

Overview

They very much rely on controlling the game. By being patient on both ends their aim is to control tempo- this coupled with being strong, physical, and making minimal mistakes lends itself to physical and mental control. The recipe to then beat them, as demonstrated by Spotswood's game plan and terrific execution, is to match the physicality, minimize your own mistakes, and then methodically and subtly steal control throughout the game. I would strongly suggest picking up full court and/or showing a press as often as possible. For the most part these would be facades and are a subtle way to steal control. Sporadic traps in vulnerable spots (corners/on side and base lines, if they pick up dribble, etc.) to gain more possessions and steal quick baskets is what will create distance. This, of course, comes with the risk of giving up easy baskets so timing, execution, and scrambling/help are of the utmost importance. When they were down and sped up the tempo, they were actually very good and trapping and rotating. This intentionally gives an advantage to the offense beyond the traps and Spotswood made the mistake of playing in to their hands and trying to dribble through traps rather than pass/dribble to avoid them. When they go aggressive and fast, go even more patient and deliberate and a breakdown will absolutely come at some point. Don't take the FIRST chance to score when they're trapping, wait for the BEST chance.

Make them move on defense. Again, when not pressing and whether playing man or zone, they are content sitting back and letting you take a contested shot, thus controlling the tempo. If they are forced to move, though, you then dictate the tempo. Great, quick ball and player movement can always beat a good defense.

Personnel

#12 – Athletic slasher and good 3pt catch and shooter. Scores almost all of his points driving left (middle) from the right wing off of a hand off or screen. They will set backdoor screens for lobs for him (including off the opening tip!)

#20 – Strong, tough attacker. Drives hard, mostly right. Didn't see any range from him.

#21 – PG, very solid, but passive. Good finisher and decent shooter, but tentative from 3.

#23 – Taller guy, but attacks on hand offs at times and screens/seals for post touches. Decent midrange shooter but not a great ballhandler.

#22 – Shoots willingly and hits 3s. Odd mechanics but obviously has a green light.

Offense

Observations

- Extremely patient. Run basic sets of:
 1. Pass to wing, back screen PG through the lane, then screener sets ball screen. Off ball screen they attack or big seals and they post. Last option from this set is a corner 3.
 2. Dribble hand offs and look to attack immediately off the hand off, or breakdown 1 on 1. #12 (goes left to the middle), #20 (strong and attacks mainly right) are main attackers.
- All willing shooters and for the most part can knock them down if open.
- Against a zone: patient, looked to hit the middle/elbow and create from there.

Suggestions

The only thing you must do is play really well on D. Sounds odd, but they are VERY simple (in a good way). They look to attack off screens and hand offs, shoot open 3s, or post bigs- that's it. If you're strong, in good position, help, don't foul, and rebound, you will be successful on this end. Key points:

1. Keep 12 and 20 out of the paint. Do something on ball screens/hand offs so that they are not coming off attacking- trap them, hedge hard, switch w/o leaving any gaps to attack, etc.
2. If they post up, just be strong, tall, and don't foul. They're big mainly just try to muscle in baskets.
3. Do not give up second chances. O-rebs give them great momentum.
4. Pressure them, but do not over pressure.
5. See 'Overview' section.

Defense

Observations

- Played mostly man. Very solid and physical but allow the offense to take contested shots or make mistakes; played a little 2-3. Middle was vulnerable
- 2-2-1 press, trap up the sideline in back or front court. They are vulnerable deep.
- 1-2-1-1 press, trap immediately on the inbound. They are vulnerable deep.

Suggestions

Though they are very good, they essentially are playing on their heels. It is a smart, tough defense, but if not trapping, they're allowing you to dictate. Ball and player movement can hurt them, as can decisive, crisp passing against traps. Do not try to dribble through the pressure.