

Guarding a Perimeter Player: How to Draw an Offensive Foul/Take a Charge

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article was to analyse an element of individual basketball technique and defensive tactics: the positioning of the defence player to take a charge. This element is not sufficiently covered in the basketball literature. The training of this element should be done in the U-16 category. The methodology of training and improvement of this element were stressed, as well as its importance and application during basketball training and matches. Coaches of younger categories must keep in mind that it is unethical to ask players to set themselves up for taking a charge without this element being thoroughly covered in training.

Keywords : Basketball defense, methodology of teaching, basketball drills

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INTRODUCTION

The basketball technique is one of the most complex sports techniques. It requires many years of training and improvement, so coaches pay a lot of attention to it for a reason. Some elements of the technique have been present for decades, but new ones are also emerging. Such original elements ought to be looked at professionally and scientifically, and a training methodology pattern should be adopted accordingly. Positioning to take a charge in basketball, as an element of individual technique and defence tactics, is not sufficiently covered in the basketball literature. Of particular concern is the fact that basketball skills training, their improvement, and the application of that particular element are often left to the player's intuition and resourcefulness. The coaches are often inclined to criticise players when they do not position themselves to take a charge. At the same time, they do not ask themselves if anyone has ever shown that player how to do it during training. It is a fact that a player learns the most by observing and imitating more experienced and better players. The question arises whether it is wise to wait for the player to independently adopt such an important element of the defensive technique from which the team has a huge benefit (a personal foul on the

opposing player plus the ball possession) or whether the young player should be trained to add the element of positioning to his range of techniques. Some senior players have developed a technique of positioning to take charge and use it in training and the game, but there are also those who rarely do it. Why is it so? Is the problem here the lack of training among the players? Fear of contact, or perhaps fear of falling? Those coaches who did not train the young player in the mentioned element are responsible for not applying the element of positioning to take charge. To avoid this, the authors suggest that coaches in younger categories include this element in their repertoire of basketball techniques.

TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The training of this element should be done in the U-16 category. Players 1 should be explained the importance of the element itself. In addition to the fact that a player who makes an offensive foul is recorded with a personal foul and a turnover, it should also be known that such a player a) loses confidence when performing the same or similar offensive actions; b) becomes nervous; and c) if he gets into trouble with personal fouls, he is replaced. Then, 2) the element should be explained from the referee's point of view (the aspect of the Rules of the Game). Namely, the rules say: a) the defensive player should take a proper defensive position facing the opponent; b) when moving to maintain the initial proper guarding position, one or both feet may be off the floor for an instant, as long as the movement is sideways or backward, but not towards the player with the ball; c) the attacker's contact must occur on the defender's torso; d) the defender must be inside his cylinder.

After that, 3) training begins using a combined training method. First, the element is demonstrated in its entirety, then in two phases, and again in its entirety. The first phase involves bouncing back, then to the side, in the attacker's line of motion. Some coaches ask that the defender immediately jump into the attacker's line of movement, but in practise (according to the authors' statistics, following 24 games of the ABA-League, season 2021–2022), only 13% of personal fouls in the offence were made after 1 dribble. The other 87% of personal fouls are committed after two or more dribbles. Therefore, after bouncing backward, then to the side, in the intended direction of movement of the attacker, the defender should "seek" contact, whereby his stance and chest should be perpendicular to the attacker's line of movement (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Positioning to take a charge

The hands should be aside, half-bent, and at chest height (timid players tend to hold their hands in front of them, which is why they are mostly sanctioned with a personal foul). The practical training begins like this: at first frontal work is performed to teach the players how to bounce back and to the side after the attacker's attempt to penetrate. Players line up, and the coach stands in front of them in basketball defensive stance, with his back turned (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Defensive stance

The coach demonstrates a defensive move, and the players try to do the task independently. First, the backward movement is learned, then to the right (or left), and then it is practised on the other side (Figures 3 and 4).

