

ALONG THE LEDO ROAD, ASSAM, INDIA  
MAY 9, 1945

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DEAR DOCTOR ALLEN:

YOU PROBABLY DON'T REMEMBER ME AT ALL. I WAS ONE OF YOUR FRESHMAN BASKETBALL PLAYERS IN 1932, AND WORKED ON THE STADIUM CREW. BIG BILL JOHNSON FROM OKLAHOMA WAS AT THAT TIME, YOUR 1st STRING CENTER, AND MY IDOL SO TO SPEAK.

WHEN I WAS IN SCHOOL IN 1932, I WASN'T QUITE OLD ENOUGH TO BE EMOTIONALLY STABLE, AND I FAILED IN MY CLASSES THE SECOND SEMESTER, THE SPRING OF '33. HOWEVER, I LEARNED A GREAT DEAL ABOUT BASKETBALL FROM BILL JOHNSON AND FROSTY COX. THE FOLLOWING WINTER, I SPENT MOST OF MY TIME ACTING AS A HALF QUALIFIED ASSISTANT COACH TO MONK EDWARDS WHO WAS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR AT CONCORDIA HIGH SCHOOL, MY HOME TOWN.

DURING ALL THE INTERVENING YEARS, I HAVE FOLLOWED BASKETBALL CLOSELY AND STILL FIRMLY BELIEVE IT IS THE FINEST SPORT IN AMERICA FOR DEVELOPING YOUNG BODIES AND AN INSTINCTIVE SENSE AND APPRECIATION FOR TEAM PLAY. I HAVE ALSO THOUGHT OF PASSING AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS IN THE GAME. WITHOUT ACCURATE PASSING, ANY TEAM PLAYS UNDER A SERIOUS HANDICAP. CONVERSELY, WITH ITS HELP, ANY TEAM HAS A DECIDED ADVANTAGE, FOR THEY ARE ENABLED TO MOVE THE BALL SAFELY, AND AT WILL, TO A GOOD SCORING POSITION, AND AT THE SAME TIME CONSERVE VALUABLE ENERGY THAT WOULD BE SPENT DRIBBLING AND RUNNING AROUND.

I HAVE BEEN OVERSEAS ALMOST A YEAR NOW, AND THE OTHER DAY, IT OCCURED TO ME THAT IT WOULD BE OF SUBSTANTIAL HELP TO A COACH TO HAVE A "PRACTICE PASSING BOARD" WHICH PLAYERS COULD USE IN THEIR SPARE TIME OR WHEN THEY WERE NOT ENGAGED IN TEAM PRACTICE. THE ENCLOSED SKETCH GIVES THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF SUCH A BOARD. THE MOVABLE DISCS IN THE CENTER OF EACH TARGET WOULD BE CONNECTED BY METAL LEVERS TO A BELL. WHEN THE TARGETS WERE HIT SQUARELY BY A BASKETBALL, THE BELL WOULD SIGNAL A STRIKE, OR, A REWARD FOR ACCURACY. PROBABLY THE TARGETS SHOULD BE ABOUT THE SIZE OF A BASKETBALL. THE CENTER DISCS SHOULD BE SMALLER, MAYBE FOUR OR FIVE INCHES IN DIAMETER AND CONTRASTING IN COLOR. OUR ARMY HAS FOUND THAT WHEN A MAN AIMS AT THE BLACK BULLS-EYE ON THE TARGET RANGE RATHER THAN AIMING AT THE WHOLE TARGET, HIS MARKSMANSHIP INCREASES AMAZINGLY.

I AM ENCLOSING THE SKETCH AND ALSO, MAILING A COPY OF IT AND THIS LETTER TO MONK EDWARDS IN WICHITA. BOTH OF YOU HAVE MY FULL SANCTION TO USE IT AS YOU SEE FIT, PERHAPS THE WASTE BASKET. HOWEVER, I AM INTERESTED IN KNOWING IF THERE HAS EVER BEEN ANY SIMILAR DEVICE USED BY SOME COACH SOMEWHERE IN THE STATES. IF SO, I'D LIKE TO KNOW THE RESULTS. IF NOT, YOUR OPINION AS TO ITS VALUE WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

SINCERELY,

*J.R. Cushing*