

Game Design Document: Dynasty Logic Overhaul

Project: EA Sports College Basketball (2027 Era)

Target Platform: Gen 5 Consoles (PS5 / Xbox Series X) **Core Pillar:** "Strategy Over Stats"

Design Philosophy: This design leverages the successful UX language established by *EA Sports College Football* to ensure familiarity for the user base, while diverging mechanically to capture the unique volatility of College Basketball.

1. Shared DNA (The "Familiar" Layer)

To minimize user friction, we utilize established mental models from the EA Sports portfolio.

- **Resource Economy:** We retain the "**Scouting Hours**" currency model. This ensures users intuitively understand resource allocation without needing new tutorials.
- **Archetypal Progression:** The **Coach Skill Trees** (Architect/Recruiter) mirror the structure of CFB's "Tactician/Motivator" trees, providing a consistent RPG progression loop.

2. Sport-Specific Divergence (The "Unique" Layer)

To capture the intimacy of a 13-man roster, we deepen the simulation in key areas.

- **Active vs. Passive Fit:** In CFB, scheme fit is often a passive recruiting bonus. In CBB (Basketball), the **Triad System** applies active gameplay penalties (attribute nerfs) because a single poor system fit impacts 20% of the players on the floor.
- **Micro-Management:** CFB focuses on macro-logistics (85 players). This design focuses on micro-psychology (**Inhibitor Traits**), forcing the user to manage individual egos that can fracture a smaller locker room.
- **Economic Volatility:** The **NIL Weekly Calculation** introduces a speed of change not present in CFB, reflecting how momentum swings in basketball (e.g., "March Madness") have immediate financial impacts that football's weekly cadence does not.

1. Executive Summary

This overhaul shifts Dynasty Mode from a "Collection Game" (accumulating the highest ratings) to a "Management Simulation." Success requires fitting the right pieces into the right system, managing volatile human elements, and balancing two distinct economies.

The Three Key Innovations:

1. **The Triad Fit System:** A deep-logic attribute check that replaces binary scheme matching.
 2. **The Dual-Economy:** Managing stable School Budgets vs. volatile NIL Markets.
 3. **The Rarity Funnel:** A generation engine that makes "Unicorn" players mathematically rare and culturally viral.
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2. The Logic: System Fit & The Triad

2.1 The Concept

We replace generic "System Fit" grades with a weighted calculation called **The Triad**. A player's fit is not determined by their Archetype name, but by three specific variable checks.

2.2 The Triad Calculation

For every Scheme/Player interaction, the engine calculates a grade (A-F) based on:

1. **The Catalyst (50% Weight):** The primary attribute required for the scheme to function. *If this fails, the player is unusable.*
2. **The Enabler (30% Weight):** The secondary skill that determines the player's ceiling within that scheme.
3. **The Inhibitor (Pass/Fail Check):** A specific attribute or mental trait that causes a "Hard Conflict." *If triggered, the Fit Grade is capped at D.*

2.3 The "Big 5" Scheme Matrix

We define 5 distinct offensive identities.

Scheme	Philosophy	Catalyst (Must Have)	Inhibitor (Deal Breaker)
1. 5-Out Analytics	Maximize 3PM & Spacing	3-Point Rating	Rim Runner Archetype (Clogs the paint; negates spacing bonus).
2. Variable Motion	Constant cutting/passing	Passing IQ	"Ball Stopper" Trait (Holding ball >3s kills flow).

3. Bully Ball	Post scoring & Rebounding	Strength	Low Weight/Strength (Cannot hold post position).
4. Pace & Space	Shots < 7 seconds	Speed/Accel	Post Anchor Archetype (Too slow; creates 4v5 transition).
5. Spread Attack	Dribble-Drive Isolation	Ball Handle	Passivity (Low "Shot Aggression" tendency).

3. The Setup: Inherited Roster & Coach Skills

3.1 The Legacy Mismatch

When a user takes a new job, they inherit the previous coach's players.

- **The Conflict:** The user runs "Spread Attack" (Needs Handle), but inherits a "Motion" roster (High Pass, Low Handle).
- **Triad Analysis:** The UI highlights these players as "Fool's Gold" (High Overall, Grade F Fit).
- **The Choice:** Purge the roster (hurt Reputation) or Adapt (Change Scheme).

3.2 The Coach Skill Tree (Adaptability)

The user selects an archetype that interacts directly with the Logic Engine.

- **The Architect (Stubborn):**
 - **Bonus:** **System Purist.** Grade A Fits receive double attribute boost.
 - **Penalty:** Players with Grade C/F Fits suffer accelerated Morale decay.
- **The Whisperer (Chameleon):**
 - **Bonus:** **Masking Agent.** Can suppress one "Inhibitor Trait" per season (e.g., ignore "Ball Stopper").
 - **Ability:** Can switch Primary Schemes once per year without penalty.
- **The Scout (Data):**
 - **Bonus:** **Truth Serum.** Tier 2 Scouting has a 25% chance to reveal Inhibitor Traits early.
 - **Ability:** Highlights "Gem" probabilities on the recruiting board.
- **The Developer (Teacher):**
 - **Bonus:** **The Lab.** Can convert a player's *Enabler Attribute* into a *Catalyst Attribute* over 4 years.

