

Offense Strategy

If you're familiar with other plays in basketball, field hockey, soccer or men's lacrosse, see if they'll translate on the lacrosse field.

Trailer

When an attacker has possession of the ball and is running it downfield, another attack player follows right behind him -- he's the "trailer." Not only is the defense confused because the two players are so close together, but also this opens up several options:

1. Pass it off. If the first player becomes crowded with defensemen, she can shovel it to the trailer behind her. The trailer should be sure, however, to avoid running into the same traffic that the first player encountered. The first player can help her avoid this by providing pick-like protection. Or the trailer can change the pace by pulling out from the fan and giving her teammates time to set up and spread out.
2. Do a give and go. The first player can dump it off to the trailer, then sprint ahead to the goal for a pass when the defense begins to cover the trailer.
3. Quick stick variation. The first player passes to the trailer right before the goal and the trailer shoots. If the first player fades right, then the trailer shoots left and vice versa. Be aware of the defense players you may be shooting into. You may be awarded a blocking the shooting space call, but at the expense of injuring a player.

Stack

This is a play that I've only tried a few times in lacrosse, but have used the same principle many times in basketball. The first home keeps the ball behind the goal and calls "stack." The attack players (usually the other two homes and the center) make a tight line facing the goal at the top of the fan and when the home calls "break," each player quickly breaks away in a different direction. The second home at the front of the stack may sprint toward goal, the third home could break left, and the center, break right. In the middle of all this, a wing sprints diagonally across the goal.

The intent here is to confuse the defense and force them to bunch up. Hopefully, the defense will be tripping over themselves in the fan and the defense wing will be so busy looking at the formation, your attack wing can make a clean break for the goal. In addition, opportunities for "three seconds" or "blocking the shooting space" calls emerge.

However, this play can also result in EVERYONE bunching up, including the offense, so the first home should make sure her pass is secure. If a break away happens here, half of your team could be caught in the fan.

First Home: The defense should be playing man-to-man coverage in order for this to work. In addition, it's important that you are secure behind the goal. That is, that there is only one defender on you and you are confident that you can out-manuever her on a moment's notice. You should also be aware of the goalie's potential to intercept the pass.

(Thanks to K. Peyton for your input)

"Just a slight variation to the stacking play. I like the way you have it we used it in college; however, we also used it a little bit different. If the stack works right away, (usually only the first time the play is used) all teh defenders will run to the top of the arc. At that point the 1st home can roll the crease and Bingo, GOAL!!! I love your web page by the way, it is great."

Motion

This play gets very confusing, but once you've mastered it, it smooths out.

The attack takes four positions clockwise around the fan (A,B,C and D) while the first home holds the ball behind or to the side of the cage. One player decides to make a move for another post position. Let's say player B sprints diagonally across the goal to replace player D. Once player D sees B coming, D moves to the post position to her immediate left. So D replaces A. Then A cuts across goal to replace player C, and C cuts across goal again to take D's place. The things to remember are that the first player cuts across goal and the person she is replacing goes to the post position to her left. The rest goes logically as each person gets replaced and makes the most effective cut. At the end of one cycle, it starts over again with one person taking the first cut.

This play takes a lot of practice to master just knowing who's going to cut first (you can designate your own system: post positions clockwise, counterclockwise, or choose specific players), and then smoothing out the rest of the play. So beware that if you use it in a game without complete confidence, your attack may be concentrating on watching the play move, rather than making a good cut. In addition, the first home should be aware of the same problems that arise in Stack.

Later, add the element of setting picks, so each cutter sets a pick for the post position they're replacing.

Back Door

An attack player (A) holds the ball behind or to the side of the goal. Another attack player (B) takes a low post position close to the cage and waits. Then a third attack player (C) sets a pick that traps the defense against the circle. Attack player B then spins around away from the pick in front of the goal, and player A drops it to her to she can score.

The pass between player A and C should be fast and accurate. As soon as player C turns, player A should already be one her way to nailing the pass into her pocket. Be careful of the goalie who might intercept the pass, as well as the defender who may accompany the pick-setter. The shot should be like a controlled quick-stick, making sure to avoid entering the crease.

Dart

(Thanks to S. Maloney for your input)

"Last year my team had a play we called 'dart.'

One attack player (usually 1st home) would be behind the cage and call DART. The other attack players (usually center 1st & 2nd home and any attack wings who were near the cage) would line up on one side of the arc in a line facing the other side of the arc. The person with the ball would then call go or something like that and the players would all charge across the arc with one of the players in the middle suddenly cutting back in the other direction and getting the pass from behind the cage and shooting."