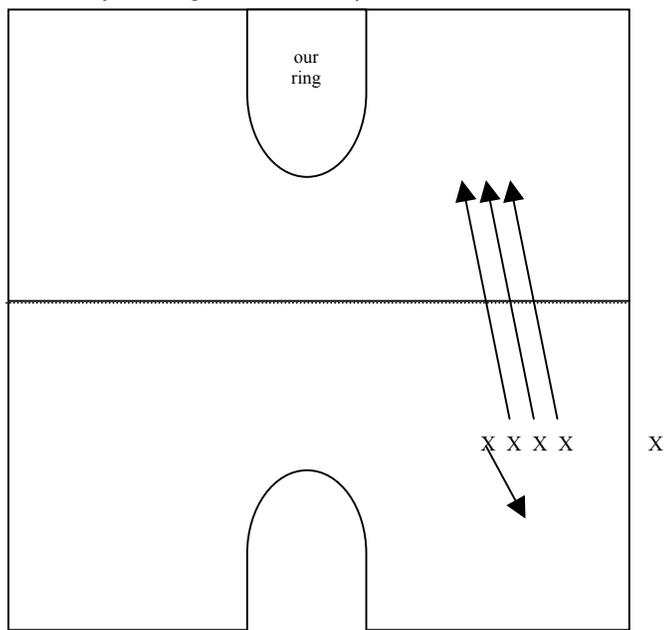


Play of the Week:

This newsletters play makes an adjustment from the play shown in the first newsletter whereby players start away from the ball and come towards it. The play's simplicity makes it suitable for all ages, but will probably work best for younger age groups. Credit goes to Mark Walker who I stole this play off several years ago without his permission – but shhhhhhhhh!



Setting it up: When we have a sideline ball, get all players to scrunch up in a line directly in front of the player passing the ball in.

Running the play: The coach yells “GO” from the sideline. Players run towards their ring. The person passing the ball in passes out in front of the running players who then do a lay-up.

The aim: Defence is guarding us one-on-one. All of the sudden our players sprint towards the ring getting them in front of the defence. The pass lands in front of the running player to run on to for a lay-up.

I called this play “1-3-4” for my team. If the pass to the running players isn't open, then there should be a player who plays 'safety'. As such I made a rule that the first, third and fourth players run to the basket and the second player waits for a safety pass if the long pass isn't available, hence the name “1-3-4”. Alternatively, when players set up for the play, yell out “Jonny play safety” and he will then know not to run off but to wait for the safety pass.

A word of caution: The play is reliant on defence guarding us so close that when we start running, we surprise the defence and get in front. Don't run the play on a zone defence! Don't run the play too close our own basket as we won't be able to run onto the pass – perhaps limit it to anytime we have a sideline pass in front of the quarter-court line. Also, if the other coach is smart enough they will eventually drop a player back to the half way line to intercept the long pass. Be aware of this and either don't continue running the play for that game, or tell the passer to pass it to Jonny – the safety player. It seems so simple, but even when I was coaching U/16's, it got us six or seven easy lay-ups at the start of every game before the other team dropped a player back.

Teaching the play: Explain to players the drill and then run it at training. Make sure players don't creep towards their ring before you yell “GO”. If they start to edge forwards, defence will realise where they are going and react faster. Explain to players you are trying to surprise their opponent by going from standing still to all of the sudden sprinting down the other end for an open pass. The more players understand the point of what they are doing, the more they will remember to do the plays the right way.