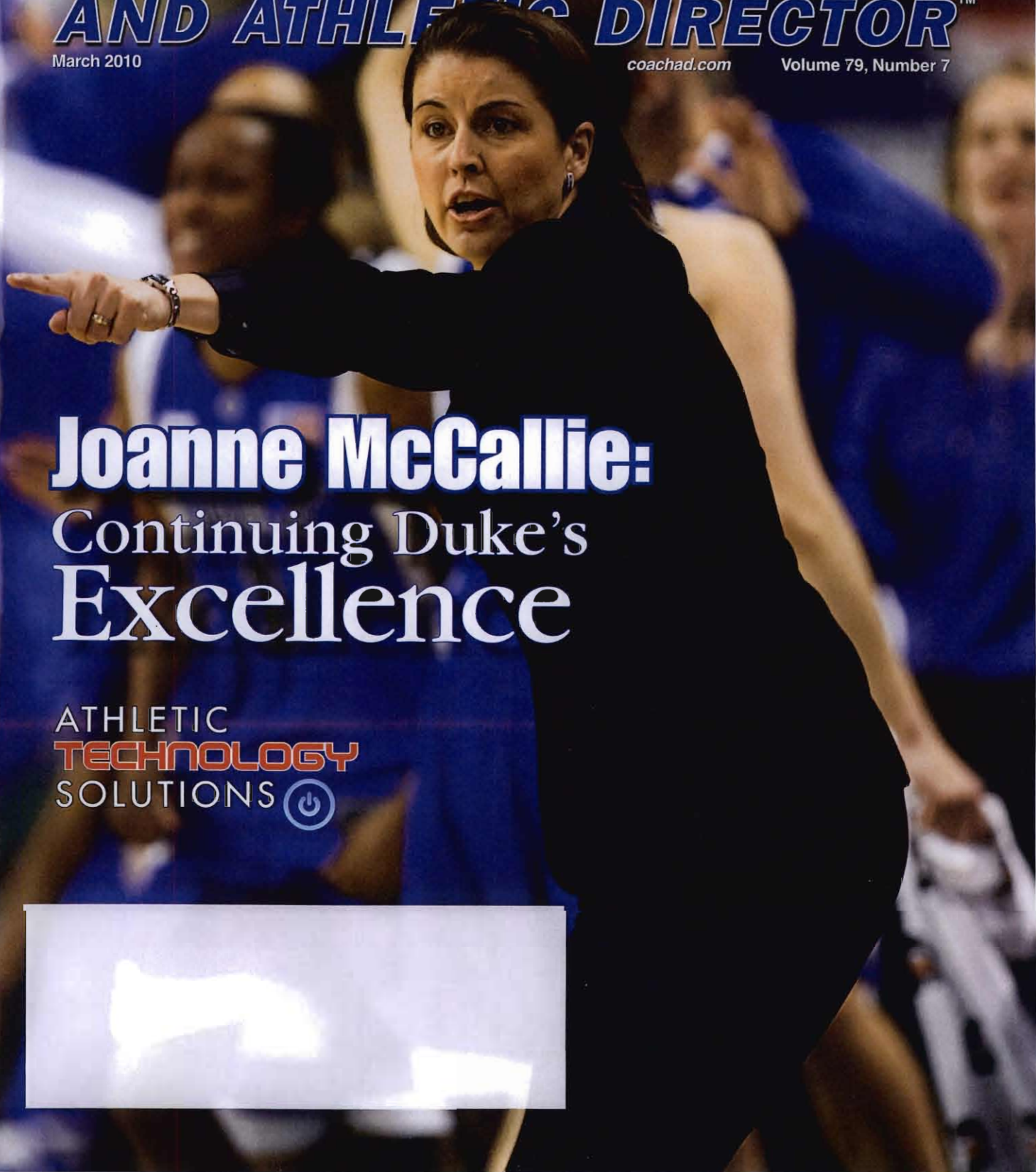


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Joanne McCallie:
Continuing Duke's
Excellence

ATHLETIC
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JOANNE McCALLIE, Head Women's Coach, Duke University.



