive for individual improvement on a daily basis and work to reach the team goals by executing the prepared game plan without fail. Pay special attention to time and score situations and understand the objectives of each. THINK about the risk and reward involved in each decision, both on and off the court. Follow all of the laws, rules and regulations as students, employees, and citizens while striving to achieve a rewarding life plan.

**TRY.** Just try. Your very best. Every time! Be competitors without equal. Players and coaches, should strive to make sure that no one prepares more thoroughly or works more diligently to become successful. Display the self-discipline necessary to prepare and succeed at the highest attainable level. Give a supreme daily effort, in all areas of life, towards being the best student, employee, and citizen possible.

Since speaking on this, I’ve had businesses leaders tell me they have adopted this as their company policy. “If you CARE about what your doing, THINK about how you’re going to do it and TRY to give your very best effort – we’ll be successful as we should”. Great life lesson! So if we can get our teams to CARE, THINK, and TRY to the greatest extent in which they can, we will have teams that Play Hard, Play Smart, Play Together, and Have Fun. And be as successful as they can. be!!!

## In The Bleachers by Steve Moore



“... But if you never put me in the game, coach, how will my father ever live his own sports dreams vicariously through me?”

## Set and understand standards, expectations, rewards and consequences

- Having the players give input on team goals helps them develop a feeling of “ownership.” Every off-season try having a "Roles and Goals" talk with your team. Ask each player to state what their goals are, team and individual. Encourage other players to comment and discuss roles. Quite often, players in this setting will "under-evaluate" their abilities, and teammates will reinforce that players' importance to the team. Team goals are emphasized, that way when everyone leaves the room, they are all on the same page. Refer back to the talk several times during the year to remind players of their intentions. This cuts down on problems throughout the year and is a very valuable team building exercise.
- Agree on SMART goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timdy
- Hold preseason meetings to outline core values and communicate the expectations for the upcoming season. These meetings should be held separately with Staff, Players, and Parents.
- Be consistent with rewards and consequences in regards to adherence to the standards.
- Establish check in points to assess progress towards the team and individual goals.
- Retaining a stable and loyal staff from year to year, identifying natural leaders among players, and helping them cultivate their leadership qualities will assist in sustaining a Winning Team Culture.

### The coach should try to:

- Love your players equally, unconditionally, and care about them off the floor.
- Be knowledgeable and organized.
- Work FOR them as hard as you expect them to work FOR you.

### Do these three things and your players will:

- Show the desire to play as well as they can,
- Listen and try to understand,
- PLAY HARD.

As a coach if we can get our team to do these things, we'll have a “Winning Team Culture” regardless of what the scoreboard says.

## Pre-Game

### •TEACH SKILLS, NOT JUST SYSTEMS •

A common oversight among coaches is spending too much time learning "plays" and not enough time learning how to play. Teams do need to have organized offenses and plays (and we have tons!), but it is far more important to be able to execute the fundamentals of movement, ballhandling, dribbling, passing and shooting than it is to know how to run through a particular offense. Along with all of the individual fundamentals, players need to understand the concept of "**relative motion**". That can best be described as *realizing how one player fits into the space on the floor, given the "relative" positioning of the other players, both offense and defense*. A player with this understanding will know how to move to get open, create proper spacing, passing angles, play good on ball defense, and give good team defensive help. These players always seem to play quicker than they really are, because they are already in the right spot on the floor – so they get there faster. Constant “minor” adjustments are much easier to make than one big one. Players with this ability also make the right pass when the right pass is needed- even when it doesn't lead to an assist. Sometimes they are the “unsung heroes” who do the things that don't always show up on the stat sheet. Be careful not to overlook that player that just seems to make your team better – and you don't know why.



Winning is **FUN!!**

## Playbook



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There are times when it is difficult to decipher your opponent's defense and determine whether it is a man-to-man, a zone, or a match-up defense. There are also those times that you might not want to burden your players with multiple offenses. The ability to have an offense that serves a variety of purposes is, at times, quite valuable.

