

Now, again, may I emphasize that I would not suggest the 12 foot basket for high school players because many of the gymnasiums in the East do have low ceilings, but this is not true in the West, and there is not a college gymnasium in America or a large auditorium in the big cities that holds any sizeable crowd but what could stand a 12 foot goal elevation without any difficulty. And by asking a raise to 12 feet this even keeps the 7 foot 6 inch player shooting for a goal and not dunking a goal. This height basket would for all time seal the gate of the gangling, inept player; but for the good, big, tall man - he would still be in the game and he could pass and shoot along with the rest of them. The premium on height would not amount to the great advantage that it does at the present time under the 10 foot basket.

There are some conferences so unprogressive that they are still using the "horse-and-buggy" four by six backboard rather than the new stream-lined board. Maybe some of these fellows couldn't hit a stream-lined board and they need that large area to stop the ball from going out of bounds. And the joke of it is that the board was never put up for a rebound board by Dr. Naismith, but rather it was to keep the spectators away from the basket. They would reach over the balcony and kick or knock the ball away from the basket, so they built a wooden barrier large enough to keep the crowd away, which proved to be the four by six backboard. Anyhow, the Big Ten and some of the unprogressive conferences still need that backboard to keep their players from throwing the ball out of bounds.

Much of this backboard is unfertile banking area and it obstructs the view of more than fifty per cent of the people who sit behind it. Olson says, "The worth of the 12 foot basket has not been demonstrated in connection with the tall 'geon' problem, and such a change would have many disadvantages -- chiefly the expense of changing the height of baskets all over the country at a terrific total cost." As if this large backboard if not obstructing the view of many people in many of the high schools who pay their good money to see the game and yet sit behind this large obstructing surface without anything being done about it. Certainly the expenditure of the people who pay to see a game and fail to see it far surmounts the so-called terrific total cost that Mr. Olson speaks about of raising the basket; and yet we are not asking that they raise the basket for high school boys but for college mezzanine hurdlers. I do not call these boys "geons". I think it is an unfair misnomer. Some of the finest athletes that I have seen have been boys over six feet six inches tall. "Mezzanine Hurdlers" seems to me a mere polite appellation.

Facetiously I might suggest that in your questionnaire you ask the public, the sportscasters and the sports editors how many 12 foot baskets they have ever seen. There are none in the Smithsonian Institute, but we have two here in Robinson Gymnasium. Then if you want to get a thousand per cent negative answer ask how many coaches have actually put up a 12 foot basket and played a game under these conditions.

It is interesting to note that in your questionnaire 52.14 per cent of the public voted for a higher basket. Doubtless the sportscasters and