White & Black Press

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Philosophy Behind Our Press

1. The press is a great equalizer (sometimes we can play and beat teams with more talent and more size because of our pressing style).

2. It’s great for recruiting because players love to play this way. In addition, the fans/alumni/media all love this style, as evident in our attendance the last several years.

3. Playing time. It is very hard to keep 13 players happy. When you press, it forces you to utilize more players and allow them to contribute, which helps morale.

4. Mindset. It gives you confidence and an aggressive, never quit mentality. When you press you are never out of the game. You are coming out and acting, rather than reacting and the press gives you the mindset of swinging first and never backing down.

5. Preparation and scouting. The press forces our kids to be in great shape and play hard with a high level of intensity. Because of this, our pressing team becomes extremely difficult to prepare for, simulate and ultimately play against us. Unless you practice and play this way every day, you may be in for a difficult time.

6. Pressing is also great for tournament basketball because of matchups and preparation time.

Indicators to Measure the Success of Our Press

1. **To be a successful pressing team, a team must be committed to it.** We work on our press everyday for 15-20 minutes in both the full and half courts. In the preseason we do agility slides tailored for our press. We do shooting drills in practice based on where we might be in our press. We will also film our pressure segments in practice and do film edits of game footage teaching our press so our players will not only hear it verbally, but also see it visually. In addition, we chart everything we can in practice concerning our press.

2. **Our Deflection Chart.** It measures intensity.

   Filled in black circle = tipped ball
   T = back tip
   S = steal
   B = blocked shot
   R = recovery
We have a 20+ deflections goal for halftime and 40+ goal for the game. When we get 40+ deflections and shoot 40% or over for the game, we have won 95% of our games.

3. **The Effects of Our Pressure**
   - Spurtability – allows us to go on quick runs, which could be the difference in the game.
   - Momentum – the press can help game momentum, change momentum and regain momentum if we are not being aggressive enough.
   - Opponents Decisions – forces teams to play on the fly very quickly, which leads to poor shot selection, turnovers, getting out of rhythm and getting out of sync. Makes teams play faster than they are comfortable with.
   - It mentally and physically wears you down. The advantage goes to the pressing team.
   - The press dictates tempo and forces people to play fast.

4. **Stats of the Press**
   - It helps to get steals. Our goal is 11 steals/game. We have led the league 4 straight years in steals.
   - It causes more turnovers. We led the league in forced turnovers 4 years in a row. Our goal is to force at least 14 turnovers/game.
   - Positive results of those 2 categories were, we often led the league in FG% because the steals and turnovers create easy baskets.
   - Our team FG% defensively is very good because we get into teams legs and wear them down. The opposing team will take quick, confused and off-balance shots.
   - We lead the league in scoring (78.9 ppg) because we get a lot of offense from our defense. Even on nights when we are shooting a low % our press allows us to put points on the board.

**White & Black Press**

Our two main presses are our White and Black Press. These are both match-up, man-to-man presses with some zone principles. We like to use our presses on made FG’s, made FT’s and dead ball situations. In some cases, side out of bounds.

We love to change pressure out of time-outs and sometimes even off missed FT’s. We may pick our pressure based upon the type of score (ex. FT/2/3) or depending on who scores.

The **White Press** is a match-up press out of a 1-2-1-1 type alignment in which we have a man on the ball, preferably a forward, and we are not face guarding. In our White Press, we like to designate certain areas on the floor to certain players.

   - We like to have our 4 man on the ball because he is normally the most skilled and athletic forward.
   - We like to have our 2 and 3 up at the elbow because they are normally the longest/quickest and most athletic defenders for us.
   - We like to have our 1 man ballside, ½ court because he is normally the quickest and best anticipator on the floor.
   - And we have our 5 man weakside ½ court ready to go deep and long as our protector.
You must communicate and match up with the closest guy in your area. You will point and trade off and communicate. Our goal is to force a trap or force an out of control speed dribble. We will run at a speed dribbler. We want to keep the ball out of the middle of the floor, we want to push it to the sideline and trap it. Our trap rules are 2 on the ball, big/tight/together, 2 in the lanes. Our anticipation guys are ready to shoot the gaps for deflections and steals, you cannot be locked on your guy. We have 1 protector whose main job is to protect the lane and the rim. **Our #1 rule in the press and traps is to not foul because fouling negates hustle.** Make the other team make a mistake.

**The Black Press**

The Black Press has the same rules as the White Press except for it is a full denial press with **no man on the ball** and we are face guarding.

The man who is off the ball is a centerfielder. He is the eyes of the press.

The centerfielder will be determined by who is taking the ball out.

In the Black Press, we are matched up with our man in an all-out face guard denial in which we will switch all screens and try not to let the ball inbounds.

Once the ball is entered, the Black Press and the White Press have the same rules. We especially do not want to get beat over the top long because we have a centerfielder back protecting an over the top pass.

**Conversion From Full to Half**

- The press is never over. You must sprint up from behind, run through lanes trying to get backtips/deflections/steals or grab a quick rebound.
- Once you get to the front court you are trying to match up the best you can with a man.
- Even though we are a pressing team we care a lot about our ½ court defense.
- We work on contesting shots, close-outs and sound fundamental ½ court defensive principles just as much as we work on our press.

**Scouting & Game Adjustments with the Press**

- We will adjust our press according to scouting of the opponent.
- We can take our man off the inbounder and double team the point guard.
- We will purposely run at a great ball handler and trap him in order to get the ball out of his hands.
- If the opposing team inbounds the ball with one of their forwards or big men, we may take our man off the ball and allow the forward to get the ball back after the inbounds pass and then force him to make decisions by shutting out and totally denying the ball away from the other four players on his team.
- We will designate one player on the opposing team who we are completely shutting out. It will be the sole responsibility for 1 member on our team to make sure that designated player does not receive the ball.

- We may also adjust our press according to what we see in scouting another team and what they use for a press breaker. We may change our alignment if we see another team uses a 1-4, 1-3-1, or 2-1-2 press breaker.

- Finally, we want to take away all advance passes. We will allow a retreating or parallel pass, but we never want to give up an advancing pass. We love when a team passes the ball through the air as it gives us an opportunity for a steal and conversion.

**Coach’s Final Thoughts**

1. When you press you have to be prepared to give something up. But understand you are getting something in return.

2. Do you want to press aggressively or conservatively?

3. It is a myth that you cannot press with slow non-athletic players. The key is positioning, anticipation and intelligence.

4. Because we are a pressing team, we know going into every game that is the way we are going to play regardless of the opponent and regardless of the opponents’ strengths. We are sure at some point of the game our press will have an effect on the other team. Example: Games take on a personalities sometimes. The press may not be a factor early on, but our kids know we are going to stay with it. Usually from the 14 to 10 minute mark is when we would almost always make our run.

5. At one point last season the longest winning streaks in the country were:

   University of Louisville (17 games)
   Manhattan College (15 games)
   University of Florida (14 games)

   There is a direct correlation between winning streaks and style of play.

6. You must understand it takes great conditioning and sacrifice to play this style of play.