



Netball Tactic #2

HOW TO *WORK* THE GOAL CIRCLE!!

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Playing 1956 – Umpiring 1974 – Coaching Professionally 2002

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CONSTANT MOVEMENT IN THE CIRCLE IS KEY

How many times do you see Goalers hovering around the goal post, showing no inclination to do anything but stand there?

Shooters can't do well by just standing tall to receive a "lob pass". They must be taught to move around and out of the circle. Others think because they're six foot five and have a smaller defender on them they have it made.

I've lost count over the years of how many small defenders I've seen really give taller shooters a thorough beating, why, because the shooter won't move and that makes her very easy to defend.

The shooter becomes "predictable".

Why is there a reluctance to move! You must have constant movement in and around the circle being the key.

By movement I mean at a quick, agile pace, using short sharp leads, not the occasional saunter to the top of the ring.

INSIDE THE D

A little too often you see both shooters taking up position in the same spot/area of the "D". To be a good goal shooter you need to learn to take up an area away from your teammate.

As a coach halve the "D" and **forbid** the two shooters to be in the same space at any given time, unless of course a shot is being taken and the other is there for the attempted rebound.

There are plenty of ways to divide the "D", e.g. down the middle from the goal post, half way across from the base line up or on an diagonal line across the "D". This teaches shooters to work together without getting in each other's way.

It is vital when teaching players how to use the "D" to keep pulling the shooters up and repositioning them until finally goal positioning becomes **natural** to them.



NOW FOR THE SPEED AROUND THE CIRCLE

Fast feet exercise works wonders. You don't have to drag it on indefinitely but including this in training is a must. You are building both speed and reflexes with this exercise.

Shooters must realize how **accountable** they are to the team. If they want to play the "Starring Role" then they have to work hard at shooting practice and movement to maintain that position.

Practice taking a pass at speed, and then completing it with a leg split so that they are closer to the post. This teaches them how they can gain the advantage by **taking ground away** from the defenders, after-all a defender can't defend from anywhere other than the first grounded foot.

Shooters mustn't be afraid of "putting in". As aggressive as defenders are so too should shooters be. At all times their aggression is to be "at the ball" definitely not toward another player.

SHOOTING PRACTICE

Seven players win the game but only two can put the results up on the board. Not to practice all aspects of the game is quite simply letting the rest of the team down.

Where I'm constantly amazed is the amount of shooters who tell me they don't practice through the week other than a few shots at training! Do these players really think they are above practicing their shooting? Netball is a regulated court game that is totally dependent on these two players. If they can't get the goals in, the team loses. It's as simple as that.

No one minds if a shooter misses a goal but coaches and players do mind if the shooter does not practice goal shooting during the week.

I started netball out as a defender and was thrown into goal shooting for a game, I only managed a few goals. We lost that game dismally. I knew then that if I wanted to continue in the shooting position I had a lot of work to do. I couldn't continue to let the team down.



In the ensuing weeks and years I shot up to 200 goals most days until I could shoot accurately from anywhere in the circle. This went on for the entire time I played Netball. Most of this training time my only audience was my young son & husband, but I learnt how to shoot accurately.

IT IS HOW YOU PRACTICE NOT HOW MANY YOU SHOOT

After sometime I changed the way I trained for shooting still going to a netball court with a friend or my husband to practice.

Shoot 20/30 goals and have your friend pass the ball back always to a different position on the court. That's your warm up. Then I committed myself to a goal shooting challenge to become better under the stress of competition.

This method can be something as simple as setting a target of posting 3, 5, 10, 20, 30 goals in succession before I left the court. If the target is 10 straight goals and you miss the last shot, you have to start all over again. I can tell you some afternoons I wasn't getting home until dark.

It can be infuriating starting again after goal 29 so please don't get too unrealistic in goal setting. You should however be shooting up to at least 20 straight shots, this will help you far more than trying to reach 200 shots per day.

At that high amount your concentration, reflexes and strength will be almost gone and then all you think about is how poorly you shot.

GOAL SHOOTERS HAVE MANY VARIED STYLES

If a player shows the potential for great hand eye coordination and constantly gets her shots in then "DON'T CHANGE HER SHOOTING STYLE".

The "Australian way" of shooting is with the high arm action, giving a back spin to the ball for accurate shooting from anywhere in the goal circle. This technique has more power and strength and easier in the long term and is the ideal way to learn for those just starting out as a shooter.



But I have also seen short shooters soundly beat a defender who is much taller with a low shooting style.

Why, because she can get the goals in. It's what works for her that is important. Don't be coerced into trying to get her to change her style, you could end up with no Shooter. I've seen this happen over and over. If she's getting the goals in, why change it, or as the saying goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it".

Tip for short shooters:

If you are a short shooter facing a very tall defender, take a step back, remember, don't move your grounded foot, and then take your shot. No defender will reach now. Balance is the main requisite when executing this - it can be effective because the defender can't move into you to defend the shot. Practice balance on the step back.

TEAM WORK ALSO APPLIES TO THE TWO SHOOTERS

Greed in the goal circle is another problem I see when I umpire games. The GA gets the ball, it doesn't matter where she is she puts the ball up, regardless of whether the other shooter is clear and closer to the post or even a better shooter.

Team works applies in the circle as much as it does to get the ball to the goalers. The starring role should be all seven players not individuals.

Goal shooters must be taught to pass off to a better shooting position if they can. I might say here that I'm dead set against passing out of the circle once the ball is in there.

A ball passed out is a goal shot missed

You see this happen all the time at National level. The goalers must learn to use each other, hence the movement in and around the circle. They have to work and work hard.

Constant encouragement is needed - players like to hear when they are doing something right.

But shooters must take the responsibility to practice, practice and practice some more. There are no excuses, as your team is



dependent that you practice being a good goal shooter working the "D" and putting the shots in.

There are three main elements to winning a game of netball. Good **passing**, court **positioning** and accurate goal **shooting**. Goal shooters are obligated to practice by the very nature of their court position as GA and GS.

Enjoy your netball...

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