1. INTRODUCTION

Coaches have been in trouble to solve situations that usually happen in many matches in which a back court player, great specialist and dangerous thrower, does not find the suitable distance for shooting with efficiency because generally speaking he is under defensive pressure, in such way that there is a good mark and control by the opponent who corresponds to him in each case, through a good defensive anticipation or by a good group tactical work on his zone that resists or annuls his individual possibilities. Go ahead that we did not refer to a situation where an individualized defense is made against the player by means of a mixed defense 5+1. We are speaking only in the cases when the opposite defenses are zonal, without concerning the type of system used. In these circumstances there are many solutions, some of individual character can be considered and, as a consequence, subject to the quality and resources of the specialist thrower -if it does not have those resources dominated is impossible to use them-, and others attacking collaboration tasks through different group tactical means -blockades, crossings, etc.-. But also there are other solutions from a strategic point of view that can help us to offer alternatives to the created problem by the defensive activity. Last ones are the most related to the team direction during the matches, but also the previously mentioned ones can be communicated to our players before and they can use them if they have the suitable capacity and the available technical resource to his resolution, trained and dominated in the training and throughout the player’s sporting life and its process of learning and improvement.

It is evident that depending on the defensive system there will be solutions more suitable than others, but in this work I do not try to explain these details, but to expose generically speaking some models of solutions to solve this problem praised. This will be the first step in the education of this topic. In this way, our article is structured in the exhibition of these solutions by groups of individual tactical solutions, group solutions, or strategic solutions. Without a doubt the experienced coach will be able to contribute with other different solutions from which we are going to offer here, but from our experience these are those that we think are more important and useful at the international top level.

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2. SUPPOSED STARTED SITUATION.

We expose on graphic 1 the general concept of the problem created by the defensive situation. The right back player is the specialist submissive to defensive pressure in the graphic, but the situation would be similar on the opposite side or with another defensive system.

![Graphic 1. Starting situation.](image)

3. SOME EXAMPLES OF SOLUTIONS

3.1. INDIVIDUAL TACTICAL SOLUTIONS

In this first group of solutions we are speaking about diverse individual actions that the submissive player to the pressure and control can use in varied forms to create more uncertainty to his respective defenders, and, as a consequence, to be more productive and effective for his team.

1st. Try to fix two defenders, and pass the ball.

It is a simple but very important solution. The reasoning cannot be simpler and is the following one: “If I have great capacity of remote shooting and I have problems for shooting because the opponents come to me early, I am going to focus to attract two
defenders to create numerical superiority, releasing to some teammate, and to pass the ball immediately”. This solution, paradoxically, being so simple is not very used, and mainly, in an absolutely conscious way, put and abound the players with ample international baggage who insist on these cases in solving the match by themselves fighting with their respective opponents.

2nd. Searching different alternatives through feints toward the weak point, double feints or playing changes of trajectories without ball previous to the ball’s reception.

The second option that we raised consists of using variety of feints, very specially towards the weak point -the opponent usually anticipates towards strong points and it is not easy that he does it towards both sides, well through single feints, double feints -exit towards the strong point and immediately to change to the weak one within the cycle of steps-, as well as to play without ball using ample trajectories towards the strongpoint to change towards the weak one receiving after the change of trajectory. By all means, the possibilities are not only for breakthroughs, but also to create superiorities 2x1 and to play with the wing (Graphical 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3. and picture 2).
Photographical illustration 2. In these two photos we can observe the back court players’ feints in its final phase of exit by the weak point. In the first case chained with bouncing and in the second one in its penetration’s phase and shooting. (Photos by U. Hocevar and S. Pillaud)

3rd. Use long trajectories towards other positions.

In this third possibility we try to alternate the direct and varied trajectories in the specific position with the use of wide trajectories from a lateral back position towards the other one surprising from outside the field of vision of the direct opponent, and also to the new opponent who is on the opposite zone, and even more, he is not used to the specialist’s mark and he does not fit well nor it graduates the distance defensive mark over the thrower. The objective is, besides to change the mark defender, to surprise and confuse the new direct opponent who does not expect for that new attacker like direct opponent on his own zone. It demands a thrower´s change of rate as well as initiates the displacement when the ball is on the opposite zone, in such way that it makes difficult the perception in the visual field of the zone to where he goes, whose defense is more concentrated in the ball (Graph, 3 and illustration 3).

