

TOP 10 TIPS

Coaching Youth Basketball

By M. Kruger

#1 Have Fun – Drill Time Can Be Games Time Too

Tedium is tedium – boring is boring – young competitors relish competing – the higher the level of competition, the more they crave it. Find ways to introduce competitive contests into your practices through inventing games that teach skills and fundamentals – it will double their efforts and keep their attention too.

#2 Fundamentals, Fundamentals, Fundamentals

...might make Jack a dull boy, but they will make Jill a sharp shooting, defensive, rebounding hardwood phenom. Balance, positioning, sharp execution – quick & precise. Insist on consistent, high tempo execution.

#3 Is That a Yo Yo or a Basketball?

Dribbling - crossovers, change direction, spin dribble, left and right hand equal, speed dribble - be quick, but don't hurry... John Wooden said that.

#4 Easy Points are Hard Earned in Practice

Shooting - lay ups (left and right hand), proper form, one hand push with one hand to stabilize. Follow through with push hand. Teach good habits from the beginning even if they can make shots with poor form. On free throws, help each player develop a routine.

#5 Teach Them to Get Big – be Demanding and to Claim Their Prize!

Emphasize blocking out when a shot goes up, to get physical, spread their arms and make themselves BIG. Tiddlywinks is for tiddle winkers... rebounds are for BASKETBALL PLAYERS.

#6 The Only Good Pass is a Received Pass

Passing; two-hand chest pass, bounce pass. Ball needs to be received at the chest, not below the waist or too high. This allows the receiver to dribble, pass or shoot as soon as received.

#7 Keep it Simple – We're Playin' Hoops Here Not Launchin' Rockets!

Only one or two basic offensive sets are needed. Break up the offense into small drills and then put it together. Basic offenses will work against zone or man to man defense.

#8 The Best Defense Isn't Should Be Offensive

Beginning players should always learn man to man first. Stress good form, quick foot movement with a solid, well-balanced defensive position – remind them to move their feet without reaching for the ball, overplay strong side and anticipate screens. Talk, talk, and talk some more!

#9 Even Rocket Launches Start Out the Same Way Every Time

Inbounds plays; again only one or two are needed. Keep it simple!

#10 The Best Laid Plans of Mice, Men and Girls' and Boys' Basketball Coaches

Practices should be at least 50% fundamentals and defense. Have a plan on a card in your pocket and stick to it. Some practices won't go as well as others, move on. For new players, 75% fundamentals. You will be amazed at how much they improve week to week.