1-on-1 Close Out

If you don't have great defensive close outs, it doesn't matter how great your help defense is when you are at a constant disadvantage, the offense is going to score a lot.

And think about this, you can have anywhere between 100 to 250 close outs per game. Multiply that over the course of a season, you might have 2,000 to 10,000 close outs per season!!

Poor close outs can destroy your defense which will lead to the offense scoring more points against you. In order to have a great defense night in and night out, you must be able to defend the basketball in a one on one setting.

This is a fast-paced drill to practice in order to get better at closing out, contest shots, and prevent dribble penetration. It forces defenders to learn how to defend in a game-like environment. There is nothing better than improving on ball defense by putting the defensive player out on an island and forcing the defender to stop the player one on one.

**Setup:**

* Defense, X1 and X2 start under the basket. Each player has a basketball.
* The two offensive players are positioned on the wings.

**Instructions:**

Diagram, engineering drawing

Description automatically generated

X2 starts the drill with a pass to 2 on the wing. Defender X2 follows the pass with a hard close out.

The Defender's job is keep the ball out of the house (paint area) and force a contested jump shot, then block out and hunt the rebound.

Progression 1: The offense is not allowed to go "live" until the defender closes out and gives them a "touch" of the hand. After one repetition, you can go to the next progression.

Progression 2: The offense goes "live" immediately on the catch.

**Points of Emphasis:**

* **Sprint To Eliminate Offensive Advantage** - Defensive players should sprint on the close outs. The quicker you can contest a shot and immediately get into a balanced position to eliminate dribble penetration, the less of an advantage the offense will have.
* **Hands Up** - Depending on your preference, either have one hand or two hands up to contest the shot and immediate entry passes from the offensive player.
* **Position Appropriately** - Whether you believe in getting the defender's butt to the basket or forcing the offensive player in a particular direction, be sure to position yourself appropriately. Bad positioning will create easy driving opportunities for the offense.
* **Practice Good Offensive Habits** - Make sure we emphasis the little things in every drill. Is the offense coming forward to catch the pass? Or are we being lazy, standing still waiting on the pass? Just because the focus of a drill is defensive, don't let little things slide with the offensive players. If you let little things slide in practice, you'll end up getting beat by little things in games.

**Variations:**

**Loser Stays On Defense** - If the offense scores, the defender must stay on defense until they get a stop. You can rotate the offensive player each repetition.

**Add Passer** - So the defender doesn't know when the pass is going to occur, you can have the coach, manager, or other players pass. This will improve anticipatory skills and reaction speed for the defender as it emulates what will happen during a game.

**Vary The Passing Position** - You can also pass from different positions on the floor to close out from different angles and positions like you would during a game. You can also have coaches, managers, or other players act as passers.

**Time Clock / Limited Dribbling** - You can also have dribble limits and time clocks, so the offense also has to practice good offensive habits.

**Coaching Tips:**

* **Alternate Sides** - Go side to side for efficiency. When one pair is running live, another pair should be ready to go on the other side.
* **Make Drills Competitive** - Make the drills competitive by having players keep score. Create accountability.