

**3 on 3 Full Court
“The Truth Test”**

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**“When necessity becomes your best teacher, you learn more about yourself
and others.”**

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3 ON 3 FULL COURT

We use the 3 on 3 full court game to tell us who can play and who cannot. It gives us a truthful look into our future because this game exposes players in a meaningful way. Moreover, the coaching staff and players can see who is fit **and knows how to win!** The game also improves cardiovascular fitness quicker than any track specific work that I know. Why? Because we are doing anaerobic and aerobic work without the players really having to look at it as “conditioning”. In other words, we get to sing while we work, or should I say “play”. The players like this game mostly because it emulates the game itself.

We use heart monitors during this game. This is an objective measurement. Our player’s heart rates are normally above 190 beats per minute. Ouch. We want to be as objective as possible when evaluating our players. This takes the guess work out of what you are doing. The more criteria/tests we can use the better. Yet, we do not want the players to think it is all an exam. If you asked me what one competition/ game we use to assess our players, 3 on 3 full court is the game- the best of the best.

Smart coaches consider the advantages and disadvantages of any game/ drill. The obvious pluses include: 1) the accurate measurement; 2) the easy evaluation of the who (i.e. which players and combinations know how to win by charting each win/loss); 3) the ability to see who can pass, cut, and score by eliminating the dribble completely; 4) The elimination of the dribble also creates “team” first as the 3 players must assist each other to get the ball up the floor; this immediate adversity pushes the players toward each other; 5) the coaches can see which players want to play defense, and actually know to move; 6) the games are played to 2 points (i.e. one point/ basket) because this allows you to quickly observe who knows how to win and play under pressure/ either offensively or defensively.

I do not know any salient disadvantages to this game. While the players do not like 3 on 3 full court without the dribble initially, they eventually ask to play this game. You can add the dribble by saying that this will be a 1, 2, or 3 dribble day: you will be a hero- enjoy.

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A. THE RULES

1. NO DRIBBLE

a. WHY?

- 1) FORCES PLAYERS TO PASS THE BALL
- 2) CUT-AND-REPLACE ACTION BY NECESSITY
- 3) FITNESS LEVEL IMPROVED
- 4) FOOTWORK IMPROVED BY NECESSITY
- 5) QUICK BALL MOVEMENT REQUIRED

b. HOW?

- 1) TELL PLAYERS THERE WILL BE NO DRIBBLE UNTIL THEY LEARN THAT THIS IS A TEAM GAME.

2. GAME PLAYED TO 2 POINTS

a. WHY?

- 1) QUICK GAMES
- 2) COACHING STAFF CAN EVALUATE WINS AND LOSSES
- 3) WHO MAKES FREQUENT GAME WINNING PASSES/SHOTS UNDER REAL GAME PRESSURE
- 4) WHO CAN GET STOPS AND/OR DEFENSIVE REBOUNDS
- 5) WHO IS MENTALLY/ PHYSICALLY TOUGH

3. FOULING

a. WHY?

- 1) DEFENSE CALLS FOULS
- 2) THE SECOND FOUL BY DEFENSIVE TEAM ON THE SAME POSSESSION RESULTS IN A LOSS BY THAT TEAM.

- 3) KEEPS THE GAMES MOVING AND DOES NOT LET GAMES GET OUT OF HAND.
4. TAKING A CHARGE
 - a. WHY?
 - 1) IF DEFENSE TAKES A CHARGE THE GAME IS WON BY THAT TEAM.
 - 2) PUTS EMPHASIS ON TAKING THE CHARGE.
5. THE LONG OUTLET
 - a. WHY?
 - 1) WHEN THE WINNER'S COURT HAS A TEAM WIN THEY CALL OVER THE TEAM LEADING OR WHO HAS WON FROM THE LOSER'S COURT. IF THERE IS A TIE ON THAT COURT THEN NEXT POINT SCORED DETERMINES THE WINNER.
 - 2) THE WINNING TEAM MAY SET UP UNDER THE BASKET TO INBOUND THE BALL, WITH THE OTHER TWO PLAYERS AT HALF COURT READY TO GO AS THE WINNERS FROM THE LOSER'S COURT **SPRINT** OVER TO PLAY. THE WINNERS MAY OUTLET THE BALL TO HALF COURT BUT NOT OVER THE HALF COURT LINE. THIS ALLOWS THE OTHER TEAM TIME TO GET SET. HOWEVER, THE WINNERS FROM THE LOSER'S COURT MUST SPRINT OVER AND ONCE THE FIRST PLAYER HAS ENTERED THE COURT THE BALL MAY BE THROWN TO HALF COURT, BUT NOT OVER. THIS **REALLY** KEEPS THE GAME MOVING.
6. NO CHERRY PICKING
 - A. WHY?
 1. SERVES NO REAL PURPOSE.
 - B. HOW?