4. The Economy: "War Chest" Management

4.1 The Two-Currency System

Dynasty Mode splits resources into two pools with distinct behaviors.

1. **School Budget (Stable)**: Earned by winning. Used for **Scouting Hours**, Staff Salaries, and Facilities.
2. **NIL Collective (Volatile)**: Earned by Hype. Used for **Player Acquisition** and Retention.

4.2 The NIL Formula

Purchasing power is recalculated weekly:

$$\text{NIL Budget} = (\text{Prestige} \times \text{Floor} \times \text{Base Value}) + (\text{Fan Sentiment} \times \% \times \text{Hype} \times \text{Multiplier})$$

- **Strategic Conflict**: Sentiment is volatile. A "Cinderella Run" spikes the budget for 3 weeks. The user must spend that cash *immediately* before a loss tanks the sentiment and the donors close their wallets.

4.3 The Allocation Slider

In the offseason, the user accesses the "**War Chest**" Screen. They must slide a bar allocating funds between:

- **Retention (Defense)**: Re-recruiting current players to keep them out of the Portal.
 - **Acquisition (Offense)**: Signing new high-school recruits or transfers.
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5. The Loop: "Fog of War" Scouting

5.1 The Logic

Attributes are hidden ranges. Scouting is the process of filtering "Paper Fits" vs. "True Fits".

5.2 Scouting Tiers

- **Tier 1: The Brochure (Free)**: Reveals Media Star Rating & Archetype. *Risk: Shows a deceptive "Projected Fit".*
- **Tier 2: Film Session (Cost: Low Hours)**: Reveals the **Catalyst Attribute**. Functions as a pass/fail filter.
- **Tier 3: Private Workout (Cost: High Hours)**: Reveals the **Enabler** and **Inhibitor**. This confirms the "True Fit" and identifies Gems vs. Busts.

5.3 The Recruiting Pitch

The user selects a strategy to close the deal¹⁶.

- "**Immediate Impact**" (**Risk: High**): Promise Minutes. *Fail State: Transfer Portal.*¹⁷
 - "**System Fit**" (**Risk: Logic**): Interest scales based on Triad Grade. *Fail State: Cannot change schemes.*¹⁸
 - "**Bag Drop**" (**Risk: Financial**): Uses NIL currency. Bypasses Fit Logic. *Fail State: Zero Loyalty (Mercenary).*
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6. The Data: Player Generation & Rarity

6.1 The Factory Logic

Players are generated using "Weighted Buckets" to ensure realistic archetypes. However, a **Nested Probability Funnel** determines "Mutations."

6.2 The Rarity Tiers

1. **Tier 1: The Anomaly (1 in 100):** A "Flawed Specialist." Example: 5'9" Guard with 99 Rebounding but 40 Shooting.
2. **Tier 2: The Generational (1 in 2,000):** A "Physical Freak." Example: Zion Williamson build (Speed/Weight physics break).
3. **Tier 3: The Alien (1 in 13,500):** A "Game Breaker." Example: 7'5" with 90 Ball Handle (Wembanyama).

6.3 The "Viral" Moment

When a Tier 3 "Alien" spawns (once every ~10 seasons), the UI triggers a **Social Media Takeover** event ("Woj Bomb") alerting the user to hunt for the player before they are even scouted.

7. Narrative Scenario: A Day in the Life

To illustrate the gameplay flow.

Week 14: The Crisis

You are the Head Coach of Memphis (Prestige: 3-Star). You run a Spread Attack offense.

- **The Economy:** You just beat #1 Houston. Fan Sentiment is at 95%. Your NIL Collective notifies you: "Coach, donations are up. You have an extra \$50k this week."

- **The Scouting:** You use that cash to buy a **Tier 3 Workout** for a 4-Star Recruit named J. Doe.
- **The Fog of War:** On paper, he is a "Slasher" (Grade A). The workout reveals his **Catalyst (Handle)** is Elite, but he has the "**Homesick**" **Inhibitor**.
- **The Decision:**
 - **Option A:** Sign him using the "Bag Drop." He fits the scheme, but the "Homesick" trait means he will likely transfer after one year if you don't win immediately.
 - **Option B:** Save the money. Look for a lower-rated "Gem" who fits the culture.
- **The Action:** You take the risk. You use the "System Fit" pitch combined with the NIL money. He commits.
- **The Result:** You have your star for next year, but you have drained your "Retention" budget. Two days later, your current starting Center enters the Transfer Portal because you couldn't afford to re-recruit him. **Strategy Over Stats.**