

Mad Ants Playbook #1

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The Fort Wayne Mad Ants found themselves in a familiar situation Wednesday night. After a slow start, they were down by as many as 23 points in the first half of their game against Rio Grande Valley (RGV). However, the Mad Ants bench fought back and got the score to 98-92 with 3:07 left to play in the fourth quarter. Mad Ants Coach Steve Gansey called a timeout and opted for an aggressive play at the rim in this must score situation. Let's take a look.



Tory Jackson brings the ball up center court, Gilbert Brown sets up outside the 3-point line, Mike Tisdale is at the top of the key, Darnell Lazare is set to post at the elbow, and Darington Hobson is in the corner on the weak-side. Once Jackson crosses center court, Tisdale screens for Brown who cuts to the basket. Hobson runs along the baseline and sets up in the opposite corner.



“During the timeout we told Brown that the key to making this play work is to sell the fake alley-oop on his initial cut to the basket,” Coach Gansey said, “Most defenders will guard the first lob attempt, but not the second.”

Brown does a nice job of selling the fake and his defender sprints hard to stay with him. Hobson continues along the baseline and clears out his defender from under the basket.



Brown continues his cut and Tisdale moves towards Jackson to set a screen that will give him a clear look at the basket. This pulls the last defender away from the paint and gives Brown the space he needs to execute the back cut that he will use to score.



Jackson uses Tisdale’s screen while Brown steps on the gas and cuts back towards the basket. “We told Gil during the timeout that he has to come up soft then move quickly on the back cut -- past Lazare -- to get space between him and his defender,” Coach Gansey said. Lazare steps up and sets a back screen that gives Brown the separation he needs to beat his defender to the rim.



The defense is out of position and away from the basket. All they can do is watch Jackson’s well thrown lob head towards a wide open Gilbert Brown. Coach Gansey had high praise for Brown in these types of situations: “With Gilbert Brown, if the ball is thrown near the basket -- he will make the play.”



Brown completes this well executed alley-oop dunk, and cuts the RGV lead to 4. This play uses misdirection beautifully, and is a great example of the imaginative play calling that Coach Gansey brings to the team. Tisdale's screen for Jackson makes it possible for Jackson to penetrate the lane or go to Lazare in the post. Brown sold the first lob attempt and made it less likely that the defense would believe a second attempt. With these multiple options, Brown is able to make a strong cut back to the basket and get open for a quick score.

Unfortunately, the Mad Ant's come-back came up short as they eventually lost the game 104-97.

Here's the play in real time:

<http://youtu.be/LbFlerqvkGA>