



**Peter Lonergan  
Individual Defense**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoV4C9XwtdU>**

- In the modern game, if you can't have accountability or defend your man without fouls, it is an issue.
- The challenge of staying in front of your man is so hard now with the skills of offensive players. Every practice should contain some form of individual defense as an 'ED Drill' (Every Day).
- Teams that don't guard the ball well are forced into unnecessary rotations.
- Foul discipline is a foundation of defense.
- By yelling 'don't foul' this isn't teaching as the coach isn't providing the player with any tools for how to do this effectively.

### **Horizontal Mirror Series**

- N.B - different to McCormick's lateral mirror series. Chest to chest, with defense staying in front of offense. HC to baseline. Lono started without a ball, with defender trying to stay in front of offense who is trying to move past them.
- Chest blow = absorbing contact with the chest. Defender can absorb but not initiate the contact.
- **Load** = on every chest-blow, hop back.
- **Load** = add in a jab (hop back, then take back the time and space)
- **Load** = add "ready hands." This is showing ten fingers as opposed to having a dig and stick hand.
- **Load** = add a ball and chest blow with hands-up. Hop / pop back but don't jump back on the chest blow (small vs gross movement). We pop back to control angles and maintain chest-to-chest positioning.
- Lono believes ideal way to guard a jab-step is to pop back as opposed to staying (offense could just go) or shifting laterally (jab & cross). A pop back means defender can guard either direction and still contest or block the shot. KPI = not popping back too far.
- Gross movements are like a neon sign to referees, especially with the hands.
- Avoid saying negatives such as 'don't do this' or 'don't reach.' Use action words instead of negatives.
- Lono considers this series a brushing your teeth drill. Will suffer from decay if you don't do it.
- Avoid using the word slide. If defenders step slide, they will be in foul trouble the whole time.

## Close-Outs

- Lono likes the two-hand close-out, but teaches more having hand above ball to stop the pass rather than having the hand out in the lane. He believes that with 2 hands, you are less likely to lead with one foot, which one hand encourages. However, not one hand 'out or up' like most coaches teach, but tracing wherever the ball is.

- "You must coach the hands."

- Close-out chest-to-chest and hand above ball.

- Dig hand and hand in line doesn't take away the pass. Having a hand above the ball does take-away the pass.

- **Close-out 1v1** - Close-out into 3 chest blows and hop backs.

- **Load** = player can change direction (zig/ zag but not pre-determined), defender has to change hands in this case but more for speed generation.

- **Load** = close-out to seam. Two dribbles baseline, defender has to try and get chest blow or stop the dribbler entering the paint. Dribbler can then retreat dribble, and have one more try to grab a piece of the paint. 2pts if defender stops them from entering the paint. Can de-load by saying offense can only drive middle after the retreat to make it easier.

- Beginning part of this series and close-outs without game context lack the full game setting. This doesn't mean we don't avoid doing, just that we avoid doing for too long. All loads so far can be done within 5/6 minutes.

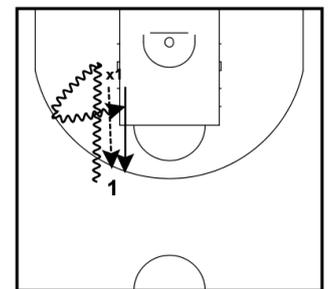
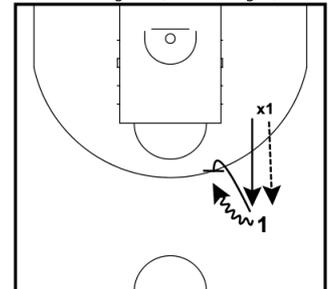
- **Load** = same start, defender tries to 'glove the ball' at the beginning by touching or deflecting it. This is how Gary Payton got a lot of steals during his NBA career.

- Should never keep doing a drill until players get it right. If you stay until they get it right you're wrong as the coach. It can never be perfect very time, drills with perfect outcomes have no sense.

- Offense always reacts quicker than defense. The game is naturally biased towards offense.

