Simone Pianigiani was 18 years old when he first started coaching the Montepaschi Siena (Italy) youth teams. From 1995 to 2006, he was assistant coach of the men's team and the coordinator of the youth teams. He won five Italian titles with youth teams. As assistant coach, his team won the 2002 FIBA Saporta Cup and the 2004 Italian title. Since 2006, he has been the Montepaschi Siena head coach. In his first season, his team won the Italian title and he was named the "Serie A Coach of the Year." He also won the 2007-08 Italian Supercup.

Luca Banchi began coaching the Don Bosco Livorno youth team in 1995, winning three consecutive Italian Junior titles. Then he coached the Livorno and Trieste Serie A teams. He also coached the Italian men's national B team, winning the bronze medal at the 2001 Mediterranean Games. Since 2006, he has been the assistant coach of Montepaschi Siena, a team that won the 2006-07 Serie A Italian title.

In our 2006-07 season, we decided to create a 1-4 offense against a man-to-man, a set that could fit our personnel. We did not have dominating big men, but dynamic players in the paint. In addition, our perimeter players could easily switch their roles, going from point guard, shooting guard, and small forward. This was also the offense that could quickly solve scoring problems or bad ball circulation. That can be effective against zone and match-up defenses, too. This offense (we called it "Horn") had different entries, depending on what the defense allowed our guards and on what we wanted to create immediately as a threat to the opponent's defense. The point guard 1 begins dribbling to one side of the court, starting the offensive play. He tries to make a back-door cut in order to make the defense work and, in case of not receiving the ball, to steal the position in the low post (diagr. 1). Then, the big man 4, who is set on the elbow on the ball side, sets a vertical screen for 2, who can cut inside, outside, or pop out away, depending on the defender’s position (diagr. 2).

The offense can also begin with an entry pass to the wing and, with 1 cutting, using the blind screen of the high post player 4 (diagr. 3). It can also begin with a pass-and-follow the pass and then a screen between the perimeter player and the post (diagr. 4). As the ball is passed from the top of the key to the weak side, from 1 to 2, a vertical screen is made between 5 and 3 to open the lane. The screened player, 3, must go to the top of the key, and receive the ball for a jump shot or a drive to the hoop. He can also kick the ball out (diagr. 5). After the ball is reversed to the other side of the court, 1, cutting in the lane, receives a staggered screen by 4 and 5 and goes to the other corner to receive the ball from 3 (diagr. 6). 3 can also swing the ball to the weak side to 2, who has received a flare screen from 4 (diagr. 7).

At the end of the offense, we always try to create a side pick-and-roll coming from the weak side, between 4 and 1, if we decide to give the ball to the shooter coming off the corner (diagr. 8). A side screen off the strong side between 2 and 4 can also be made (diagr. 9).

**BUILDING THE OFFENSE**

For building this basic offense, we divide all moves and options in order to see all the geometric solutions, making every option automatic for our players when they face every defensive adjustments.

**BALL SIDE**

Three against zero: The point guard, 1, dribbling to one side of the court, passes the ball to the cutter, 2, who is going back door 2, alternatively, will drive to the hoop (diagr. 10) or he will pass the ball to the post player 5, who will cut in the opposite direction of Zs drive. He is guarded by an assistant coach (diagr. 11). If, after attempting the cut, and 2 doesn’t receive the ball, he will try to get the best low-post position to receive the ball and play one-on-one (diagr. 12) or pass inside the lane to 5 (diagr. 13). The high-post player, 5, will move now in order to set a screen against the guard’s defender. The guard must be aware of the high-post player’s position and move. He must decide if he’s going to use option: A) use the screen passing over; option B) passing under; or option C) popping back to the same corner (diagr. 14).

**ENTRY PASS**

1, the point guard, must decide if it’s better to cut by using the post’s 5 blind screen to go in the low post (option A); or if it’s better to let 5 receive the ball (option B) (diagr. 15); or if it’s better to go back to the top of the key, if he cannot receive the ball in the low post (diagr. 16). If 1 makes a pass-and-follow play for a hand-off pass, 2 will decide how to use 5’s...
screen (diagr. 17), or if he will pick for 5, allowing him to receive a pass in the low post (diagr. 18).

**THREE-ON-ZERO WITH A COACH OR TEAMMATE**

After reversing the ball to the coach or a teammate on other side of the court, 5 will screen first for 1, who cuts along the baseline (option A), and then for 2 (option B), who can curl, make a back-door, or screen-the-screener (diagr. 19). While screening on the ball in the final part of the offensive play, we need to take care about the execution, timing, and spacing to react correctly to the defensive adjustments. The defense could double-team (diagr. 20), switch (diagr. 21), or jam in the lane (diagr. 22). The offensive abilities of the posts and power forwards convinced us to look for rolls to the basket rather than cuts to the perimeter. This way, we can “split” the screens and avoid any possible defensive adjustment (diagr. 23). If 1 chooses...
to cut on the blind screen of 5 (diagr. 24), the other offensive players will adapt their positions, creating a sort of “screens’ box” set (diagr. 25). They must then decide if they are going to use the lateral pick-and-roll or a new screen on the ball (diagr. 26 and 27).

**WEAK SIDE**

We take care of the vertical screen on the weak side to change our offensive side and use our guards’ skills to attack the basket. The shooter sets the screen by opening the court, faking to move to the corner, forcing his defender to follow him on the screen, which is set at a 45-degree angle. This particular screen will allow the player to attack the lane’s elbow as the first option, or, if he doesn’t get the ball, he then goes out to the three-point line (diagr. 28). If the defender tries to stop the exit with a body-check, the picker must change the screen’s angle, making it “flat.” The screened player will receive the ball out of the three-point line, rather than on a cut inside the lane (diagr. 29). The following screen must be set with both feet inside the lane. The screener will decide if he should cut to the opposite elbow in a pick-and-roll action, or move away from the ball, waiting to take advantage of an eventual defensive help or rotation (diagr. 30).

**FOUR-ON-ZERO**

It’s possible to run this drill in two ways: with three guards and a big man, or with two guards and two big men. This drill allows us to coordinate the moves of several players at the same time, reducing their own spaces so they can better understand how to collaborate with each other and which adjustments to make, especially in the last seconds of an offensive possession (diagr. 31, 32, 33, 34 and 35).

Each one of these collaborations will be tried against the defense because once the players have learned the automatic moves, it is necessary that they be able to develop different solutions based on the reactions of the defenders. As we said on the introduction, this offensive set, once improved upon thanks to daily work in practice sessions, should also be effective even against special zones, using both screens and the ability to attack the basket with drives and cuts, while always respecting spacing and teammates’ roles.