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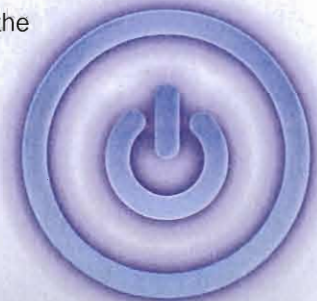
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Joanne McCallie, who has led three schools to the NCAA Tournament, drills her teams to take advantage of all fast-break situations

By CLAY KALLAM, Contributing Editor

Most coaches love to draw up plays. The Xs, Os and squiggly lines on pizza-parlor napkins are part of the fun...but the sad truth is that most baskets don't come from those bolts of offensive genius, but rather in transition, or after a play breaks down, or thanks to some other unplanned occurrence.

Joanne McCallie, one of the most successful womens college coaches in the business, recognizes this all too well, so she spends more than a little practice time preparing her team for those times when the Xs don't mark the spot, and the Os are off in the ozone.

“The strong-side elbow jumper is the money shot in a 3-on-2...”

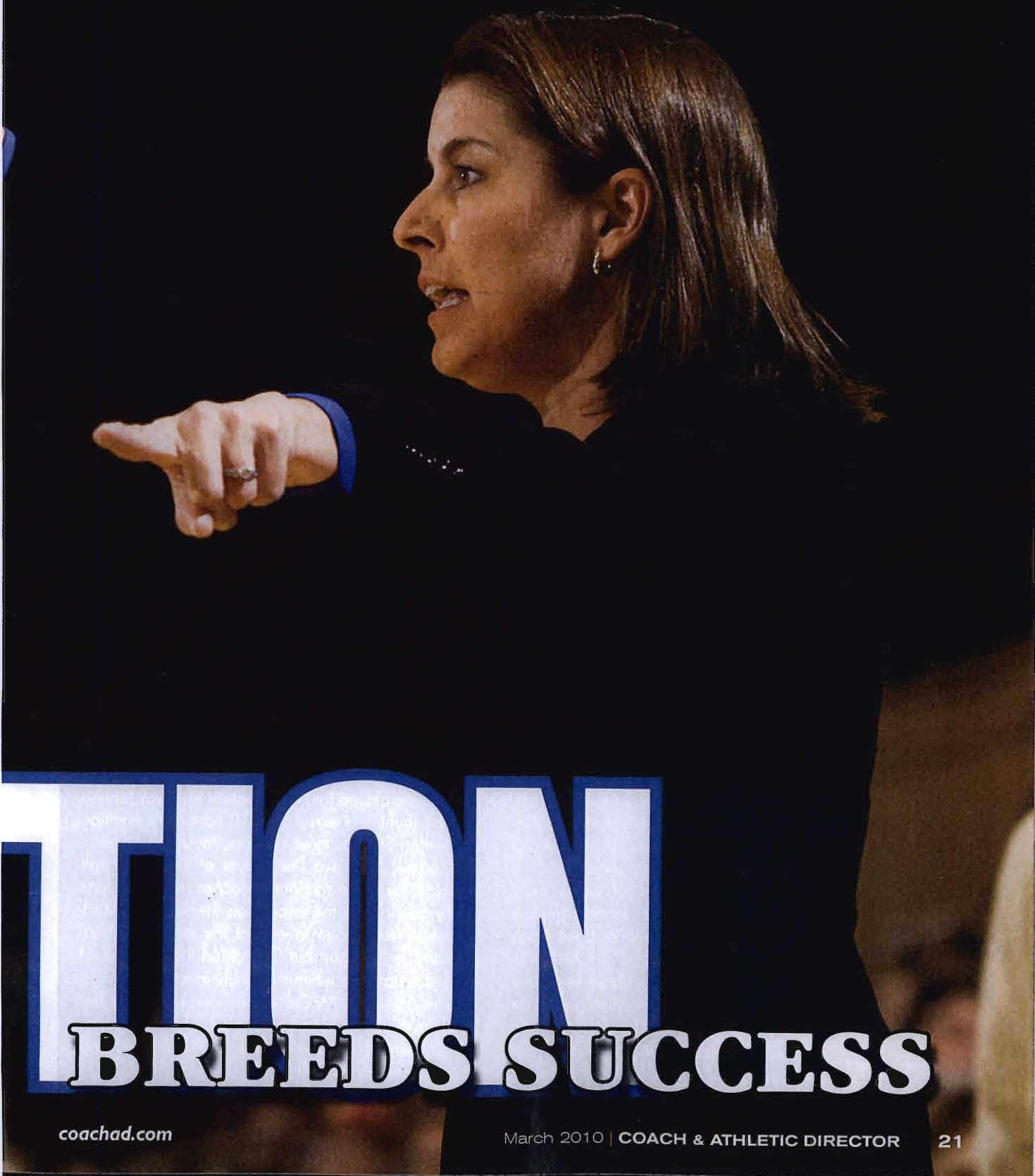
“We work with advantage situations first,” says McCallie, who's now in her third year at Duke after highly successful stays at Maine and Michigan State, “those are situations where points are there for the taking.” If a team can score every time it has an advantage in transition, it's going to win a whole lot of games — but how many teams convert those situations into points as much as the coaches would like?

