

TCYBA Grade Three/Four 3 X 3 Program

Tri-City Youth Basketball has adjusted its Grade 3/4 Boys and Girls programming to a 3 X 3 format replacing the 5 on 5 model used in the rest of the league's competition. This initiative is consistent with Canada Basketball's 3 X 3 Mini-Basket program which has at its core, a philosophy to allow children to play a game that is better suited to the development of their physical, mental and basketball skills by instituting long term athlete development (LTAD) modifications to the adult game. With high repetitions and touches, 3 X3 is novice player oriented and places an emphasis on skill development in combination with the teaching and age appropriate competition relative to the ability of the participants.

With greater time on task (more touches and playing time for everyone) Tri-City Youth Basketball feels that the adjustment to programming at this development level will provide a high-quality experience for youth basketball players creating a positive experience which will help foster their passion as they grow with the sport.

This initiative has received unanimous support from the TCYBA Board and from our National Sports Organization. "Canada Basketball is in support of younger athletes playing 3x3 instead of 5 on 5 in the early stages of development. The opportunity to touch the ball and have more meaningful participation in the competition makes the activity more fun for the children and more likely to keep them active while learning to play basketball". "Congratulations on this initiative. I'm sure it will be very successful", - Michele O'Keefe, President and CEO, Canada Basketball.

Why 3 X 3

While these adjustments are similar to those adopted by other youth sports such as hockey and soccer to name two, they do have their own basketball specific modifications and development benefits.

Benefit 1: Increased Handling of the Ball

When youth play traditional 5 on 5 games, it is common for 1-2 players to rarely touch the ball. This is especially true when a team has 1-2 dominant players who are the best ball handlers or are early developers. Teammates tend to pass the ball to those players and those players tend to take the ball to the basket and sometimes coast to coast, failing to work on team and decision-making skills. This results in other players not developing their skills. The dominant player is only working on a few skills, and the team isn't developing as a whole.

In 3 X 3, everyone must be involved for a team to have success. All players get to handle the ball almost every possession allowing for more skill repetition in competition

environments and therefore, providing the best opportunity for skill development to occur.

Benefit 2: Better Spacing

Even with the smaller bodies of young players, 5 on 5 games are crowded. Youth basketball is not the right environment for players to practice dribbling or passing through multiple types of coverage - their skill package is underdeveloped to be successful in those areas.

3 X 3 opens the court up and provides players with more room to operate. Youth can play in open space, allowing them the opportunity better practice and load their skills without multiple defenders crowding the ball. This spacing also allows for players to practice individual and team decision-making skills (advantages, when to shoot/pass/drive).

Benefit 3: Focus on Basketball Skills & Actions

3 X 3 emphasizes individual skills as well as 1, 2 and 3 player actions that are the foundation for successful 5 on 5 play. The focus is on concept development as opposed to being system oriented.

Defense for 3 X 3 is player-to-player, creating opportunities at the offensive end for freedom, decision-making and creativity to develop.

Benefit 4: More Directed Competition

Games in 3 X 3 competitions are shorter in duration but more frequent, allowing players to face multiple opponents in one competition night. The number of players is reduced, allowing for maximal competition experience and playing time during this developmental stage.

So, what does the Tri-City 3 X 3 program look like?

Players will take part on the two main hoops of each gym allowing 12 players instead of 10 to play at one time. Games will be approximately 4 minutes in duration. An official will be assigned to each basket. Floor spots will be placed at a minimum of six positions on the court, one at the point, one at each wing, one at each corner, etc. at approximately the high school 3-point line. Each possession will begin under the basket with an uncontested pass or dribble to one of the spots. Each of the three offensive players must go and touch one open floor spot. The offense may start as soon as the player dribbles or passes the ball to a teammate at a spot, but all three players must touch a different spot before they can receive a pass or cut to the basket. The defense

may not impede the offensive players from cutting to the floor spots but may guard their checks as soon as the ball becomes live. If a steal occurs, that player may dribble or pass the ball to a teammate at a spot and they may immediately initiate offensive play.

The game is played with alternating possession. If a basket is scored the defensive team is not required to take the ball out of bounds. They may take the ball immediately after the basket is scored, pass or dribble the ball to a spot, run to the spot closest to them and begin offensive play.

Emphasis of play for this program includes taking/catching the ball and attacking, cut, pass and fill principles, ball cuts and backdoor cuts. Screening on the ball at this development phase is **not** permitted.

A coach from each team will be assigned at one of the two baskets but it is imperative that principles of guided discovery are utilized and that each coach accept that they are part of a coaching collective that assist in the development and provide feedback to all players regardless of whether that individual player practices with them or not.

In addition, a league assigned program coordinator will attend each gym to assist with program operation, philosophy adherence and as a resource to parents of the participating players.,

Additional game night components include participation in cross court 3 X 3.

Cross Court 3-on-3 is a small-sided game that creates advantage/disadvantage situations naturally out of transition. Both offensive and defensive situations can be coached using a games approach.

Cross Court 3-on-3 is a fun, competitive way to work on unscripted moments. Quick decisions and an emphasis on flow in these moments can help your players create scoring opportunities out of chaos. Cross Court 3 on 3 will be simultaneously played in 4-minute shifts on each of the two cross courts available at each gym with one referee assigned to each court. 3 players from each team will play against each other on each full Cross Court. The two teams of 3 players will transition back and forth just like a regular 5 on 5 game but, the players will have greater skill acquisition opportunities based on the additional ball touches offered when fewer players are on the court.

All other games rules will be consistent with those used in the TCYBA Grade 4/5 level.