As a solution, we've "tilted" the spots in one of our man-to-man offenses for use against zones, putting players in gaps but leaving the \*continuity\* from position to position basically the same. This enables players to, essentially, learn one offense for multiple uses, drastically maximizing practice efficiency. The major difference is we now use cuts and slides to put pressure on the zone, rather than setting and using screens to help get players open. This allows the offense to be as effective against all zone defenses and match-ups as it is against a man-to-man... so it became our

One of my favorite stories is told of a farmer who owned an old mule. The mule fell into the farmer's well. The farmer heard the mule 'braying' - or - whatever mules do when they fall into wells. After carefully assessing the situation, the farmer sympathized with the mule, but decided that neither the mule nor the well was worth the trouble of saving. Instead, he started to shovel dirt to bury the old mule in the well and put him out of his misery.

(switch to the mule's perspective) Initially, the old mule was hysterical! "You're doing what? BURYING ME!" But as the farmer continued shoveling and the dirt hit his back...a thought struck him, in the way that only mules can be struck. It suddenly dawned on him that every time a shovel load of dirt landed on his back...HE SHOULD SHAKE IT OFF AND STEP UP! This he did, blow after blow. "Shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up...shake it off and step up!" he repeated to encourage himself. No matter how painful the blows, or distressing the situation seemed the old mule fought "panic" and just kept right on SHAKING IT OFF AND STEPPING UP! You're right! It wasn't long before the old mule, battered and exhausted, STEPPED TRIUMPHANTLY OVER THE WALL OF THAT WELL! What seemed like it would bury him, actually blessed him...all because of the manner in which he handled his adversity.



**TEACHING is rewarding!!!**



## **Video Room**

Here's a great clip showing a single Spurs defensive possession with double teams, help, rotations and a contested shot. Focus on the great commitment to the basketball.

(Click the photo to start the video)

## **Between the Lines**

During the preseason, as basketball coaches are introducing the offensive and defensive game plans, philosophies, and strategies, it is easy to forget some basic actions that can improve players and the team. Here are FIVE fundamental things that ANY player can commit to doing, simply by putting their mind to it, without needing to get better at any "basketball fundamentals". These "commitments" can make the player more effective IMMEDIATELY without getting any better at "basketball skills".

### **BE BIG ON THE LITTLE THINGS!**

#### **PLAY WITH YOUR KNEES BENT.**

Always stay in an athletic stance. It is your point of maximum explosion. Be just like a track sprinter coming out of the blocks. Have your knees bent. Be on balance. Be ready to move. You will get open on offense more often. You will guard your man on defense easier. The player with the lowest active stance usually wins.

#### **GET A HAND UP ON EVERY SHOOTER**

The only person who can score is the one with the ball. Go guard him even if he is not your man. Help your teammates when their man is open. Go guard him. Contest the shot even if it means leaving your feet, but don't fall for a head fake too easily!

#### **GAIN POSSESSION WITH TWO HANDS**

Always catch the ball with 2 hands--concentrate on the catch before you do anything else. Rebound with 2 hands--and try for every one. Pick up a loose ball with 2 hands—and pick it up, don't dribble it. You will get more possessions for your team and each possession is another chance to score.

#### **TRY TO OUT RUN YOUR OPPONENT EVERY TIME**

You will usually break their will with your first three steps. Get ahead of the defense and your teammates will throw you the ball. It will help you get easy shots on offense with your fast break. If you beat the offense back, they may not even try to run their fast break. Getting back on defense will help stop their fast break and cut down on their easy shot attempts.

#### **PASS TO THE FIRST OPEN PERSON**

Passing the ball is faster than dribbling it. If you move the ball, you make the defense adjust and they might make a mistake and leave someone open. Maybe even you! If you see an open teammate--throw them the ball. Don't wait for a better pass. Remember - "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."



## Basketball4ALL

Basketball for Athletes  
Looking to Learn



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The small, 14th-century, Hungarian village of Kocs is located on the main road along the Danube between Vienna and Budapest. These two great cities needed well-built, fast vehicles that would carry more than two people over the bumpy roads of the day in as much comfort as was then possible. So in Kocs they began to build superior wagons, carts and carriages.

