

April 2, 1945.

Mr. Bob Switzer, Sports Editor,
The Daily Register-Mail,
Galesburg, Illinois.

Dear Bob:

I am sending you tear sheets from C. E. McBride's sport column in the Kansas City Star as of Friday and Saturday, March 30 and 31. He forgot to mention that the games were all played on a concrete floor, and the six-by-sixes which supported the basket and the backboard were set right in a hole drilled in the concrete. The endline was then in line with the back of the backstop, and the posts put in rather hurriedly for the tournament were not wrapped, so the sharp edges caught many of the players driving in under the basket.

No basketball games had been played in this Convention Hall previously, and the whole set-up was entirely new. At that time there were no elbow pads or knee guards used, and you can quite imagine after a three-game tournament on successive nights just the condition of the players' elbows and knees. They were just a mass of raw beefsteak. And the games were rough, too.

I sometimes think of how the boys complain about the roughness of the game now, with their normal protection that sanity has dictated.

There is one other angle. I do not want to make it sound like boasting, but I practically single-handedly got basketball to the Olympic Games at Berlin in 1936. I made an effort to have basketball included as a demonstration sport in the Olympic Games at Los Angeles and came having near success until they promoted a football game, and of course there was much more money in that. Each host country is permitted to have a demonstration game for the entertainment of the visitors. Basketball had not at that time occupied a prominent place on the Coast, so it was difficult to get it over.

I proposed that they build an outdoor basketball court in sections and use the Coliseum for the seating capacity, and play the game out of doors, much as the Olympic Games were at St. Louis when the Buffalo Germans were there. But the football-minded prevailed, and while there I conferred with Sohaku Ri of Watsuka University, Tokyo, and some of the German plenipotentiaries. The Japs were strong for it. Dr. Karl Diem, when he got back to Germany, notified me that basketball had been included in the games. Of course, I had done a lot of work with the other foreign countries, and the people here were much surprised because Dr. Diem notified me three days in advance of any of the other American officials.