

How to Help Develop a Two-Meter Man

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Most two meter men coming out of high school have not learned many of the skills they are going to need to play 2 meters at the college level. Like everything else to learn to be an effective 2 meter man an individual must spend a great deal of time working in front of the cage shooting and passing out of set until his moves become automatic.

The first thing I try to teach my two meter men is to learn to shoot off their triceps and wrist. This is an easy way to learn to shoot well with the weak hand. This is done by bending the arm at the elbow and shooting off the forearm and the wrist. Have 2 meter men sit in front of the cage and shoot forearm shots with both arms for about 15 minutes every day until it becomes absolutely natural.

To be effective at the college level a 2 meter man must be able to go both directions and get a good shot off. Most good 2 meter guards will try to play on the power shoulder of the setter. The power shoulder of a right handed setter is his left shoulder. The reason this is called the power shoulder is that is the way a right handed setter shoots his right handed scoop or the way he will want to turn. Most high school players have a right handed scoop when they come to UCI and most of them can turn some what toward the power side. However if the 2 meter guard lines up on the left shoulder it is very hard to shoot a right handed scoop or turn toward the that side. So the first thing I start to work on is developing moves toward the other side (the left side of the pool). The shots that go toward that side are right handed back hand, left handed scoop, roll out toward the left and a step out left and shooting with the left arm off the forearm and wrist.

The right hand back hand should be shot with a straight right arm at the elbow and the 2 meter man should be able to shoot straight back low or high or to get more wrist on the shot and bring the ball cross face to the right side of the cage either high or low. Like most shots the setter must get his shoulder as high as possible out of the water. He wants to get up and then lean a little forward from the waist. The ball needs to come in right off his shoulder. First he should just work on getting the shot off quickly after he has mastered getting the shot off quickly then he needs to learn forward meeting the ball and make a very short fake like he is going to go for the scoop and then come back with the back hand shot.

The next shot I teach going toward the left is a left handed scoop. Again the 2 meter man must get his shoulder as high out of the water as possible as the ball arrives so the 2 meter guard can't reach over his shoulders and hit the ball away. The 2 meter man wants to bend forward from the waist to meet the ball and get his hand up behind the ball in the middle of the ball not underneath the ball or it will climb and hit the bar or go over the cage. It is important to be able to shoot low toward the left side or high left as well as being able to get the ball cross face low or high. The two meter man should work on looking back and knowing where the goalie is in the cage. Most of the time if the 2 meter guard is taking the left shoulder the goalie will be on the opposite side to take the right handed back hand which means the goalie will move out and get both arm up to stop the back hand so a left handed scoop has a good chance to get around the goalie either low or high. A left handed scoop again should come off a straight left arm at the elbow. Having a straight arm gives the setter a better chance to get around the goalie. The shot should be straight arm with a lot of wrist on the shot to give the direction you want.

The third shot I teach is rolling out toward the left and shooting right handed. If the ball comes in off the right shoulder and the guard is on the 2 meter man's left shoulder the 2 meter man takes one stroke with

his left and push's the ball with his right hand and then rolls his hand under the ball and shots it cross face low or high depending on where the goalies left arm is. If his left arm is out of water shot low if it is in the water shoot high. I believe it is best to shoot cross face on the roll out because the goalie will usually be on the left side of the cage so the cross face is usually open.

The last shot that I teach is a step away toward the left. Again get up high to protect the ball from the 2 meter defender and push the ball and then grab it with the left hand take the left leg and step it up and over so you are facing the cage with the ball in the left hand and then pull yourself toward the left leg and away from the defender. This is when being able to shoot off the fore arm and wrist with the off arm is really worth while. If the defender gets around behind and goes for the ball the 2 meter man can pass from his left hand to his right and shoot the ball right handed. Once a setter can develop these shots he can then be effective going toward the left side or away from his guard who is taking his left shoulder. Obviously all these shot can be learned in reverse for a left handed setter where the 2 meter guard lines up on the right shoulder or power shoulder of a left handed setter.

A right handed player should be able to also roll out toward the right and shoot a left handed roll out. He should also be able to step out toward the right. I think one of the most effective hole shots for a right handed player is a left handed back hand. I spend a lot of time trying to teach this shot to my 2 meter men. If the defender is on the left shoulder (power shoulder of a right hander) it is possible to get off a left handed backhand shot out side the defender and put the ball strong side if the 2 meter man keeps his left arm straight when he shoots the ball and uses his wrist a great deal. Since the goalie expects the hole guard to take the right side and he takes center and the left if the 2 meter man can get the ball by the defender the right side of the cage will be vacant So the key to the left handed back hand is getting it by the defender.

There is one more key shot 2 meter men should learn and that is a straight back roll out shot. This can be shot either over arm or side arm. First work on rolling out and shooting quickly. Again get up big to protect the ball and then bend forward from the hips and meet the ball. Use the legs to get the hips up and lay on your back hips as high as possible to keep the defender off you to make your shot. After you have learned to shoot it quickly, work on pumping the ball once or twice and then shooting. Some players can develop a very quick roll around and then shoot the ball quickly. This is a good shot but it is very easy for officials to call an offensive foul on this move so I don't like to see my 2 meter men take this shot very often. If the defender is playing for the role out it is easy to change this roll-out move into a backhand shot. So you need to have your 2 meter men work on both a straight role out and also a back hand off the same move.

Last a good 2 meter man should be able to turn inside going either right or left off a scoop or a backhand. It is always easier to turn off a scope because the 2 meter man can use his off arm and hand to get position on the defender's hip to help make the turn. Obviously if the 2 meter guard reaches over the shoulder the 2 meter man can use his movement to greatly help him make his turn. A 2 meter man doesn't want to try to turn unless he is on at least the 4. If you turn when you are on the 3 you end up so close to the goalie that you really don't have much of a shot.

When a 2 meter man turns inside he must have a good off-the-water shot, something that is pretty much a lost art in the game of water polo. Here again this is a good place for a forearm and wrist shot. In the last few years I have been trying to teach my setters a good T shot as well as a screw shot. But I still like coming up under the ball and snapping it off the forearm and wrist. It takes a good deal of practice to shoot this shot effectively.

Obviously leg strength and over all power are key to playing 2 meters effectively. 2 meter men must spend time in a weight room gaining power and time in front of the cage gaining technique and

improving their moves.