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Practice Plan 1



GOAL: The introduction of proper warm-up exercises and techniques for dribbling, passing and shooting.

First 10 Minutes (Introductions)

Considering this is the first practice, introduce yourself and all coaches to the players. Have the players introduce themselves – name, school, what they like. Many times, players know some of their teammates from a prior season or school. One of the more important aspects to stress to the players is they will work together as a team. Having camaraderie among the players is crucial. As the coach, it is important to teach the players how to have fun, but, at the same time, to teach them how to improve their skills. It is the coach's job to figure out that fine line of balance between play and work. Plus go over some new rule each practice, whether it is what a line on the court means or a certain foul, etc.

Next 5 Minutes (Stretching)

Of course, the coaches are involved with the stretching, but it's important to have a player lead his teammates, too. Keep track of this, so all the players have chances to lead their teammates.

Have the players stretch legs for two minutes and stretch arms for two minutes. Stretching prepares the muscles to prevent injury. The last minute should be used to jog around the field once.

You can decide on the stretches, but are some examples:

1. Sit, with legs extended out flat on the ground in a V position. Lean forward, reach for the toes and pull back on the toes. Hold for a 10 count (have the girls count down from 10). Repeat. This works the hamstrings, calves and lower back.
2. Sit, with legs extended out flat on the ground in a V position. Reach and touch the right hand to the outside of the left foot. Mimic the other side. Hold for a 10 count on each side. This stretches the outside of the upper back.
3. Sit in an Indian-sitting position, with legs bent and the soles of the feet touching in front. Gently press the knees toward the ground. This stretches the groin muscles.
4. Stand straight, bend a leg behind the body, grab the ankle and pull the heel toward the backside. Hold for a 10 count. Mimic with the other leg. This stretches the quad muscles.

Next 10 Minutes (Proper Passing Mechanics)

Put the players in a circle, and one player will be in the middle and you will use 2 balls.

Make sure to step into the pass, follow through on each style of passing with your thumbs down and aim for your teammates hand target. Anyone receiving a pass should have their hands up. Maintain eye contact between players throwing and catching. Have each player call out the name of the person they are passing to, so that everyone gets to know everyone's name very quickly. Increase speed as players become more proficient.

Coaching Points

- Be sure they follow through correctly.
- Eye contact and hitting the target are always important.

Next 15 Minutes (Dribbling)

Now we move onto ball handling. Start slowly and keep them stationary to start with. You can begin to move them with the ball but tell them to keep it low! Make sure the players use the pads of their fingers and look up as they dribble. Use both hands and alternate.

Coaching Points

- Controlled setting to learn basics of dribbling. Make sure the players use the pads of their fingers and look up as they dribble. Use both hands and alternate.
- As you are talking to players, have them look up at you as they do the drill so they learn how to dribble without looking at the ball.

Next 3 Minutes (Water Break)

Give the players time to break for water. It is extremely important for the players to remain hydrated at all times. The players must be told your expectations for returning, so make sure you tell them when time is up, hustle back to where you want them next.

Next 10 Minutes (Form Shooting-No Basket)

Now begin to build the shot. Good drill with no ball. Good for warming up and don't have much court space. Have the players go slow at first to ensure proper techniques. Remember, elbow in, as you raise your arm, have it pointed towards target and have the hand flat like it is holding a tray and then extend and reach up into the cookie jar to ensure proper follow through. Then add a ball. We don't want them to worry about distance, just form.

Coaching Points

- Remind them that the off hand is just to be used as a guide and don't incorporate the 2nd hand into the shot until the player can handle the ball with one hand correctly.
- Metaphors like "hold it like a waiter would hold a tray" and "cookie jar" help them remember the basics.

Next 10 Minutes (Form Shooting with Basket)

Same drill, but now move them to in front of the basket, about 3 feet back. Explain how a shot is the same from the waist up no matter the distance, and how your legs will determine how far the ball needs to go. Incorporate them bending their knees to the proper form so that the ball is released at the top of the extension of your legs and arms together.

Coaching Points

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Next 15 Minutes (Shooting on the Move)

First chance to incorporate everything you have gone over into one drill. Put them into 2 teams and have them dribble to the basket and stop and take a shot. Encourage every shot that has the proper technique and correct those who are off. Reward the team who makes the first 10 shots. Switch sides.

Coaching Points

- Keep reiterating the basics of dribbling, shooting and passing.
- Give the drill a catchy name so they will remember it next time!

Next 15 Minutes (Basic Defense)

Finish up practice with something you want to build on each week. The first part of defense is teaching them how to guard the ball. Teach them proper footwork and stance, forcing the player to their weak hand and giving proper distance between the ball handler and the defender. As the player moves, defender slides their feet and tries to stay half a step ahead of them and tries to turn them back to the other direction.

Coaching Points

- Sit in his stance, one hand up, one hand on the ball, and within one arms length of the ball.
- Tell the offensive player to go slow. Remind them to work on their skills as well.

End of Practice

End practice with line drills of some sort and having them to make foul shots when they are tired. While the players are drinking water, huddle them together for a talk. Take this time to recognize the work that was done well, but also discuss what needs improvement. Always finish the talk in an upbeat, positive way. Tell the players the next practice time and follow up with an email to their parents.