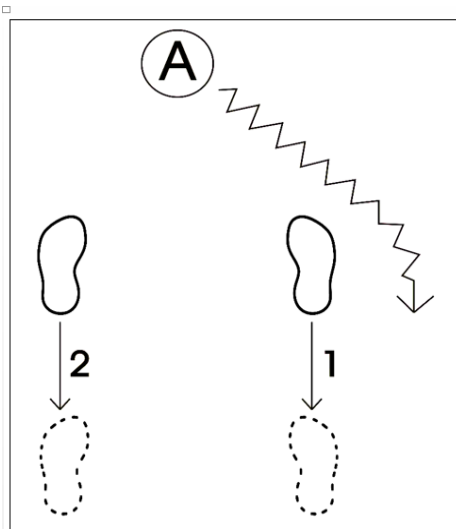


Figure 3. Backward movement

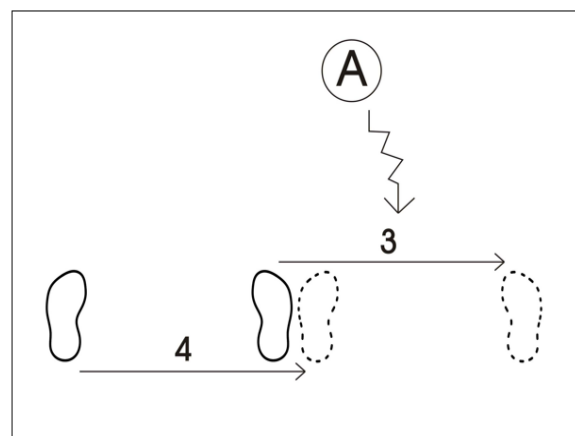


Figure 4. Movement to the right

In the second phase, the players have been demonstrated a backward fall. This is a very important part of training because a player who falls "hard" several times can start to avoid using this element. After the attacker pushes away (most often with the forearm or shoulder), the defender lowers the center of gravity of the body (Figure 5), pushes back with his legs, and slides on the floor (Figure 6). Hands should not be placed under the body but next to the body, in order to avoid injury to the hand.



Figure 5. Lowering the center of gravity



Figure 6. Landing after the contact

IMPROVEMENT METHODOLOGY

When players complete both training phases, the work on improving the element is organised in groups using the direct instruction method. First, work is done on the parts of the basketball court where offensive fouls are mostly drawn: along the sideline and end line, and later on other parts of the court. For the element of positioning to take charge, it is necessary to allocate 15-20 minutes of training every week, and suggested drills are as follows:

Drill 1

The players are divided into 4 groups of 3-4 players each (Figure 7). Each group works on $\frac{1}{4}$ of the field. "Shaded" players work first. The offensive player (OP) 1 has the ball in the corner (Figure 8). Upon direct instruction, he starts to penetrate along the sideline. The defender swiftly moves back and to the side, makes chest contact with the attacker, and falls. After that, OP 3 moves from the other side, then OP 2, then OP 4. The same thing happens on the other side of the court. After each attempt, the defender and attacker switch roles. They practice 4-5 times each.

