

Ball Defense- Rick Pitino

To play outstanding defense you do not need to be an outstanding athlete. You need-

1. Excellent quickness
2. The desire to excel
3. Great anticipation

His defense is not man defense it is ball defense. Man to man you are not going to keep a great scorer from scoring. 2 reasons

1. Back pedaling by defender
2. Offense knows where he is going and is moving forward

If you allow an offensive player to set up in the middle of the floor where they can shoot, pass and drive, you are giving them too many options. Must take away options-

1. Keep your arms bent at the elbows with your thumbs pointing toward your shoulders when in a stance- this allows for quicker reactions from your hands and arms
2. When the shooter goes to shoot, get a hand into his vision (not his face) and make sure his vision is distracted
3. Take away his strong hand drive- get your head onto his strong hand side- this will hopefully force him to only go one way and you know which way he will go- he prefers one foot to be forward so you will only drop step in one direction
4. After the player shoots, call out shot. This will reinforce that you now have to box out and will be running the fast break.

When the ball is on a side, take away the middle by overplaying the offensive player to the middle of the floor and forcing him outside

On ball defense

1. When playing defense, take short steps and not long slides.
 - a. Head goes up and down
 - b. Will get beat on a drop step
2. Remain bent at the elbows, bent at the knees and having your momentum go to the basket. We will protect the basket and give up the moving jump shot but we will challenge the shot with our hand into vision
3. Keep the thumbs pointed at your shoulders as this will take away the pass over your shoulder and next to your ear- it makes your hands quicker- deflect the ball
4. If we deflect 35 passes and shoot over 38% for the game, we will win over 95% of the games

When defending off of the ball, play the ball and see the man

1. Get into more of an open stance- deflect or intercept passes with your outside hand and not your inside hand if you were in a chest to chest deny position
2. Be more concerned with the ball going to the basket than with your player catching the ball
3. As your player moves toward the basket or the baseline, stay open seeing the ball and just backpedal with him staying between him and the basket

4. Keep a hand on the cutter if you need to so you know his position
5. Any time you make a steal in the backcourt, do not dribble the basketball- catch it and advance it with a pass
6. Do not lunge when trying to make a steal- lead with the outside foot and hand as not to foul

Defending Screens

Down Screen

Ways to fight over the screen

1. The screener will head hunt the defender and try to take him out- many times he will move and rarely will they call the moving screen
2. Switch- leads to big on small situations
3. Only fight over the screen- frees up the curl
4. Have the screener's defender open up and then slide through- frees up the fade to the corner
5. Go 4 deep over the top and this makes the fade even harder to defend
6. His way
 - a. Always see the ball and your man. See the screen coming
 - b. Get directly behind the cutter and follow the man fighting through and then trying to deny
 - c. The screener's defender must call out the pick and take away the curl
 - a. Open up
 - b. Keep a forearm on your man
 - c. Hit the curl cutter and stand him up
 - d. If you lose contact with the screener, he will slip to the basket leading to an easy score

Back Screen

1. Call out "back pick and direction"
2. The cutter's defender drops the foot of the direction called and loses sight of the ball and is directly facing the screener
3. The screener's defender will allow space between him and cutters defender so that the cutters defender can slip through- single space and fight through
4. Relocate the ball

Cross Screen

1. The screener's defender must open up and show his numbers to the ball and protect the basket
2. The cutter's defender must take away the low cut baseline forcing his man to catch the ball while going away from the basket
 - a. Will step over the screeners top foot and still deny
 - b. Will follow and then catch up and deny or defend if his man was passed the ball

UCLA Cut with Back Screen

1. Any time you are guarding the ball and it is passed you must jump to the ball
2. The screener's defender must have an arm bar initially
 - a. Call out the screen
 - b. Open up to the ball nearer the basket to allow the cutter's defender to single space and go through
3. The cutter's defender
 - a. Jumps to the ball
 - b. Drop steps to go face to face with the screener and goes ball side of the screen and then moves between the screener and your teammate (screener's defender) to find his man
4. After this action, the post player will normally pop out
5. The UCLA cutter will normally post up
 - a. Keep an elbow on him
 - b. Play to his high side to take away the duck in

Pick and Roll

1. On a pick and roll above the 3-pt line- hedge out with the screener's defender and go behind
2. On a pick and roll below the 3-pt line- hedge out with the screener's defender and then trap with the on ball defender
3. The other off ball defenders will have to rotate over to the screener when he rolls to the basket
4. This pass to him should not be easy as we should have good ball pressure

Post defense

1. Post defender must get a forearm onto his player at all times when he is ball side
2. Keep a hand or finger on his man when he is weak side of the floor
3. Teach the double down with the top defender and not the wing defender
 - a. The opposite wing defender will take the player who receives the next pass out of the post
 - b. The wing defender takes away the return pass to his man by face guarding the wing player
 - c. The player that double-teamed then takes the next pass to the outside
 - d. The double must take away the inside pivot and use high hands
4. Do not allow the post to back the defender into the lane
 - a. Show the referee your hands
 - b. Place your thigh of the baseline foot against his top thigh and bump him out showing the referee you are innocent of any fouls by not using your hands
 - c. Must stay low to use leverage

Key thoughts

1. Do not fear the dribbler- fear the passer
2. Trap any uncontrolled dribble- when their head goes down and they are not looking for teammates
3. Do not be concerned with who's guarding who in this defense
4. Guard the ball
5. Take away all options to the basket

Deflection system-stay active with your hands and feet

1. Touching any portion of any pass
2. Any steal
3. Any blocked shot
4. Any dive for a loose ball
5. Any tip from behind