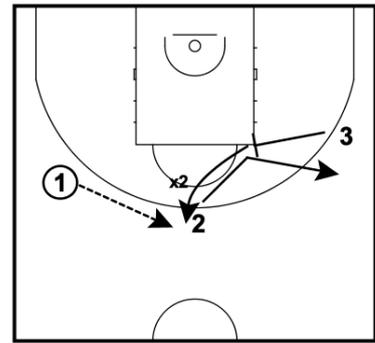
- Players must be quick going from one defensive phrase to another. E.g. denial to on-ball positioning.

- Uses the word 'Adaptive Shooting' as opposed to 'Contested Shooting' as the aim of shooting is to get a 'ROB Shot' (Range, Open, Balance). Adaptive simply means adapting from one action to the next.



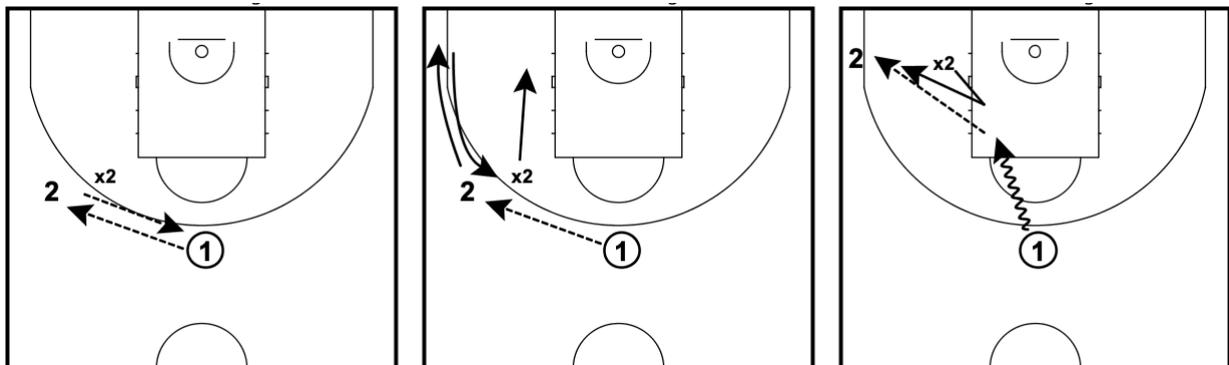
## Defensive Positioning into 1v1

- Defender starts on offense with a teammate on the wing spot. Coach or another player as an uncontested passer at the top (could add a guided defender). Defender completes the following series:



- Start in denial but allow the catch
- On the pass, adjust to on-ball positioning
- Offense boomerangs, defense moves back to denial
- Offense spaces down to corner or shallow cuts, defender adjust to help
- Offense blast cuts, play live 1v1

- **Load** = can change the individual actions (e.g. basket cut, post-up)
- **Load** = offense chooses combination randomly, live as soon as the coach gives a vocal command or signal.
- **Load** = coach can drive ball, and defender has to stunt or bluff and recover.
- **Load** = can add in DHO or Ball Screen reads for defender.
- **Load** = 2v1 shooting if passer is a player and not a coach (ideal scenario)
- **Load** = 2 and 3 player actions.
- Short close-out can be harder than a long close-out as there is less time for the ball to be in the air and for the defenders to adjust on the catch.



## 1v1 Short-Route Screen

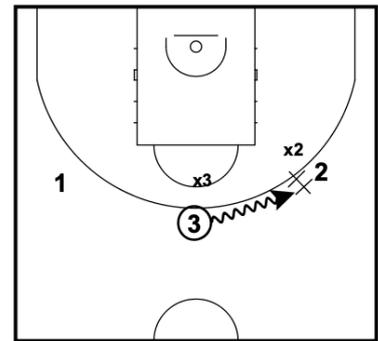
- Screener says 'screen coming.' Defender also talks task and says 'avoid' followed by 'chase' (if they are chasing). When recovered to ball, they say 'ball, ball.'
- Player coming off screen says what they are doing (pop, backdoor, tight curl or wide curl) based on what defender does:
  - Pop = defender calls under and goes early
  - Straight (catch and shoot in front of screen) = defender goes under on-time (not early)
  - Backdoor = defender top locks
  - Tight curl = defender chases over the top, and screener's defender doesn't show
  - Wide curl = defender chases over the top, and screener's defender shows
  - Switch = self-screen or curl and hi-low (if post-match). Could boomerang if on perimeter.
- Don't let the outcome interfere with acknowledgement of the process and decision-making

## 1v1 Flare

- 'Talk Task.' Wing player this time sets the flare screen for player in the 45. Player flaring makes a 'drive step' and flare cut.
- Defender can avoid and chase or gap and chase.