Graph 3. The left back thrower is using a wide trajectory towards the right back side when the ball is in RB.
4th. Try to change direction in the third step during the cycle of steps.

Technically speaking it requires great quality in the varied use of the directions of the feet during the cycle of steps. One is to modify slightly the direction of the third step towards the weak zone after having taken both first steps towards the strongpoint, in such way that the thrower escapes from the direction of the direct opponent’s harassment. It is necessary to emphasize that it is not properly a feint but a change of direction during the cycle of steps, since we have already indicated. In the high level’s current handball there are many players who are able to develop correctly and effectively this action.

Graph 4. In this zenithal view we can observe how the player—in this case right-handed—when receives the ball he gives the first step towards his strong point followed by another one with the right foot in the same direction, but finally he modifies his initial direction towards the left side separating from the defender’s direction.

5th. Making shots at “changed foot”, or with two feet together, at point “0” of the steps’ cycle.

The following example of individual tactical variation consists of not completing the cycle of steps, because with our interventions the defender is created himself some perceptive certainties that adjust to our habitual way to act. In this case the player is managing simultaneously with the time factor and the space factor, that is to say, the “time dimension” of the defender’s expectations regarding to the moment of his intervention is “broken”. But also the space dimension, because the cycle of steps is altered from the mechanical point of view. This solution of shot on “changed foot” or also in a very fast form with both feet together—feet placed symmetrically—is very
surprising for the opponent because he has not enough time to react and are progressively much more used in the top level, since we have been able to verify even in junior players in recently finished World Championship in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Spain we enjoyed very good specialists in this technical variant (Cañellas, Raul Entrerríos, Sarmiento, Antonio García,...).
of the left is observed the moment at which the thrower is falling down after the jump’s feint shot ready for bouncing, while the defender is on the flight phase by his previous reaction for trying to block the previous announced shooting of his opponent.

In the last example we try to make a technical linking through a double cycle of steps with intermediate bounce in such way that once fixed the direct opponent, the thrower moves away from him extending his displacement with a directed wide trajectory towards the opposite zone. This technical action not difficult at frequently surprises the opponent –he usually is in the air- and it creates problems of defense’s misalignments that usually react late against the shooter on the new zone, with which this dangerous shooter obtains an effective distance for shooting.

3.2. SOLUTIONS BASED ON GROUP TACTICAL MEANS.

In this second group the solutions that we suggested imply a cooperation of one or more teammates with perfect coordination in space and time. We are talking about actions that are in themselves different group tactical means -crossings, blockades, curtains, space permutations, etc.-, or coordinated actions not usually known as tactical means, but that really imply a good association amongst the tactical actions or protagonists’ intentions. Among them we suggested the following examples:

3.2.1. Alternatives based on the direct protection of the specialist shooter.

3.2.2. Alternatives based on the creation of defensive’s problems in the give on-takeover activity: simple tactical means in the zone.

3.2.3. Alternatives through combined tactical means between several players: tactical maneuvers little more complex

3.2.1. ALTERNATIVES BASED ON THE DIRECT PROTECTION OF THE SPECIALIST SHOOTER.

1st. Placing the pivot in the conflict zone, and he tries static fixations or use of blockades.

The first solution proposed is based on the use of static fixations of the pivot or blockades in the conflict’s zone of defensive pressure. We try to get, from one or another way, to protect the specialist thrower through the creation of doubts in the responsibilities and mark relations defensive-attackers in that zone, doubts who do not consider when the pivot is located in other spaces of the attack.
Photographical illustration 6. We can see in the photo RB left-handed from Korea (Kyung-Shin Yoon, great thrower specialist at a distance finding possibilities to shoot) when the third defender moves forward and the doubt appear because the pivot is located between second and third defender.