Transition Takes Time

Of course, almost every coach runs a version of the 3-on-2, 2-on-1 drill, but for McCallie it's a staple for getting her transition game in tip-top shape. “I don't think teams do those types of drills enough,” she says.

For example, how many coaches really focus on the strong-side elbow jumper in a 3-on-2 situation (see sidebar)? “That's the money shot in a 3-on-2,” says McCallie, who wants her players to look ahead, pass ahead and flatten out the defense. Once that happens, the strong-side elbow is wide open for a quick return pass and a quick shot.

TRANSITION



ITION BREEDS SUCCESS

But even though McCallie is working at the highest level of the women's college game, and coaches a perennial Top 10 team, she still starts by breaking down 1-on-1 play. "The defense has to try to take away the ball handler's strong hand," she says, "and the offense needs to attack the defender's high foot."

In a 2-on-1 situation, McCallie doesn't like to hear the bounce of the ball. "Move the ball as much as possible without the dribble," she advises, "and get the defender to commit. There's nothing fancy about it."

McCallie also works on her players' ability to score in spite of contact. Defenders often just settle for a foul when they're outnumbered, but McCallie wants the and-one play. "I don't think anyone's happy without the finish," she says.

The natural progression from a 3-on-2 is to a 4-on-3 but it's a bigger step than most coaches realize. "The defenders tend to zone up," says McCallie, so Duke emphasizes strong-side cuts through the defense to

stretch the zone. "We don't want to allow one defender to guard two people," she says.

The same principles apply in 5-on-4: The defense most likely will be in a semi-zone and strong-side cuts that split the defenders will ultimately create good shots (see sidebar). And of course, the ball handler can also look to score: "Go by them if you can," says McCallie.

In addition to full-speed work, McCallie also has her team warmup extensively to work on how to handle advantage situations. "You can do some warm-up drills that get some principles in place."

Point-Guard Play

Another transition fundamental for McCallie is attacking the foul line. She wants her point guard to get the ball to the foul line when the defense is still setting up, because once there, a plethora of options open up.

JOANNE MCCALLIE: WORKING HARD AT BEING A WINNER

THOSE WHO APPRECIATE the art of program-building will marvel at Joanne McCallie, who has been consistently successful at three schools: Maine, Michigan State and now Duke.

After a 15-3 start in Durham this season (at press time), McCallie's career mark stands at 383-167 in 17+ years of coaching, including a trip to the 2005 National Championship game while at Michigan State. She was the Associated Press National Coach of the Year in 2005 and has been the conference coach of the year three times. She's guided three different teams to 13 appearances in the NCAA tournament and is only one of three D-1 head coaches to have taken three different schools to the tournament. She's also just one of four coaches who have led three different teams to at least 25 wins in a season.

