

HOOPS EDUCATION



How to Play Basketball-Bonus Material: How to coach pick-up games

1) Pick 1 fitness option and drill down to it. When you find people not running, not in a defensive stance, not warming up or not cooling down you must have consequences.

For example let's say I was focusing on sprinting back on defense for the "Run!" aspect of the Fitness section. Each time I felt like somebody was not sprinting back on defense I would mark it down. Then after the game they would run that many sprints. I bet people will start to run during the game so they do not have to run after it!

2) Pick 1 Fundamental aspect and drill down to it. Whatever fundamental aspect you pick you need to first coach it in a practice setting. You also want to pick the aspect that you can get the biggest bang for your buck. Again if people are not executing this fundamental then you must have consequences.

For example if you are a terrible rebounding team and that has plagued your ability to win games, then pick that aspect. First you want to do drills that give you the opportunity to teach them how to box out. Now in pick-up games you can really highlight the people boxing out. If there are people that are not boxing out then you need to write that down. After the game make sure you coach those who missed box outs and follow-up with the consequence. Maybe this consequence is 10 push-ups per missed box out.

3) Pick 1 Skills aspect for each player. Because this is developing a skill, in my opinion you should not have a consequence for not being able to execute this skill. This skill should be adding to their game so you want to

encourage them to constantly build their skills. Again think about where you can get the biggest bang for your buck.

For example, if you have a young post player who you know is going to be a key contributor to your team's success but they never seem to get good post position. Then you want to use the "Get to your spot" aspect of Skill section as a focus. Make sure you are encouraging the young post player to find their way to the post on every single possession. You would also want to reinforce that by telling the rest of the team to look for them in the post. Peer pressure is an amazing tool when used properly. If your team knows that post player is supposed to get the ball in the post on every possession then they will be more likely to look inside. Also they will be more likely to praise their teammate when they secure good post position.

CAUTION: If your player is not properly executing this new skill you do not want the team to start ganging up on them and making damaging comments. Make sure your team knows that it is your job to break people down and their job to pick each other up. Coaches need to coach and players need to play. I have seen too many young players lose confidence in them because their teammates do not display confidence in them.

4) Make your players fill out the Progress Trackers every week. I have already given you a tool so do not reinvent the wheel here coach. Sure there may be some things you want to add but keep it simple. This self-reflection is such an important part of their development that you have to show them how they are progressing. These Progress Trackers will serve as a paper trail of your players' development. It will really show them how far they have come. As I said in the book, "If you are not committed to implementing something from each section and then monitoring your performance you might as well stop reading this guide right now." Coach if you cannot commit to monitoring your players performance and giving them feedback about their progress what are you doing?

I hope these quick pointers help you and your teams improve!