2nd. Placing the pivot in the shooter’s zone, and later try to mobilize defenders.

With identical objectives of the previous proposal, but in this second case the pivot must move ahead or behind the attackers, in such way that alternates his tactical intentions being unmarked to free spaces, mobilizing or attracting defenders sideward, or obstructing their frontal movements or lateral displacements through blockades. We can have a look at the following graph some examples.

Graph 6. The left back player is supported and protected by the situation of the pivot on his zone as well as the alternatives of his movements: in the first one being unmarked to the space behind the third defender who moves forward trying to anticipate or dragging his direct opponent towards the axis of the court; in the second we can see how he takes part modifying his action and turning it in an outer and dynamic blockade against the third defender and facilitating in both cases the action of the LB shooter by the assigned space.
3.2.2. ALTERNATIVES BASED ON THE CREATION OF DEFENSIVE PROBLEMS ON GIVE ON-TAKE OVER: SIMPLE TACTICAL MEANS IN ZONE.

1st. Pivot’s “distracting runs” for the back shooter’s benefit.

The pivot works in curvilinear displacement in front of the initial opponent of the specialist just at the moment that the later is going to initiate his frontal displacement of anticipation against the thrower. Due to that the pivot generates a distraction of the direct defender of our thrower and a delay in his forward movement allowing a greater approach to an effective distance of the specialist. Sometimes, this action also generates an error in the change of opponent. It’s more useful when the action of the pivot takes place from the external part of the court towards the interior, because the defenders have difficulty in seeing a good field of view opponent-ball, reason why it is a surprise for them. Logically, the ball comes from the opposite zone to the shooter submissive to defensive pressure.

2nd. Coordinated change positions without ball between winger and pivot on zone.

Graph 7. Tactical coordination between the wing and pivot players on the conflict’s zone. They are trying to confuse or to delay the defender’s anticipation over the thrower.

In this case coordination between two players in benefit of the specialist takes place. The pivot is placed centered and from there he moves in front of defenders towards the outer zone, to which the wing of the same zone responds of immediate form in

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opposite direction. Both actions take place without ball trying to create confusion in the defensive responsibilities of the pressure’s zone and thereby to allow a better approach of at a effective distance. The greater difficulty is based in the fact of the moments of these interventions that as well must agree with the moment at which the thrower receives the ball from the CB or the other lateral back.

3rd. Crossing between the CB-LB and later returning pass, and immediate play 2x2 with pivot in that zone.

Action based on a coordination of a crossing between the CB and our back thrower, and valuing that this one is going to be marked immediately in proximity and contact with the corresponding change of opponent or -as it frequently happens last years in the high level through a defensive sliding-, give back the ball quickly to the CB that searches for solutions in the 2x2 game with the pivot previously located in that zone. One is to take advantage of the attention that demands our specialist to attract the defense towards the center and to release spaces in his initial specific position what causes advantage for other teammates.

4th. CB blockades with false exits of the marked player and to play 2x1 with wings.

The following situation model stars from the basis for understanding that the direct opponent of the specialist thrower anticipates in his forward movement, although
does not get to dissuade or to prevent the pass. It is also necessary at the same time to assume that the defender will try to stop or to cut the displacement towards the opponent’s strongpoint and in many occasions will even make difficult the possible crossing pass. With these premises, the CB with ball can work in diagonals blockades in benefit of the thrower, but having in account the foreseeable answer of the defender, the thrower must make trajectories with false exits, that is to say, by the opposite side of the blockade, and receive the ball after the direction’s change -it is advisable the bouncing pass-, and searching for the penetration or the 2x1 play with the wing of his own side.

Graph 9. CB tries to block the defender, with false exit of LB and play 2x1 with the wing.

5th. Changing positions between the RB marked and the CB and later crossing with the opposite back player.

The attackers resort to a tactical procedure that tries to chain a simple exchange between the CB and the RB player who is submissive to the anticipation mark, and later crossing between the opposite back and the thrower who acts from his new situation in the CB position. With this tactical solution two problems for the defending team can be considered: on the one hand we moved to the specialist thrower from his zone taking him to the opposite zone where the defenders are not accustomed to his mark and control; and on other hand we create a problem “give on-take over” by the crossing that immediately is made on the opposite side. This model of tactical
maneuvers usually is more advisable against 5:1 defensive system, although also it could be used against 6:0.

