

## EXTENDED DEFENCE

Extended defence is a generic term applied to both zone and man-to-man defences played outside the normal shooting range of the offensive team. You may also hear them referred to as pressing defences or "presses". Extended Zones & Extended Man-to-Man defences use the same principles that apply when playing defence close to your basket.

Coaches generally refer to extended defences as being  $\frac{1}{2}$  -court,  $\frac{3}{4}$  -court or full-court, indicating the area in which the defence will be set up. The skill level of the opposition, the defensive skill level of your players and the intended purpose of the "press" will determine the area over which the defence is 'extended'.

Where teams are highly skilled or both equally skilled, extended defences are seldom used, because when "presses" fail, the offensive team will score easily. This is the reason why it is unusual to see extended defence at the NBA, NHL and AHA level in either Men's or Women's competition.

When extended defences are used at this level it is used as a tactical tool, a surprise or shock weapon, not as a strategic tool. In other words, extended defence may be played for short bursts, not the whole match. The defence will generally be keyed by pre-determined events, eg. after you score, after free throws, etc.

Whilst there are good reasons for playing extended defences, you should never lose sight of the primary defensive objective: 5 players working together to stop your opponents from scoring. When using 'presses' you have to assess the risk (an easy score if it fails) against the possible benefits.

Here are some tactical uses of extended defence:

- Keep the ball out of the hands of the best ball-handler
- Create turnovers through ball handling errors.
- Make pass interceptions through passing errors.
- Change the match tempo.
- Cause 8 second backcourt violations.
- Give offensive team less time to execute offence.
- Cause 24 second clock violations.

When playing extended defence players should still be maintaining good stance and proper footwork (ie: shuffling/sliding) and utilizing techniques such as containment and channeling.

**IF YOUR PLAYERS ARE RUNNING MORE THAN THEY ARE SHUFFLING/SLIDING THEN YOU AREN'T REALLY PLAYING DEFENCE AT ALL.**

When teaching defence to your players try to remember this truism:

**YOU CAN'T EXTEND WHAT YOU DON'T HAVE.**

In other words, if you can't defend near the basket, don't extend your defence.