

The Jayhawk Coach

Dr. Forrest C. Allen

Twenty-two conference championships in 28 years of coaching is the record of Dr. Forrest C. Allen, basketball coach at the University of Kansas. He is the dean of basketball coaches in the United States, having been in the coaching game since 1908.

Dr. Allen played his high school basketball at Independence, Mo. and it was there that he first met Dr. James Naismith, inventor of the game of basketball, and coach at Kansas then.

In 1904 Dr. Allen entered the University of Kansas. During his college career, he lettered in basketball in 1905, 1906 and 1907 and in baseball in 1906 and 1907.

The following year, 1908, saw Dr. Allen off to a successful start as a coach, with a championship basketball team at K.U. His second Jayhawk team made even a better record in winning another championship the next year, marking up ten conference victories to two defeats.

The same season, Dr. Allen was coaching the Haskell Indian "National Aboriginal" team which won 19 of 24 games and the cage team of Baker University, 20 miles away.

This concluded Dr. Allen's coaching efforts for three years, while he pursued the study of medicine. In 1912 he became coach of all sports at Missouri State Teachers College at Warrensburg and his service as a coach has been continuous from that date.

In his first year at Warrensburg, Dr. Allen's football, basketball and baseball teams were undefeated and the basketball team started a series of championships which was unbroken during his seven years there.

In the fall of 1919 he became director of athletics at the University of Kansas, and before the basketball season was over was coaching that sport. Missouri was dominant in basketball at that time, but by 1922 the youthful Jayhawk mentor had brought Kansas up to a tie with the Tigers, each team losing a single game of the 16-game conference schedule.

The remaining six seasons of the old Missouri Valley conference yielded Kansas five championships, the one on 1923 without a defeat. This season was notable, also, as being in the midst of a winning streak of 34 consecutive conference games, ended, finally by Oklahoma, which in 1928 moved in championship position.

Oklahoma carried over its winning ways into the Big Six conference and held the leadership in 1929; Missouri won the next year; then Kansas, under Dr. Allen, swept the next four years. The 1935 championship went to Iowa State, coached by Louis Menze, a pupil of Dr. Allen's at Warrensburg.

In 1936 the Jayhawks blazed through their regular schedule without defeat, winning eighteen consecutive games. In the regional Olympic tryouts Kansas defeated Washburn and Oklahoma A. & M. to qualify for the semi-final eliminations.

In that series of games the Jayhawks played Utah State and won the first game, but at a great cost. Francis Kappelman, all-conference guard, suffered a deep cut across his knee, when he ran into a wire supporting one of the goals and was lost to the team. Without him Kansas could not keep pace with the sensationally shooting Utah State.

In 1937 Kansas and Nebraska tied for the championship and last year the Jayhawks were undisputed champions.