**Graph 10.** Exchange CB-LB chained with crossing RB-shooter on the opposite zone.

6th. Making successive crossings with the other two back players.

**Graph 11.** Making successive crossings CB-LB and RB-LB who is already located in CB position.
This example is similar to the previous proposal and it is a very frequent situation in top level. Assuming that good defenders will even put many difficulties with the opportune change of opponent for the successfully attacking accomplishment of crossings in the specific position of the thrower or with anticipate sliding, the solution is that when the thrower receives the ball he pass immediately to the opposite back, in form that is chained a new crossing in the opposite zone, whose defenders do not expect that new difficulty. The pivot is initially located in the ending zone –opposite side to the specific thrower position-, and at the crossing moment of the back court players on his zone the pivot tries to be unmarked towards the axis of the court or, in its case, mobilizing or dragging to the direct defender and releasing plus the finish space. We return to use the criterion of modification the thrower´s space taken him to the opposite zone. Also it is useful against 5:1 defense (graphical 11).

7th. “Give and go” with the pivot plus try to make a trajectory´s change.

“Give and go” with the pivot is a group tactical mean that can offer interesting possibilities, whereas when taking place anticipated forwards of defenders inevitably spaces are created behind. In addition, if we try to pass the ball to the pivot we create problems of view’s field to the responsible defender. This solution can be done from several forms, for example the thrower marked connects with the pivot just in the moment he receives the ball or through a CB pass that immediately can circulate towards 6 meters line behind the conflict’s zone. Let us see one example in the following graph:

Graph 12. “Give and go” LB-Pivot and later CB makes a deployment inside.
8th. Try to coordinate long cross between the wing and CB, followed by a new cross for the back thrower’s benefit.

![Diagram of handball strategy](image)

**Graph 13. Long crossing LW-CB and new crossing CB-LB.**

This new proposal is also used frequently in top level handball. The wing of the thrower’s zone -with or without ball but receiving it during the route- initiates an ample trajectory throughout 9 meters line, even more outside, and makes a long crossing with the CB taking in account the difficulty to connect with the marked player for the defense anticipation. Normally this circumstance implies to concentrate the danger in another space and the direct defender in charge of the thrower usually goes backward to integrate him in the defensive block. Immediately the CB, either in ball possession, chains a new crossing whose beneficiary is the marked thrower, and so the thrower has more freedom and facility to adjust his action to an effective distance. It is important that for better coordination the thrower uses a trajectory from outside to inside as we can appraised in graph 13. In order to avoid an excessive accumulation of attackers that would make difficult to use the free spaces as well as to balance the attack it is advisable that the pivot is located in the opposite side of the main action.

### 3.3. STRATEGICAL SOLUTIONS

1st. Locating the marked player on the opposite back zone and play 2x1 for outer zones with the wing.
This is a simple strategic solution that consists on placing the back thrower on his opposed side from the beginning, in such form that his natural exit movement towards the strongpoint becomes playing by the outer zone to play with the wing and to search the 2x1 possibilities. Considering that the thrower in this case is right-handed, the ball is more protected and the pass more assured. Sometimes could be because the defender of that zone is accustomed to defend a left-handed player with deployment’s tendencies towards the axis of the field, besides the fact that this other player usually has different characteristics.

Photographic illustration 8. Right-handed shooter playing in the opposite side and play 2x1 with the wing. (Photos S. Pillaud)

2nd. Wing’s transition from the thrower’s side –circulation like a second pivot-, locating the pivot on the same zone, and later trying to play 2x2 LB-Pivot.

