

Description of the Swish Method by a Coach

By Terry Tucker, Jasper, Indiana

[Note from Tom Nordland: Here is what a coach from Indiana recently wrote to describe the value of my Swish Method and the things I'm teaching/coaching. Terry has described earlier in these Newsletters how he feels about the Swish "Process," as he puts it, and I really liked this new way of putting it.]

MORE ART THAN SCIENCE?

Prior to ordering and studying the Swish process and working with players at various age levels, I used to think that shooting was more art than science. In other words, you either had that special eye-hand coordination that allowed you to be a good shooter or you didn't and if you weren't blessed in that regard there wasn't a whole lot you could do about it. Also, you had to have a shooter's confidence and mentality and, again, that was not something that you could develop easily.

NOW I SEE IT DIFFERENTLY!

Now I look at shooting very differently. It can be a learned skill and anyone can improve significantly if they are willing to learn the Swish process. There are scientific reasons as to why a basketball flies toward the basket in the manner that it does, and if you understand and execute those principles upon which the Swish process is based, you will increase your odds of success. Also, the mechanics necessary to do this are simple, not complex; forgiving not rigid. Unlike golf, where the margin for error off the club head is very, very small; the margin for error in shooting a basketball is quite large if you understand what's going on. I did not believe this before, but now I most certainly do. This is the advantage that the Swish process provides.

MORE MECHANICAL THAN MYSTERIOUS!

Bottom line, shooting is much more mechanical than mysterious; more physical than mental. The common coaching practice of applying pressure by making everybody run if one player doesn't hit two free throws does more harm than good if the shooter's mechanics do not allow for success. You can't control variation through concentration if the shot mechanics are wrong. However, you can control variation through the Swish process, and once a player is convinced that it works, his/her 'shooter's mentality index' soars! It's better to shoot only 25 jump shots per day correctly than 500 without awareness and understanding of what you're trying to accomplish.

Also, I would emphasize more heavily your engineering background and all of the time you spent studying and analyzing the shooting mechanics of great shooters to find the common threads. Your background and approach clearly support the concept that shooting is more of a science than an art.

CALL IT A 'PROCESS'

On a minor point, I would suggest using the term 'Swish Process' instead of 'Swish Method' or 'Swish Approach' as the word process has a more scientific and disciplined ring to it than method or approach.

Coach, I think your differentiator is, 'Science that is understandable and works for the masses,' instead of 'one guy's opinion that is vague and only works for a select few.'

-- Terry