

Coaching Tips

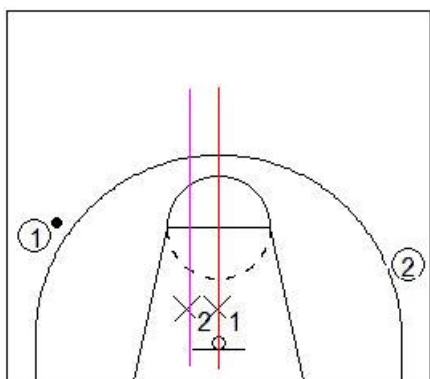
Teaching Split Line Rotation

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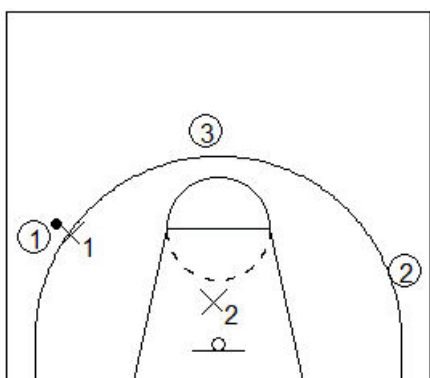
I recently attended both the U14 Boys and Girls Australian Club Championships and was certainly impressed by the overall standard of players and teams. One trend that I did observe is that all teams were poor at rotating from the split line. Here are some drills that we used in the NT National ITC Program to work on split line rotation:

Read the Player Drill

I think the most important aspect of split line rotation is to anticipate the drive and to move first! Too many players just stay right in the middle of the key and then rush over at the "last minute". To be effective, the rotating defender must stop the offensive player from getting into the key at all.



Here X_1 is on "the split line" – the imaginary line from one basket to the other. As soon as they think that O_1 is more likely to drive than pass I encourage the split line defender to move to at least the edge of the backboard (X_2). They are still guarding O_2 and must be able to see them, but they are preparing to guard O_1 if they drive baseline.



In this drill X_1 starts guarding O_1 and X_2 starts guarding O_2 . X_2 must read what O_1 is going to do and move accordingly:



If X_1 reads that O_2 will drive baseline, hedge to the side of the backboard, ready to rotate across.



If X_2 reads that O_1 will pass to O_2 , hedge toward O_2 (again the side of backboard is a good reference), ready to intercept pass or to at least guard O_2 .



If X_2 reads that O_1 will pass to O_3 , they must move above the "dotted line", ready to move to a "one-pass away" defensive position, guarding O_2 .

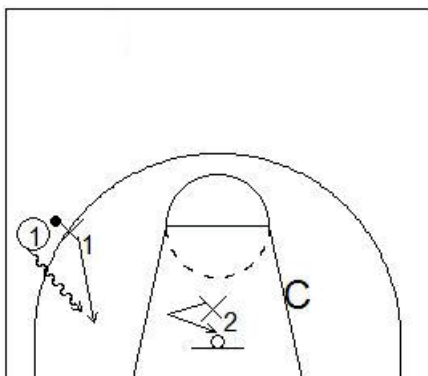
Tips for reading what O_1 is going to do:

- Height of the ball – they higher they are holding it the more likely they are looking to pass;
- Where they are looking;
- Where their body is facing – if their body is facing O_3 , even if they turn their head and look at the basket, they aren't going to drive until they face it;
- Amount of defensive pressure – what is your teammate stopping O_1 from doing?

"That's a Foul!"

Basketball NSW Coaches Newsletter

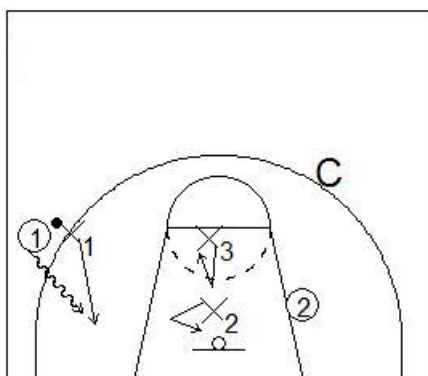
1v2 Split Line Rotation Drills



O₁ looks to drive to the basket and X₁ is forcing to the sideline-baseline. X₂ only rotates across to help if X₁ is beaten but they can hedge across if they think that O₁ is going to drive. To keep X₂ honest, O₁ can pass to the coach instead of driving. The coach should ensure that X₂ keeps vision of them, unless rotating across because X₁ is beaten. If the coach can't see X₂'s eyes they should call to X₂ to get vision.

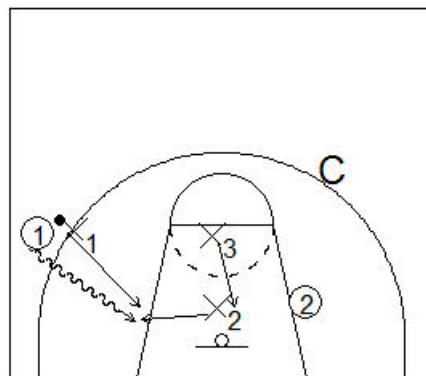
You can also have another player take the role of the coach, which is good practice at reading your defender! In the diagram above, X₁ is not beaten so X₂ hedges in anticipation of a drive and then recovers back to guard the coach.

2v3 Split Line Rotation Drill



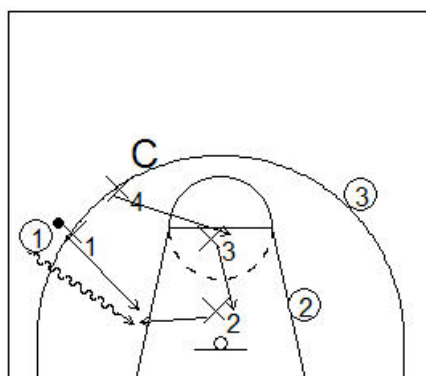
This drill simply adds a second offensive player and a third defender. Again, to keep X₂ and X₃ honest, O₁ can pass to either the coach or O₂ rather than drive. Both the coach and O₂ should talk to their defenders if they lose vision.

Both X₃ and X₂ should hedge if they anticipate a drive, but they only rotate if X₁ is beaten (in the diagram above X₁ is not beaten so they recover back to their player). If X₁ is beaten the rotation should be:



3v4 Split Line Rotation Drill

Again, this drill adds another offensive and defensive player.



After the drive, if X₁ passes to O₃, X₄ must guard that pass.



Defensive Stance and Focus

Your weight should be on the balls of your feet (not your heels), and have your feet about shoulder width apart. Keep your knees bent and your back straight. Keep your head up, eyes forward, arms out with your palms up and elbows bent a little. Watch your opponent's belly button. Your opponent can fake you with eyes, head bob, shoulders, a jab step, but the belly button is only going the way they are.

Never rest on defense!!!