



The Global Player

Conceptual Challenges

Multi-Skilled...Multi-Positional...Multi-Dimensional Player

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A 'Global Player'?



- A Canada Basketball term
 - Origins linked to CSP development post 2012 Olympics
 - Flow & Dynamics of International game evolved to demand more from all 5 players on court...See Patrick Hunt's FIBA trends observation work post 2012



FIBA's focus on speed of play + Players pushing boundaries of skill, athleticism and IQ

+ Coaches responding philosophically / tactically =

Heightist sport sees dramatically evolving style & trends output, and previous stereotyped deficiencies linked to positions & body-types blurred.

A 'Global Player'?



- Universally, interchangeable language being:

- Multi-Skilled Player
- Multi-Positional Player
- Multi-Athletic Player
- Position-less Basketball
- Multi-Dimensional Player
- Etc.

- Semantics?

- Multiple Positional or Position-Less? Adult Version versus Youth Development Stage?



A 'Global Player'?



- 5 Pillars of Skill
 - Technical
 - Tactical
 - Physical
 - Mental/Emotional
 - Performance Lifestyle

Complicated or Simple?



- Very **complicated** discussion because it all comes down to meshing context, ambition, reality, comprehension, ability etc. Who provides this direction for us? What are the 'Push & Pulls'?
- **Recognition** of Level we are coaching...Club, HS, Provincial, University, National Team, Pro etc., and how it fits into BIG picture for youth player.
- Is multi-positional **contradictory** to multi-skilled? What is position-less basketball? Are we only referencing tall people? Should we coach the game as if we are trying to un-earth only Candice Parker or Kevin Durrant types?
- Fashions, Trends, Evolution?
 - Can this game evolve further?
 - Are we naturally evolving away from the positional orthodoxy...are we comfortable with the term "post" or "centre"
 - What or Who is the next "Stretch 4" or "Point Forward"?
 - Is the Jack of all trades, not able to master anything?



Eastern v Western Philosophy



Are we simply answering a question, following the crowd, or are we trying to determine whether we are asking the correct question to begin with, and seeing what best fits for us...

- Are we REALLY saying every player should play every position, or are their clusters...or is it an IQ or *familiarization* awareness exercise...or do you have a genetically modified super team of 6'10" [men]...6'2" [women]?
- Personally...I reference 2 Adult Positions and being able to defend at least 3 at a high level. WHY? This take into account variance in skills, athleticism and physical traits [length, height etc.]
- Personally I look at the "Cluster", e.g. 1-3 we teach to have the same skills, e.g. handling, scanning, footwork, passing, ball-screen, off ball decision-making etc.
- Joined Up thinking...No Gimmicks...Desire for players that I Coach to be able to play for anyone in any system at the adult level, and use basketball to educate the behaviors and habits to excel at life. Everything is designed for them to be able to do that...on court, weights room, periodization of working week, film review process, scouting, goal setting etc.

Eastern v Western Philosophy



Are we simply answering a question, following the crowd, or we trying to determine whether we are asking the correct question to begin with, and seeing what best fits for us...

- Who floats to the surface to be a PG?
 - What are the goals of the player – Liene Stalidzane example
- Commitment to multi-skilled/position-less basketball creates readiness not necessarily expertise or mastery....adult version, depends on system or style of basketball.
- Should a player at a certain level have to earn the right to execute a skill?
 - Minimum agreed upon %
 - Evidence that they are committed to make the skilled improvement
 - Is this still a game of mistakes?
 - At what level is it only about winning? Is it ever only about winning?

Complicated or Simple?



- Race against time...a pie chart of activity [tech, tac, physical, mental/emotional & performance lifestyle training]...a game of %'s
- When do you pull the plug & think "Adult" position?
- Individualizing a team sport with how little contact time we actually have, will always be the hardest element of what we do as coaches.
- Do the Individual skills correlate with the 5v5 game. Is there a nexus right now between how the Individual is independently training and what the 5v5 FIBA game requires
- Has the spacing of our offensive shape determined most of this? 4 out 1 in, 5 out
- Has the Ball-Screen / Pick determined most of this...Roll & Rise = 4 out 1 in...Pick and Pop = 5 out

"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler..."

Albert Einstein

1. Always working on Interior and Perimeter Skills, regardless of so called position...5'5" may actually become your best like-for-like back-cut and seal 1v1 match-up iso!
2. Always work on "Attack" & "Counter" skills, ideally in a competitive [or at least dynamic] environment that elicits rehearsal, trial & error, decision-making and creativity.
3. Small sided conditioned games is a productive environment to take skills rehearsed and practiced to a setting where the above "attack" & "Counter" execution and decision-making can happen.
4. Think % of time as a pie chart and plan accordingly...you cannot become elite at everything in a short period of time. Less done well, consistently and frequently over time = GROWTH



Where do we go next?