"What we've managed to accomplish has never been done before," McCallie says about her move from Michigan State to Duke. "I was the first coach to leave a Final Four program

and take over another Final Four program. I guess I'm the guinea pig."

The experiment was clearly a success, as the transition to Duke was much easier than her first years at Maine (9-20) and Michigan State (10-18): The Blue Devils won 25 games and went to the Sweet 16. Much is expected of Duke this season, and so far McCallie has delivered, as the Blue Devils were ranked sixth in the nation by the Associated Press in mid-January.

McCallie has been involved with USA Basketball as well, winning international gold medals with the 2006 Under-20 team and the 2007 Under-21 team.

Nine of her former players have gone on to play professionally, including four who were first-round picks in the WNBA draft: Cindy Blodgett (Maine), Kristin Haynie (Michigan State), Liz Shimek (Michigan State) and Chante Black (Duke).

McCallie played for Northwestern (she was Joanne Palumbo then) and was All-Big 10 honorable mention as a senior. She has three children, including 15-year-old Maddie, who is a fine player at Riverside High School. (One of the sacrifices coaches make that fans usually overlook is the impact on the families: Maddie would have gone to one of the top high-school programs in Michigan but left behind the potential of winning a state title when the family moved.)

Over the years, McCallie has been known for her use of the match-up zone and a 1-2-1-1 full-court press, but her teams have always been well-balanced and strong offensively as well.



“I tell the point guard there’s a yellow blinking light at the foul line, which means they have to change speeds...”

At Duke, McCallie has a scout team for her players to work with when it comes to transition drills but the team isn’t dependent on having outside competition. “The scout team makes one pass and takes a shot,” she says; “then we box out, go down and try to score.

“We try to use one outlet so we can get everyone down the floor — it’s difficult, but the idea is to run, run, run,” she says. “We want the point guard to get to the foul line and make good decisions.”

To help out her point guards, McCallie uses a visual: “We tell the point guard there’s a yellow blinking light at the foul line, which means they have to change speeds. So many players blast through the foul line at top speed, and they make it easy for the defense.”

In game play, there are times the point guard can’t get to the foul line, and so the Blue Devils immediately go into their early offense (secondary break — see sidebar on page 25). In transition, the first post runs to the strong-side rim, and the second post trails, and out of that basic set, Duke has several different options. “We have a lot of different stuff we can run,” she says. “We have five or six called plays that roll into something else. When there’s no call, the players must read the defense.”

No Single System Necessary

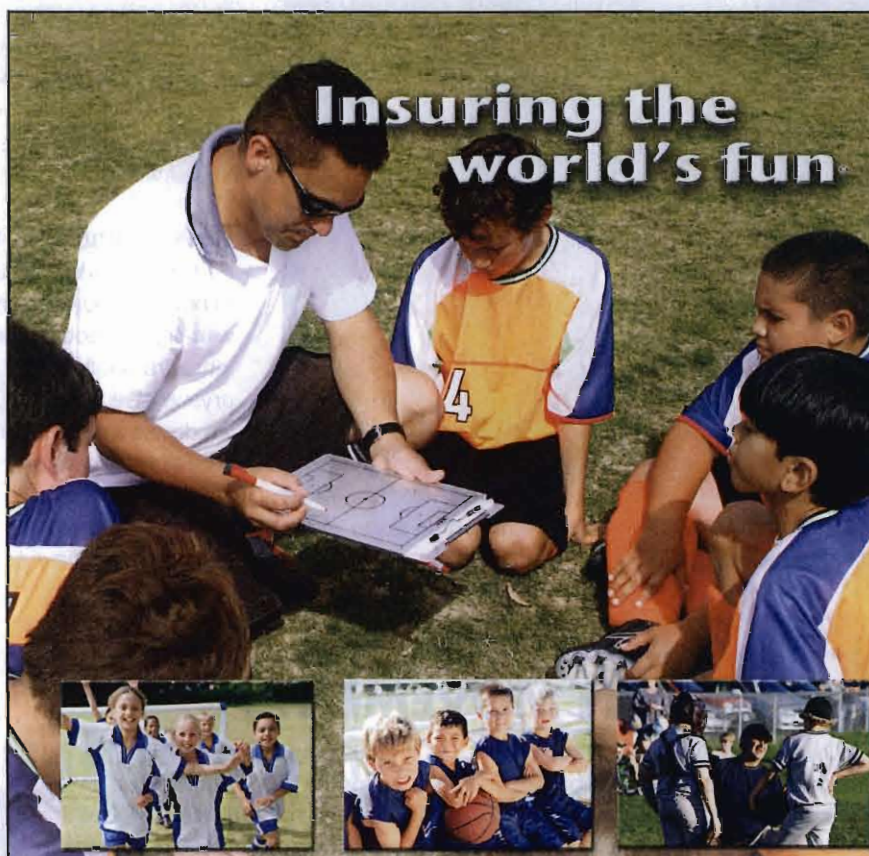
And of course, McCallie does install familiar offenses — but she’s not wedded to any particular one.