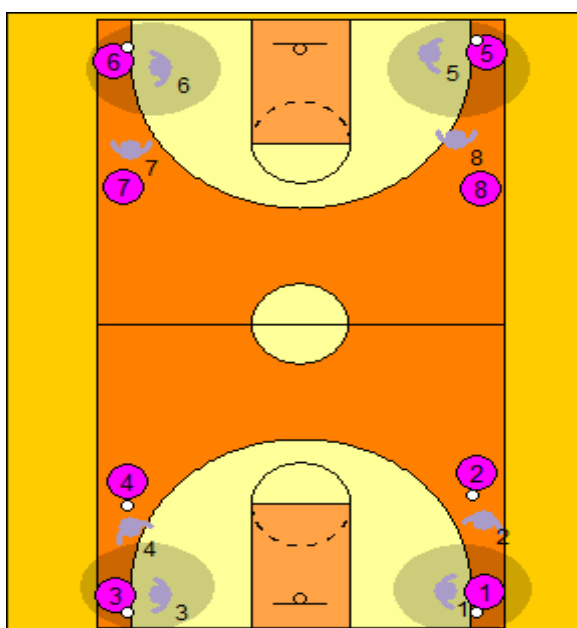


Figure 7. Working groups

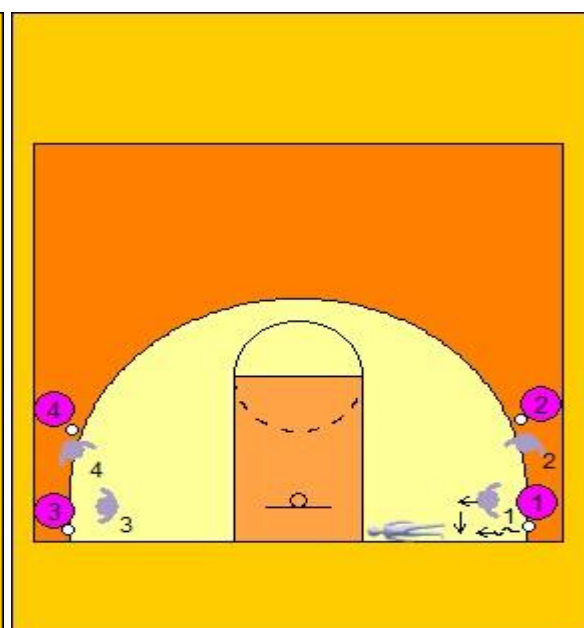


Figure 8. Exercise in the corner

Drill 2

The organization of the drill 2 is similar to drill 1, only now the attackers with the ball penetrate the sideline in a controlled manner. The defender is in a diagonal position and directs the OP to the outside (Figure 9). The defender rushes to the back and to the side, makes chest contact with the OP, and falls (Figure 10). Then OP 2 moves from the other side, then OP 3, then OP 4. The same thing happens on the other side of the court. After each attempt, the defender and attacker switch roles. They practice 4-5 times each.