## 1v1 Flare Screen into DHO

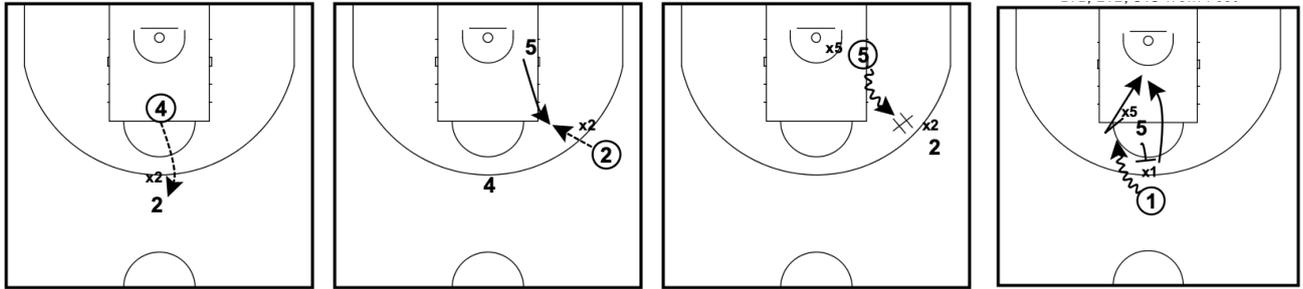
- Same start as before, finish with DHO action. Wing player sets rip for player at 45, whose defender chases over. Wing player pops to 45 for catch from top. On catch, DHO and live 1v1 or 2v1 with wing player.
- KPI = when jumping to the ball, must be a lateral jump to give the defense a better angle. If defense jumps back, they become vulnerable to backdoor cuts.
- Load = 2v2 +1. Can start with short-route screen or down-screen (players have to communicate).



## 2v1 Punch Screen

- Lono doesn't use colours for defensive coverage as he thinks its too difficult to remember
- Three-way switch some pick and rolls to have the guard still guarding a guard when you switch the ball-screen action. E.g. players in swing, strong side slot and strong side block. As post comes up to set the screen, corner player switches onto the big and big switches onto corner player. Then when switching the ball screen, this means a guard switches onto the other guard, while the post can bump the screener ensuring they are back on their original match-up. This leaves on the on-ball defender to switch onto the corner player.
- Screener starts at the elbow with the ball, defender and offensive player in the swing. Screener throws loop pass and follows with a punch screen, defender gets in close to the ball handler knowing the screener is coming so they can try to avoid being screened.
- KPI = defender gets 'skinny' to avoid screen. This means turning side on as it's harder to get torso screened as opposed to staying flat.
- **Load** = could also start with high post flash with the defender contesting the pass to make it more game-like). Off the pass to the post, could be UCLA action or DHO randomly instead to add different action. Otherwise, big can pass back and player can shoot or go into punch screen if no space to shoot or attack the close-out.
- **Load** = low post starts with the ball. If they can't get ball in, uphill DHO.
- **Load** = 2v2. 'Talk Task' and 'Avoid Skinny.' Screener's defender says delay as the ideal first coverage. If ball handler's defender gets caught in the screen, that is the cue for the screener's defender to call the switch and then commit to it. Otherwise, switch isn't needed until that stage. If the defender is successful avoiding, screener's defender delays with a soft show and both players recover.
- KPI = 'smash hip.' Screener tries to chip screener's hip to get through. Want to 'melt' the screen and not get caught in it.
- 'Wrap' = absorbing the screen and using body or hands to wrap and fight around the screen.

- With 'avoid' and 'chase' have to succeed in both phases. Isn't good enough to succeed in just one. Aim is to avoid, chase then wall-up.
- When teaching P&R defense, shouldn't teach in isolation of P&R offense. Have to combine as much as possible.



### 2v2 Down Screen into Punch Screen

- Long-route down-screen at the block. Players task their task. Player coming off pin down could make a primary read based on how defense guards them. If no read and defense successfully avoids and recovers, go into punch-screen. Can only stay on one half of the court.