“I like them all,” she says. “I’ve run 1-4 sets, which create

on-ball screens, I’ve run high-low sets for post players, and I’ve used the triangle, though never as a base of offense. It’s mechanical and I get a little bored with it.

“But you name it, we’ve used it.”

Why not go with a set system? “Each team is different,” says McCallie, who made adjustments when she came to Duke from Michigan State. “It doesn’t matter how good the players are, they still have to learn. When you’re new to a program, you have to



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JOANNE MCCALLIE STRESSES the transition game to all of her players.

determine how much they can deal with. Some teams can do very little.

"We have very smart teams," says McCallie, which is expected at a highly rated academic school like Duke, and she emphasizes possession. "Valuing the ball is very, very important. Our goal is to have 24 or 25 assists to 12 turnovers."

To that end, the Blue Devils spend five to eight minutes every day working on ball handling. "I'm not sure there's enough ball handling done during practice," she says.

But it doesn't matter how smart a team is, or how well the players execute, if the players can't put the ball in the basket. "Good players make shots," says McCallie. "Lindsay Bowen (an all-American for McCallie at Michigan State) made plays look great."

Developing Shooters

It also takes a great deal of time, effort and patience to build a good jump shooter. Sure, some players are born with great shooting ability but everyone benefits from taking extra shots in the gym or at the playground after everyone else has gone home for the day. "In the summer, we do a tremendous amount of shooting," McCallie says. "Our players have to teach shooting at our summer camp, which is very valuable, but players don't shoot enough at any level — there's a huge issue in today's game of sweat equity. Players have to put the time in.

3-ON-2 & 5-ON-4 TRANSITION MOVEMENTS

JOANNE MCCALLIE, IN her third season as the Duke womens basketball head coach, stresses that players understand and comprehend the basic movements to be successful in the transition game. McCallie constantly drills her players on how to move well in 3-on-2 and 5-on-4 situations.

es that the post player come to the elbow for an open jump shot. In the example, 1 dribbles toward the corner, which forces 2 to clear through the lane to the opposite side. 3 pops to the high post (elbow) and 1 makes the pass for an open jumper.

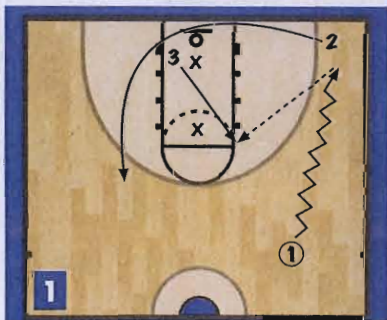


DIAGRAM 1: 3-On-2. With a 3-on-2 advantage, McCallie stresses

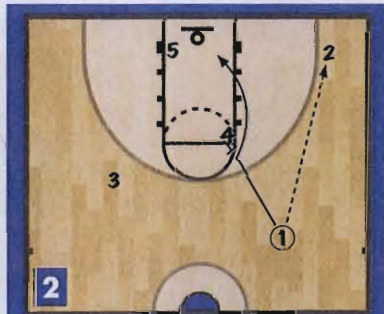


DIAGRAM 2: 5-On-4 (A). When faced with a 5-on-4 advantage, McCallie stresses strong-side cuts that

split defenders. In this example, 1 passes to 2 in the corner, then runs off a screen from 4. 1 cuts hard to the ball-side block.