- How does a 'Global Player' skills focus, layer with our tactics toward rebounding, conversion, defensive schemes, motion offense, special situation offense & defense, etc.
- How do you periodise through a year where a player may be playing for 2-5 different entities [club, high school, province, national...perhaps with a personal trainer]?
- In this world of instant-gratification, & self-promotion, how do we create a basketball landscape where the long-term blueprint toward a true multi-skilled player development model is the focus?
- The elephant in the room...accountability & ego surrounding winning & losing

On Court



- Don't let buzz terms or interpretation of terms such as Empowerment, Discovery learning, Conceptual Basketball or Holistic Training frighten you. You know more than you realize, once you stay focused on what you wish to emphasize and have thought carefully about how to link it all together. Food for thought:
 - Don't coach it all...but also don't leave it random, e.g. Guided learning, not random...have a focus/emphasis!
 - Design the *discovery*...empowerment does not mean roll the ball out and hope they find it out.
 - '5 Out' is '4 Out 1' in, and '4 Out 1' in can easily be '5 Out' at different stages...it is about spacing, gaps, perimeter and interior attack to create advantage.
 - Read & React can only happen if you allow ADVANTAGE basketball to flow from 1st advantage!
 - Advantage = Separation [to begin with...]
 - Separation comes from dynamic play & hard-to-guard action
 - Simple often means thematic in approach, e.g. back to basket interior catch & attack + counter...and face-up interior attack + counter

On Court



- *Inside – Outside – Inside*
 - Advanced analytics has taken us all behind the arc more, but there is no higher % look than un-contested at the rim, and this is as much to do with probability of getting fouled if semi-contested.
 - @ Rim / In Paint
 - FT
 - 3ptr
 - Counter
 - Rebound Play...sub 5 seconds

On Court



Utopia = Most open

Not highest % Individual

Time to get BRAVE...you know more than you realize!



Questions/Thoughts for us as Coaches...

- Are we connecting the dots of our philosophy, the age group, level, their performance pathway destiny, and how we deliver that through training & games?
 - What conversations between Clubs, NGO's, High School, University, Families would need to happen?
- Is the player getting a chance to execute in games what they are practicing?
- Does your training environment with younger players allow them all to touch the ball, work in transition, be creative, improve speed and agility, sharpen defensive skills, enhance their perimeter and interior skills, improve game-like decision-making in multiple situations etc.

Time to get BRAVE...you know more than you realise!



Questions/Thoughts for us as Coaches...

- Have we mapped out a Macro, Meso and Micro approach to player development taking into account all 5 Skill Pillars + a Pie Chart % of time allocated
- How are we tracking progress?
- Thematic approach to
 - Off Ball / On Ball Skills
 - Handwork, Footwork, Vision
 - Executing / Observing [Doing / Film]
 - Offense / Defense
 - Shooting, Finishing
 - Decision-Making, Creativity, Flare
- Rules & Principles...good sounding music = 1-4-5 Chord progression...but rules are meant to be broken [sometimes 😊]
- Does every player have a "Go-To" move? A signature move that if there was, 5...4...3...2...1, they could at least create an "offensive rebound" opportunity?

Thoughts...



- Even in recruiting calls, particularly with younger players that seem so desperate to be seen, to be offered a scholarship, and recognize that the game outside of the actual game is the self-promotion competition...they ask what can I do, what can I focus on, what can I work on, how do I get seen?
- The fashionable evolution to Skills Trainers, and accessibility of so called "NBA player Workouts" online, and the 30 second Twitter burst of film, has forced our game down a "highlight" reel of skills...because we feel that imitating Kyrie Irving or Steph Curry is the way to get noticed or dominate the game.
- You can see through 3X3 that the tides are turning toward a vehicle to showcase the "Individual" skill as the spacing and connection to those individual skills can come to life more than in a 5v5 setting
- Invasion game sports have always had "positions" set around space they hold, but so often have been different in skills sets; enforcers or creative players, foot speed strikers, does-it-all midfielder etc.
- At the ADULT level our aim should always be to have our basketball philosophy harness & emphasize the skill set of our players...Krista Philips 6'6" versus Natalie Achonwa 6'3" [4 years younger] in Princeton...or how I have had players like Jessica Franz and Claire Colborne [offensively All-Star caliber] yet not your proto-typical Pressure Defensive specimens. There has to be flex and this is where we should be BRAVE

Final Thoughts...



- Less about a quest for “position-less” players, and more about **NOT typecasting** players to orthodox positions early on.
- Focus on **Interior skills and Perimeter skills**, not positions.
- **The Perimeter Paradox**....because of the Stretch 4 fashion, we are moving toward taller/longer players creating a set of perimeter skills and certainly in the women’s/girls game witnessing a softness toward the interior part of our sport. Therefore what we end up with this dearth of interior skilled play...whether that be players trending toward Guard or Centre “adult” positions.
- Genetically modified is a term I often use in jest to highlight that within my chosen style of play it is genuinely 6ft to 6’4” from 1-5...when ultimately given the hoop is 10ft in the air it is still a *hightist* sport, whether you are finishing inside or trying to shoot a step back 3ptr over someone.
- We are all on the ‘**Players Continuum**’ not our own island. **BIG PICTURE Alignment** is key...think layers of connection – what context / role on basketball landscape...what level...individual goals of players...collective goals of a team...it matters!
- **Be brave**...when the best say they steal, they don’t mean they copy verbatim...they mean the spark of thought and design comes from constantly watching, listening, trial & error. It is rare for me to copy a whole set...basketball is about advantage & disadvantage, and advantage comes from separation. Separation comes from action that is hard to guard and how you sequence or pattern that over 60-90 phases offensively, and defend it for 60-90 phases against you.

Example Resources...



[TWITTER](#) / [YouTube](#) / [Website](#) / [Newsletters](#)

- Slappin' Glass
- Chris Oliver / Alex Samara [*Basketball Immersion*]
- Euroleague Basketball
- Positionless Bball
- Zico Coronel
- Zak Boisvert
- Efficient Sauce
- Kostas Kalogeropoulos
- Arete Hoops
- Dribble Handoff
- PickandPop

[TWITTER](#) / [YouTube](#) / [Website](#) / [Newsletters](#)

- Bball Breakdown
- Xavier Newsletter
- Pascal Meurs
- Brook Kohlheim
- Diogo Cunha
- Damin Altizer
- Mike Shaughnessy
- Elite Athletes
- John Leonzo
- Jacob Ammerman
- Liam Flynn