



Guidance for Keeping Games Competitive

SOMA Hoops makes every effort to create balanced teams with the hope that every game played is evenly matched. The reality is that we will always have some games that are not evenly matched for a variety of reasons including but not limited to accuracy of evaluations, attendance, and injuries. In those instances, we ask that coaches use the tips below to keep the games competitive and enjoyable for all involved.

- 1. Adjust your sub rotation so that your most skilled players do not get extra rotations (if less than 10 players present).**
 - a. Take the opportunity to set lineups that allow for players that don't normally lead on the court to be the "leader" for that sub rotation. (i.e. sit your 2-3 most skilled players at the same time if possible)
- 2. Eliminate stealing from the opposing team ball handler.**
 - a. Talk to your team about defensive positioning and using their feet to stay in front of their opponents without using their hands to swipe at or steal the ball.
- 3. Assign players that don't normally handle the ball as much to play point guard (bring the ball up the court).**
 - a. Allow additional touches for players that don't normally dominate the ball during highly competitive games.
 - b. Additionally, assign your normal ball handlers to play in the post and focus on rebounding and/or setting screens.
- 4. Switch up defensive matchups/assignments.**
 - a. Similar to assigning a different point guard, switch up who your players are covering on defense so that your best defender(s) are not covering the opposing team's best offensive player(s).
 - b. Challenge your smallest player to cover their tallest player and vice versa. Giving players the chance to play "out of position" will help their overall development while giving your opponents a better opportunity for success on offense.
- 5. Set a goal for your team that every player scores.**
 - a. Do not shout out "Only Johnny can shoot. Pass it to Johnny"
 - b. Do talk to your team before the period and encourage them to try to find ways to help players that have not scored get a chance to make a basket. Things like: setting screens for them (on ball and off ball), give and go passes, and generally looking for them every time down court are great ways for them to get additional opportunities to score without making it completely apparent to everyone in the gym.
- 6. Use a timeout to reinforce any of the strategies listed above if your players are not following instructions.**
 - a. Sometimes the quick break between periods is not enough for every player to completely understand your instructions. Do not hesitate to take a timeout to clarify exactly what you are asking them to do. Your opponents will likely appreciate the break in play as well.