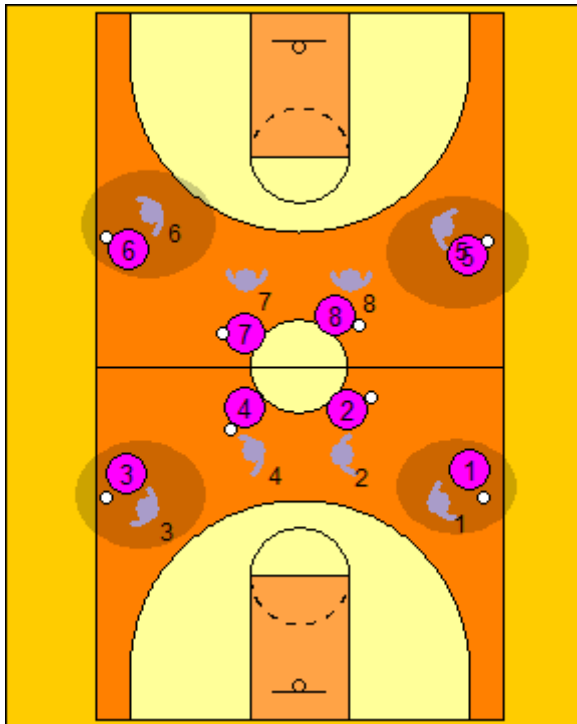


Figure 9. Defender directs OP to sideline

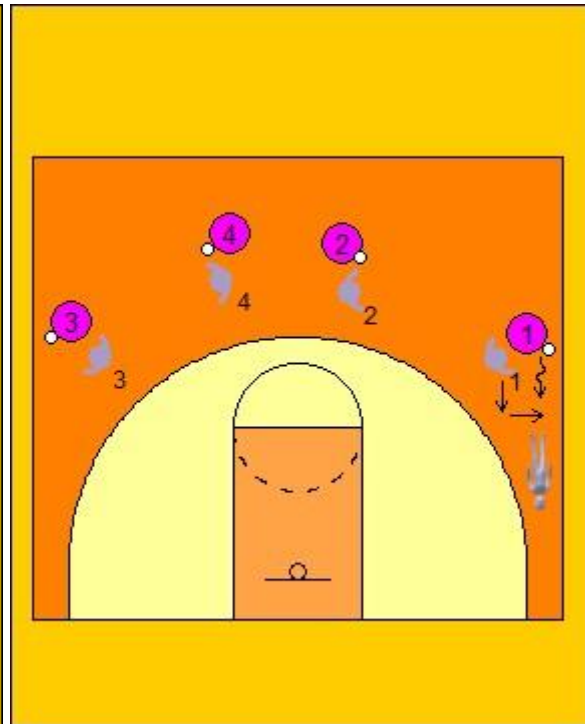


Figure 10. Defender making contact

Drill 3

The coach forms 2 groups on 2 sides of the court. Directed play one-on-one from the center (Figure 11). OP 1 makes a change of direction on his way to the basket, and the defender quickly moves on his new line of motion and positions himself to take a charge (Figure 12).

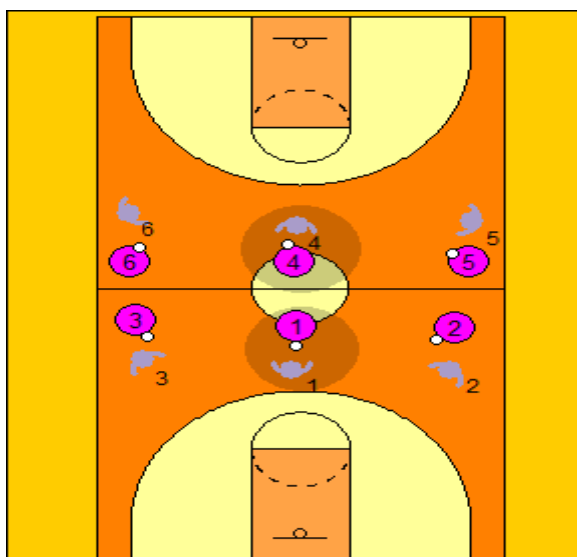


Figure 11. Play 1-on-1

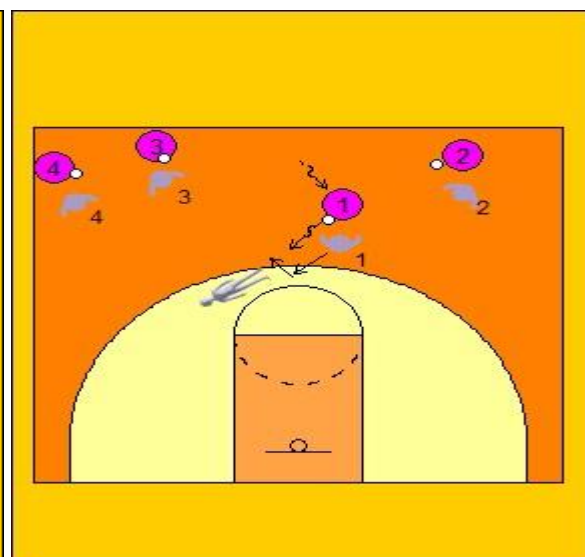


Figure 12. Positioning to take a charge

Drill 4

The coach forms 2 groups on 2 sides of the court. Play goes one-on-two from the center, game situation training context. The drill starts with handing off the ball to the OP. The starting position of the defenders looks like in figure 13. The defenders direct the OP to the "weaker" hand and do not allow him to change the side of the attack and the dribbling hand. The coach requires the defensive players to rush on the OP's intended line of motion and set up a position for taking a charge (Figure 14).