Another solution from the strategic point of view is to use the systems transformations, through the circulation of the wing of the same side of the back player submissive to a defensive pressure, locating the pivot on the same zone between first and second defender, in such form that players search for solutions by playing 2x2 back player-pivot. If it is continued maintaining the forward movement and the anticipation against the back, the pivot is matched with the outside defender, habitually with less weight and with problems to mark the pivot if he receives the ball. If the defenders remain on back zone the thrower can reach the effective distance. If the defenders solve the problem, the back player must connect with the opposite side.
3rd. With pivots opened between 1st and 2nd defenders, deployment of CB towards the space behind the defender who leaves the goal area line.

Graph 14. With the pivot located between 1st and 2nd defenders, deployment of CB behind the forward defender after passing the ball (defensive system 5:1)

In this next proposal we try to facilitate the remote shooting recharging the zone of the thrower through creating two inside supports: the pivot who is located between 1st and 2nd defenders, and the second one is the CB who circulates inside after a change.
of trajectory trying to locate him behind the defender who goes forward against the thrower, in such form that if the thrower does not find an effective distance for shooting, he always will have two pivots on his zone with whom he could connect. In case of an excessive accumulation of defenders in zone it is obvious that he must pass the ball towards the opposite zone, always paying attention to the possible interception of the pass by the defenders of that zone.

4ª. Try to attack the CB towards the thrower zone with direct pass to the wing. 

Interesting option when is the defender’s anticipation is constant and it is made from a considerable distance -for example, up to 10-11 meters-. In these cases, sometimes the team must consider the advantage of the spaces that are created behind the defender who leaves the 6 meters line, trying to extend to the maximum the zone of possible breakthrough to 6 meters. For doing this the wing of that side must previously locate with the maximum width, making difficult to the maximum the field of view of his direct opponent, considering that the ball is in the opposite zone or in the CB. This player attacks the interval between 2nd and 3rd defender through a change of direction extending previously the space in opposite direction, and without trying to progress he passes the ball to the wing that at that moment has unmarked to the inside space with a curvilinear trajectory between 1st and 2nd defenders. This second defender is now in 11 meters anticipating against the thrower. In this case it is advisable that the pivot is located on the opposite side to release that space.

Graph 15. CB makes a direct pass to the wing in the zone where the defensive anticipation takes place.
5th. Taking free throw situations´ advantages sporadically.

No despicable alternative if our team really has a great level thrower. Sometimes the players are not able to obtain the necessary space-temporary adjustments to arrive at an optimal situation for shooting, and it usually produces very positive effects in obtaining spatial advantages that allow us a free throwing. One of the characteristics to consider in these cases is that the action must surprise the defense. For example, with a previous thrower´s body orientation from backs to the execution´s place of the free throw, try to make a fast change of rate and direction and to receive the ball from the executer´s player very quickly and shooting with the smaller number of steps. Another interesting and very simple solution is to take advantage of the free throws on the opposite conflict´s side, through a surprising change of rate and making a long trajectory of the thrower towards the opposite zone offering himself to the free throw´s executer. It is also important in this same line of simplicity a free throw can be coordinated in which initially the back player who is not under pressure goes to receive the ball from the executer but finally he does not receive the ball because is the dangerous thrower who at last does moving behind the first “false shooter” and crossing and surprising the defense, that has been fixed by the first thrower (graphical 16)

**Graph 16. Example of the free throw´s possibilities making a 2 players´ screen, and later crossing between two lateral back players. It is possible to do it also feinting a pass -the executants- over the first thrower and pass finally to the second thrower who comes from the opposite side.**

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4. SUMMARY AND FINAL CONCLUSION

In this article I have tried to expose a few solutions against the problem mentioned at the beginning of the article. As we had said in the beginning, without doubt there will be other possibilities depending on the potential of the team and the individual player’s characteristics, as well as the used defensive system. Either one way or another, I want to point out as synthesis that all adopted solution must apply through the following general criteria:

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<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Modifying space factors</strong> (occupied trajectories of the player, spaces, changes of spaces, places of penetration, exchanges, etc.).</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Modifying temporary factors</strong> (moments of intervention, speed of execution, changes of rates, accelerations in the movements, etc.).</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>Modifying modal factors</strong> (to vary the executive models, tactical means used the type of action, arm’s position or the route to articulate the shooting, etc.).</td>
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