

WATER POLO

THINKING OFFENSE: INDIVIDUAL

What are the duties of a good attacker?

- Protect the possession
- Forward the ball
- Create high probability fast break shooting opportunities
- Transition into an organized front court offense when the fast break shot is not available
- Create high percentage shot opportunities for the team
- Execute the team's overall offensive strategies

How does driving create scoring opportunities for the team ?

The most obvious way is for a driver to get open for a shot, but driving creates other opportunities, too. A driver may draw an exclusionary foul when a panicked defender swims on the driver's back. A driver who beats his defender may also draw another player's defender away and create a possibility for his teammate. Driving creates motion that can confuse the defense.

What are some general field position guidelines for an attacker?

An attacker must look for field position where they will have at least two possibilities if they receive the ball - preferably shooting or making an entry pass to the hole set. The team must look to give the ball at least two outlets so the ball doesn't get stuck while the shot clock is running. An attacker needs to watch the field and have a plan before the ball comes to him so he can react quickly.

What is a pick and how does it create scoring opportunities for the team?

A pick is when two attackers work together to get one of them free. Usually, one attacker will swim up to the other attacker's defender and block him. At least one of the players will be free until the defense recovers. Often, a pick will force the defenders to switch players so using a pick can be a tool to force a mismatch and the consequential opportunities that stem from that.

How does the simple act of paying attention give a player an edge on their defender?

An attacker that reacts instantly to the ref's whistle will beat a defender who is still assessing the situation. An attacker who sees that their defender is looking away and drives will beat him. An attacker who recognizes his specific advantages over his defender can capitalize on them.

What elements of their game must each player know in order to play effective offense?

Identify your offensive strengths. Are you quick? Wily? Strong? Work your strengths. Identify your weaknesses and don't allow them to be used against you. A quick driver may be immobilized by a guard that has a strong grip. Adapt your individual game to the situation. Know your effective passing and shooting ranges. Water polo is a team sport so it is helpful to know your teammates' strengths, weaknesses and preferences as well so you can create opportunities for them. If you have a teammate who is a great shooter, look to create shooting opportunities for him.

IT'S OKAY TO PLAY IN THE WATER