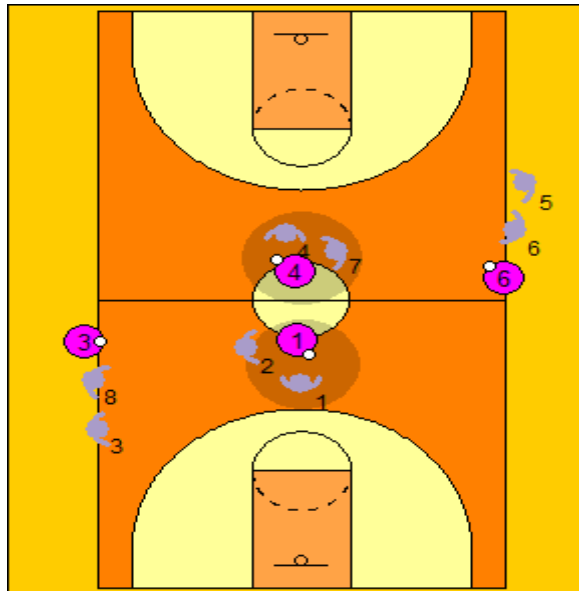


Figure 13. Play 1-on-2 from the center

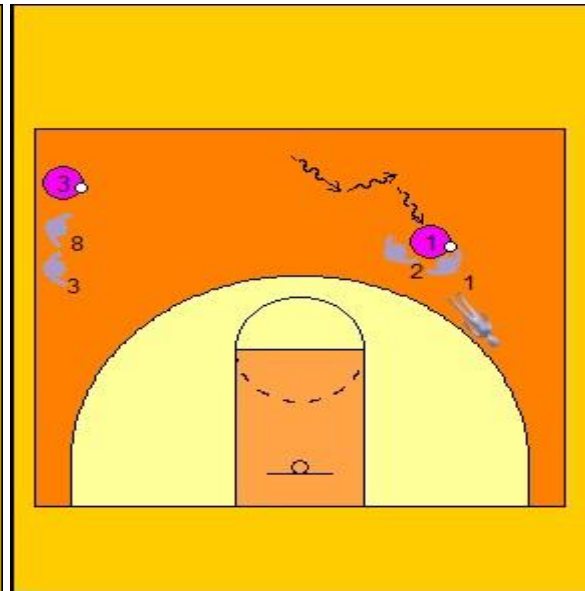


Figure 14. Taking a charge

Drill 5

Competitive game 1-on-2 on $\frac{3}{4}$ of the court. The drill starts with handing off the ball to the OP (Figure 15). The defenders direct the OP to the weaker hand and do not allow him to change the side of the attack and the dribbling hand. The coach requires the defensive players to quickly get into the attacker's intended line of motion and set a position for taking a charge. If the defenders do not allow the transition of the ball over the center, both players get 2 points. If the OP crosses the center line but does not score, the defenders get 1 point each. If they draw an offensive foul, they get 3 points each. Each group performs the exercise 15 times, i.e. each player should be in offense 5 times, not consecutively, but every time the players rotate.

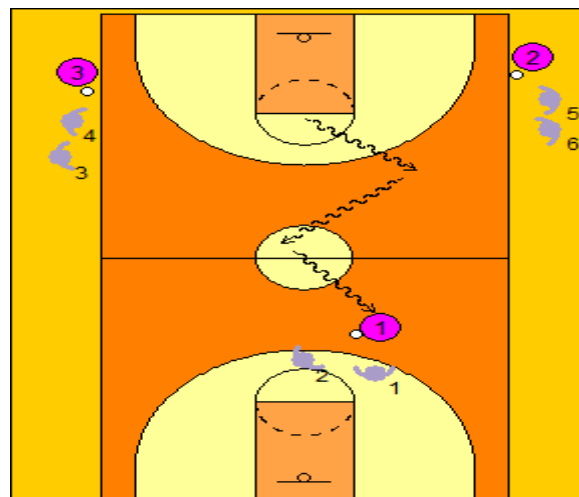


Figure 15. Competitive game 1-on-2 on $\frac{3}{4}$ of the court

Drill 6

Pick and roll (Figure 16) with the center quickly moving into the dribbler's path of movement (hard hedge). The center guarding blocker 5 should be in contact with him. When the dribbler passes the block, the defensive center should pop up perpendicular to the dribbler's line of motion, "seek" contact with his chest and draws an offensive foul (Figure 17). All young players go through all 4 roles 4 times. The drill is under direct instructions.