DIAGRAM 3: 5-On-4 (B). If a pass can't be made to 1, 1 clears to the other side of the floor on a screen from 5. 3 shifts to the top of the set. 4 leaves the high post to screen for 2. 2 uses the screen, dribbles to toward the elbow and has several options, including driving to the rim and scoring, which is McCallie's first choice.

JOANNE McCALLIE HAS been successful in getting the most out of her players.

McCallie is finding that players do not have the fortitude, or the time, today to take those extra jump shots when no one is watching. "I think shooting is a lost art. Players used to shoot a thousand shots a day," says McCallie, "but now they're playing on club teams and not shooting in the driveway." And what happens is that the players who focus on getting to the rim at the high school and club level discover they need a jumper in college – and it's hard to develop one that late.

"Players don't shoot well, and they wonder why their shots aren't going in," says McCallie, who also thinks players need to set their shooting goals high. "If they really want to shoot the ball well, they can't be satisfied if the ball rattles the rim. They need to snap the net."

McCallie uses basic shooting drills during the sea-

"Shooting is a lost art. Players used to shoot a thousand shots a day..."

son, including the 5-Spot Drill, which has players taking five shots from five determined spots on the court, and also the 40-40 drill, which has partners each taking 40 shots from the paint, from mid-range and from outside the arc.

"It would be great to do more," she says, because it doesn't matter whether it's an advantage situation, early offense or a set play: If the ball doesn't go into the basket, it's not what the coaches had in mind back at the pizza parlor. **CAD**

SECONDARY BREAK TO 4-OUT

WHEN JOANNE MCCALLIE'S point guard can't get to the foul-line area in transition, the coach instructs her Duke team to get into its secondary break, which leads into a 4-out set.

the floor, which sends to through the lane and curling back toward the top of the set. 2 runs around 5 (who is cutting through the lane) and off 4 (who is positioned at the free-throw line).

3 on the opposite wing. 4 comes across to set a screen for 1. 1 uses the screen to move to the ball-side post.

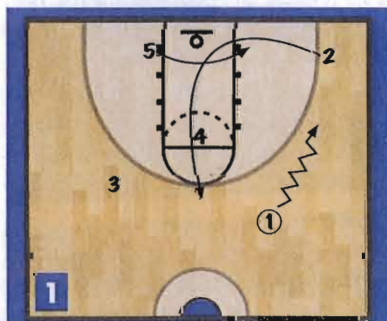


DIAGRAM 1: Secondary Break (A). The secondary break begins with 1 dribbling to the right side of

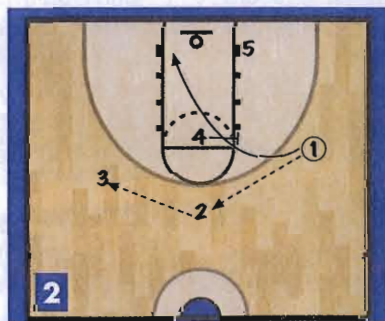


DIAGRAM 2: Secondary Break (B). 1 begins ball reversal by passing to 2, who then passes to

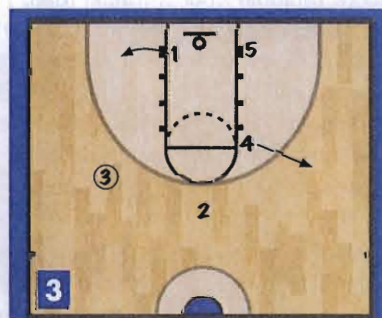


DIAGRAM 3: Secondary Break (C). If a pass from 3 to 1 cannot be made, 1 pops to the corner and 4 moves out to the wing so Duke now is in a 4-out set.