1. ONCE BALL HAS CROSSED HALF COURT, EITHER WITH PASS OR DRIBBLE, ALL THREE PLAYERS ON THE OFFENSIVE TEAM MUST CROSS HALF COURT AS BALL IS SCORED- PERIOD.

7. BALL MUST BE PICKED UP BY THREE QUARTER COURT
 - a. WHY?
 - 1) ALLOWS COACH TO SEE WHO CAN PLAY DEFENSE.
 - 2) EXPOSES THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE TEAM.
 - 3) EXPOSES PLAYERS AND ULTIMATELY ASSISTS PLAYERS TO IMPROVE THEIR FITNESS LEVEL.
 - b. HOW?
 - 1) IF THE DEFENSIVE TEAM DOES NOT PICK UP $\frac{3}{4}$ COURT THEY LOSE A POINT AND, IF IT HAPPENS A SECOND TIME, THEY LOSE THE GAME.

B. STRUCTURE

1. WINNER'S COURT/ LOSER'S COURT
 - a. WHY?
 - 1) EMPHASIZES THE "KING OF THE MOUNTAIN" CONCEPT. YOU WIN AND YOUR TEAM STAYS ON THE WINNER'S COURT. HENCE, EVERY TEAM IS LOOKING TO BEAT YOU AS THE WINS ACCUMULATE.
 - 2) CALL IT WHAT IT IS... WINNER'S COURT/ LOSER'S COURT.
 - 3) ALL TEAMS WAITING TO PLAY COME FROM THE LOSER'S COURT. THERE IS **NEVER** ANY OVERFLOW AT WINNER'S COURT.
 - 4) IF THE WINNERS FROM THE LOSER'S COURT FINISH **BEFORE** THE WINNER'S COURT HAS COMPLETED THEIR GAME

THEY WILL WAIT UNTIL THE WINNER'S GAME IS DECIDED, AND THIS HAPPENS VERY RARELY.

- 5) THE LOSERS FROM THE WINNER'S COURT GOES IMMEDIATELY TO THE LOSER'S COURT TO PLAY. THEY **DO NOT** GO TO THE END OF THE LINE AND WAIT TO PLAY.

2. RUNNING TIME

a. WHY?

- 1) PUT 20:00 MINUTES ON THE CLOCK FOR THE FIRST WEEK YOU PLAY THIS GAME.
- 2) THE GAME WILL EXHAUST YOUR PLAYERS. YOU CAN AND ADD APPROXIMATELY 5:00 MINUTES A WEEK. YOU WILL SEE YOUR PLAYERS PHYSICALLY ADJUST- QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY.

3. CHANGING RULES AND EMPHASIS

a. WHY?

- 1) YOU CAN ADD THE DRIBBLE AS TIME PASSES.
- 2) YOU CAN CHANGE CERTAIN RULES PER SESSION OR WEEKS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE BALL MUST GO INSIDE BEFORE IT IS SHOT OR WE WANT **ONE** SCREEN AND ROLL SITUATION BEFORE THE BALL IS SHOT.
- 3) THIS ALLOWS THE COACH TO SEE THINGS AND FORCES PLAYERS TO INCORPORATE DIFFERENT SITUATIONS.

In conclusion, the “try it you’ll like it” statement applies here. The 3 on 3 **winner’s/ loser’s** court game is one of the best instructional games we do in our pre-season. This game allows you to objectively evaluate your team.