

Lesson Plan #22

Objective of the week: The Fake Hitter

This week's objective is one of the most efficient attacking strategies and is used by all the teams both at the highest and the lowest levels because it's very simple and also really effective.

As you may know, the designation can be done by any player whether he hits or not. The fake hitter strategy consists in having the player making the designation, make a feint and then getting under the ball and have another player stand up and hit the ball.

Technical key points:

In order to produce the proper results make sure that you take the time to mention the following points to your players.

The signal:

In order to be successful in performing the fake hitter strategy, the players of a same team must find a code or a signal that will confirm to the players under the ball that the player doing the designation is not going to hit and will get under instead. This code or signal can be done in advance or just before the hit comes. For example a team that wishes to perform the fake hitter will call to each other before the play starts a word that will confirm to everyone of the team that a fake hitter is on the way. An example would be to have the player doing the designation repeating the colour twice as he completes it: "Omnikin black black".

The positioning:

In order to score points using this strategy, the positioning is important. In fact the hit made by the player executing the fake hitter must have a trajectory that is opposite or a least different than the one the player doing the designation would have



taken. It is logical; the teams in defense are preparing to receive the ball according to where the designating player is. If the fake hitter sends the ball in the same direction, there won't be any surprise. According to the positioning in the image, the player with the * symbol will be the one hitting the ball. Also mention that the fake hitter is not effective when starting (for example after dropping the ball) from a corner.

The speed of execution:

The execution speed is important in order to really surprise the teams in defense. Of course the first times your players will execute this strategy, they will be slow and the teams in defense might have the time to react. The quicker the execution, the bigger the surprise and the higher are the chances of scoring points.

Modified games:

In order to encourage your participants to use the skill during game time, you can proceed with two different modified ways of playing the sport.

The **first** one would be to give a bonus point to a team each time they use the fake hitter whether they score or not. At this moment confusion may appear because every player under the ball will want to hit it. In order to solve this issue, you can make pairs of players. For example Mike, every time you will be the designating player, Sophie you will be hitting the ball at his place. Jonathan will do the same with Andy and vice versa.

After playing that way for a couple of minutes, you can then put more emphasis on one of the technical key points such as the direction of the hit or the speed of execution. If the fake hitter does not hit the ball in the proper direction or takes too much time to execute the hit they won't get their bonus point.

By playing this way, the team that executes this skill the most will get more points and will be more involved in the game than the other teams. If you are using this game, to avoid always having the same team attacked over and over, you must make sure that the teams are balanced and you could reset the score every two minutes.



This modified game is more efficient for younger participants (elementary schools).

For the **second** modified game you will request of your participants that they use the fake hitter on every play except if they are stuck in the corner. If they don't use the fake hitter the team will get a fault for illegal offense. You could also play using the following rule: the player doing the designation can't hit.

At first your players will be slow and not so convinced that this is a good strategy as the teams in defense will catch most of the hits. It will be important when making the transition to the normal play to encourage and emphasize a proper execution of it. You could, for example, use the first modified game after using this one. The better they will become in performing it, the better the results will be during the game. This is a very good way of working on team spirit and cooperation.

In order to make the play more efficient, make sure that your teams are balanced.

This modified game is more efficient for older participants (middle and high schools).

REMINDER: You should not use modified games for the entire playing time. You should use this modified rule for a maximum of 10 minutes if your activity lasts one hour.



Game of the week

Shepherd's Pie Tag

This game requires that you divide your players into three teams. The coach will be "It" and will chase the players and try to touch them with the ball. Once they have been touched by the ball, they have to go to the circle in the middle of the gym and yield which ingredient they are (beef, corn or potato). The blue players will be the corn, the grey the potatoes and the black the beef. In order to be freed and leave the circle the players must assemble a Shepherd's pie. To do so a player of each team (each ingredient) has to find a player of each other team, hold hands and cry out "Shepherd's pie" to be freed.

This game emphasizes the team concept.

Thank you very much for your interest in the sport, please contact us for any question.

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