

ZONE 1

SERIES: ZONE / PRESS OFFENSE | DNA CATEGORY: RECOGNIZE THE GAP

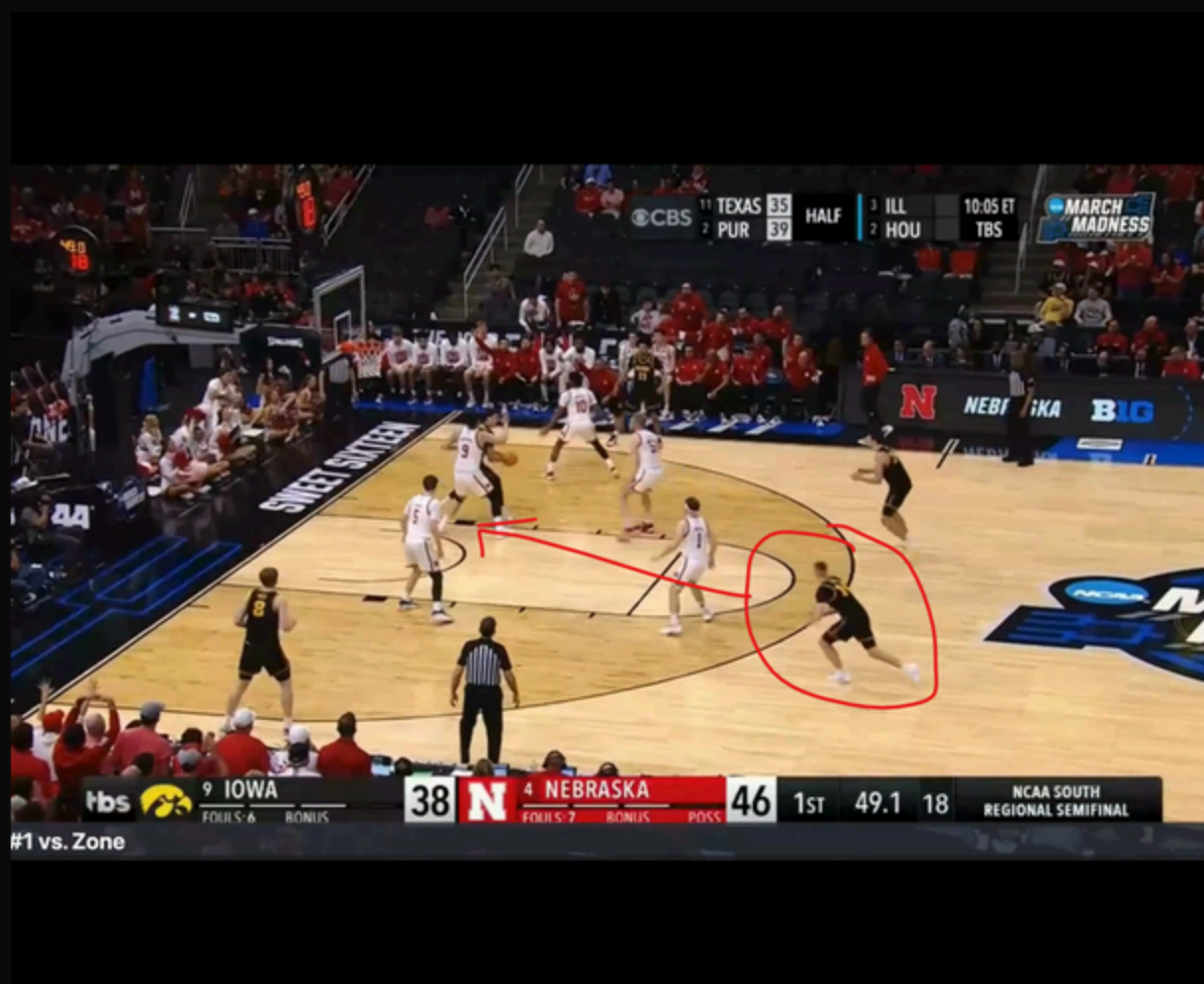
IOWA

HAWKEYES

THE ADVANTAGE DNA™

- 1 Iowa reverses the ball to shift Nebraska's zone.
- 2 The ball handler attacks a gap instead of standing outside the shell.
- 3 Nebraska's interior defenders collapse toward the ball.
- 4 #1 cuts hard to the basket behind the occupied defenders.
- 5 The rim-cut window is open even though Iowa does not throw the pass.
- 6 The key read is seeing the cutter before the zone can recover.
- 7 If the cutter is covered, keep the ball moving and make the zone shift...
- 8 Recognition comes first: the defense gave up the cut even if the possession...

ADVANTAGE FRAME — 49.1 1ST HALF



THE PASS IS NOT MADE — BUT THE CUT IS THERE. RECOGNIZE THE WINDOW.

ACTION BREAKDOWN

1. MOVE THE ZONE



1 and 4 reverse the ball to force the zone to shift. Ball movement changes the defenders' angles before penetration begins.

2. ATTACK THE GAP



4 attacks the gap and pass-fakes to move the shell again. The goal is to occupy the middle, not just move the ball around the perimeter.

3. SEE THE CUT



As the zone collapses, #1's cut to the basket appears behind the help. Even if the pass is not thrown, this is the read the offense must see.

PAUSE HERE

This is the teaching moment. Iowa does not actually throw the pass to #1, but the cut to the basket is available. Nebraska's zone is occupied by the ball and has opened a lane behind the help. The lesson is not simply whether the pass was completed — it is whether the offense recognized the window. Good zone offense sees the advantage before the defense can close it.

COACHING INSIGHTS

WHY IT WORKS

Reversals and gap attacks force the zone to turn and collapse. Once defenders lose vision behind the ball, the cutter can slip into the rim window.

DEFENSIVE REACTION

Nebraska contracts toward the ball. That protects the gap initially, but it leaves space behind the second line of the zone.

OFFENSIVE READ

Do not stare only at the ball. When the zone collapses, scan the backside and the rim line. If the cutter has a step, the pass is available now.

COACHING POINT

Reward recognition, not just completions. If the player sees the rim cut but cannot deliver it safely, the offense can still flow into the next reversal.

STEAL THIS IDEA

When teaching zone offense, do not grade only the pass that was made. Grade the advantage that was recognized. A cut can be the correct read even when the passer chooses not to throw it. Train players to see the rim window first, then decide whether the pass is clean enough to make.

DNA TAKEAWAY

THE PASS WASN'T MADE.
THE ADVANTAGE WAS STILL THERE.
RECOGNIZE THE CUT.