

Rating the Passing Game

By Dave Little

This is the third in a series of articles devoted to analyzing the player cards from Strat-O-Matic basketball. From the previous articles, you will recall that the players are rated in terms of Points and Possessions generated by the player card per 48 minutes played. This article will review the calculations that determine the value of each player's passing, both half-court and fast-break.

HALF-COURT PASSING

Points generated by passes thrown in the half-court offense are determined by the number of passes thrown and the percentage chance of each outcome for a given pass. The number of passes thrown is a function of the action deck; assuming 100 possessions per game, the deck will assign 40% of these outcomes to passing cards in the following proportion: RG 12, LG/RF 8, LF/C 6.

Passing ratings are assigned on the basis of points and possessions according to the following scale:

DAZZLER

2 points

OPEN SHOT

0.5 points

A rough approximation — improves FG%

STEALS/TURNOVER

Minus 1 point

Loss of possession

The formula for the overall rating:

$$[(\% \text{Dazz} * 2) + (\% \text{Open} * 0.5) - (S\% + T\%)] * \text{Position Rating}$$

Example - John Stockton

Dazz%=	0.95	* 2 =	1.90
Open%=	0	* 0.5 =	0
S+T%=	0.05	* (-1) =	-0.05

Total points per pass = 1.85

1.85 points per pass * 12 passes per game = 22.2 points per game in half-court passing

Other examples: Karl Malone 2.55; Michael Jordan 3.0; Reggie Miller 0; Dennis Rodman 1.05.

From these figures, it is obvious what a profound contribution a point guard will make to his team's offense in Strat basketball. Stockton adds 22.2 points per 48 minutes to his team, entirely by throwing dazzlers.

FASTBREAK PASSING

Fast-break passes are rated with similar assumptions. The differences here are that no "open" results occur — only turnovers, dazzlers, and standard FB shots. The standard FB shot, as the standard position shot in the half-court offense, is considered neutral. Turnovers on FB passing are charged against the passer's rating in this scale (although in the game, inexplicably, they are charged to the recipient of the pass).

Assuming 30 fast-break opportunities per game, fast-break passes will occur as follows:

RG 8.75, LG/RF 2.08, LF/C 0

The formula is the same:

$$[(\text{Dazz}\% * 2) - (S\% + T\%)] * \text{Position Rating}$$

Example - John Stockton

Dazz%=	0.5 * 2 =	1.0
S+T%=	0.5 * (-1) =	-0.5

Total points per pass = 0.5

0.5 points per pass * 8.75 passes = 4.375 points per game on fast-break passes

Other Examples: Rod Strickland 12.25; Michael Jordan 0.104; Reggie Miller -0.42; Rodman, Malone N/A

Strickland and Avery Johnson have the best fast-break passing cards in the current set. Miller is a liability leading the break, since his passes generate more turnovers than points. With Reggie at LG, this occurs only 2.08 times per 48 minutes; it certainly discourages the notion of using him at the point in a fast-break situation.