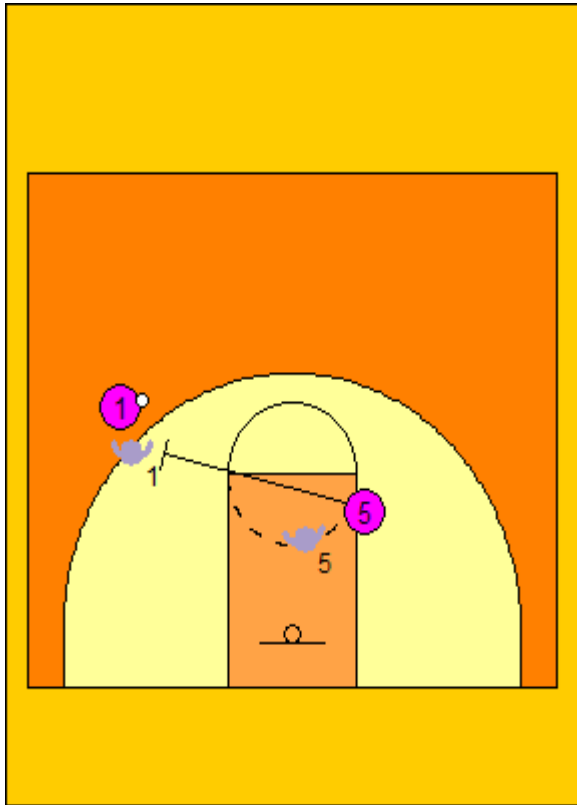


Figure 16. Pick and roll

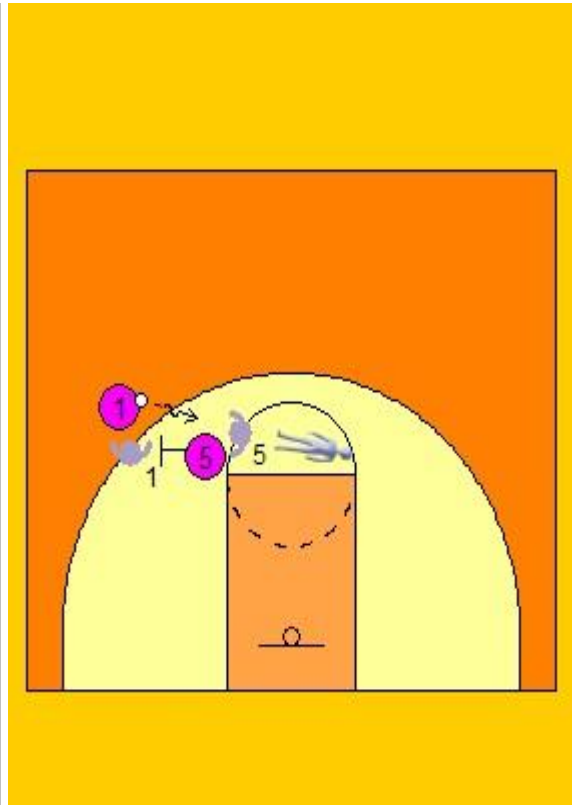


Figure 17. "seeking" contact with chest

CONCLUSION

Coaches, following their team's physiognomy and their defensive philosophy, should design additional drills to master the element of drawing an offensive foul. This element carries the risk of calling a personal foul to the defender. However, the question is whether the defender should move out of the way and allow the attacker to score the basket unimpeded. Of course not. On the contrary, the players should be warned to make an effort in improving this element very seriously and demand its use during training sessions and matches. If a player avoids making a personal foul during the match, he should be replaced and told why he was replaced. This measure must be applied consistently, especially in the transitional and preparatory period. Likewise, the opportunity to praise a player who draws an offensive foul from the opponent should not be missed. Coaches of younger categories must keep in mind that it is unethical to ask players to set themselves up for taking a charge without this element being thoroughly covered in training. Of course, an offensive foul can also be drawn from an outside player who is not in possession of the ball. It is more the result of recklessness on the part of the attacker (e.g. when setting up a blockade, demarcation, jump in attack and defense, etc.), so this article did not even deal with it.

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