One of the best of these multi-horse carts was called, in Hungarian, "kocsi szekér" or a "wagon from Kocs". Its design was so compact, elegant and sturdy that the design spread throughout Europe. The German-speaking Viennese started to call this vehicle a Kutsche, which is how they heard Hungarians saying the name of their little carriage-making town. From Vienna these lively vehicles traveled to Paris and the French, adapting the Austrian word, called it a coche. When it arrived in Rome in Italian, it was a cocchio. Eventually, the English called it a coach. When Anne of Bohemia married England's Richard II in 1382, she brought carriages from Kocs, Hungary with her to England. Wealthy squires had their servants read to them as they drove in these coaches about the countryside or on long trips into a nearby city.

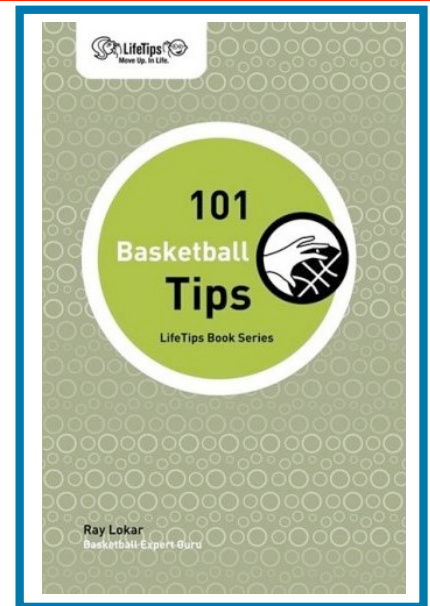
So the first coaches took **very important people** from where they were – to where **they** wanted to go. And many of them **learned** along the way.

Are we taking kids where **THEY** want to go? And are we teaching them other valuable life lessons in the process?

## Catalogue

### 101 Basketball Fundamental Tips – Ray Lokar

From playground to the pros, from young players to adults, there are seemingly as many ways to coach and play the game of basketball as there are places to play it. 101 Basketball Fundamental Tips distills the game of basketball in order to provide concise tips, tools, and techniques on coaching philosophy, basketball strategy X's & O's, skills and drills, as well as ways to develop a basketball program on the court, outside the lines, in the locker room, and in the coach's office. From the novice youth coach to the experienced veteran, and all players, there is something in 101 Basketball Fundamental Tips for everyone.



## Road Trip

In this space we'll highlight some of my very favorite places to visit...on the web.

<http://www.positivecoach.org>

The Positive Coaching Alliance offers some great tips and tools for coaches, parents, and leaders of educational/athletic organizations. These tips provide the means to help players Have More Fun, Maximize Player Performance, Build Positive Character Attributes, and Improve the Entire Sports Experience !

## And One

One of the most oft-repeated quotes comes from Bill Bradley, star NBA guard for the Knicks and American Politician who said,

*Somewhere someone is practicing. If you're not and you meet them in competition, all other things being equal, you will lose!*

I'm wondering if MAYBE the following statement is just as true...

*Somewhere, someone is resting and recovering. That will revitalize them to the point when they take the court again, they will work harder, longer, and with more focus . This periodization of training leads to a more productive practice regimen. And when and you meet them in competition, all other things being equal, you will lose!*

### **About Basketball4ALL**

Ray Lokar is the Southern California Area Coordinator and Lead Trainer for the Positive Coaching Alliance. Coach "Lók" has coached basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, football, swimming and track in the San Gabriel Valley for over 25 years at the youth, high school, and college levels and has worked countless camps and clinics during that time for ages 8-18. Ray has been involved in the business development and marketing of the ACE Intelli-Gym(tm) for Applied Cognitive Engineering. The IntelliGym(tm) is a revolutionary training tool that enables basketball players to dramatically improve their game-intelligence skills using computer software.

Coach Lokar was the Head Basketball Coach of the 2002 CIF Champions while at Bishop Amat High School and is a Past-President of the Southern California Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Association He is now the Director of The Basketball4all Foundation that provides a variety of lessons, camps, clinics, competitions, and events for the benefit of the Southern California basketball community. Ray's book "101 Basketball Tips", published by Lifetips as part of their Lifetips Book Series, is available at Amazon.com and his second "101 Basketball Coaching Tips" is scheduled for a March Madness release.