



One week from tonight Dr. Forrest C. "Phog" Allen, basketball coach of the University of Kansas, will be here to open the better basketball clinic at the YMCA, sponsored by the local YMCA as part of the golden jubilee celebration of the cage game. Nationally, however, four of the country's outstanding teams, starring, among others, the all-time all-American, Hank Luisetti, will start a 6-month golden jubilee celebration with games in New York's Madison Square Garden on November 19 and 24, inclusive. The celebration is intended to commemorate the name of basketball's inventor—the late Dr. James A. Naismith. It will end with the foundation of a museum at Springfield, Mass., the game's birthplace. Fifty years ago, Doctor Naismith, then a physical instructor at the YMCA in Springfield, conceived the idea of an indoor game and he sat down to figure out the only contest that is truly American in origin. All other sports have been directly imported from other countries or are diluted versions of some foreign game.

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The outcome of Doctor Naismith's cogitations was a game fast enough and so simple that the original equipment would make present-day hoopmen gape. And there were only four fundamental rules:

First: The player in possession of the ball must not make progress while it is in his possession.

Second: The goal is horizontal and above the heads of the players.

Third: Roughness is eliminated so far as possible by making it a no-contact contest.

Fourth: The ball belongs to the player at any time that he can get it without making personal contact.

Doctor Naismith put his fundamentals down in black and white and then set about to work them out. Then he decided to use a light ball, adopting a soccer ball, the closest he could then get for his needs. He then mounted an old peach basket on a pole and worked out his idea of the game.

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From this humble start in the Springfield "Y" gym fifty years ago, basketball has developed into the game we know today. Naturally, Doctor Naismith, when he invented it, didn't realize that the game would grow to such vast proportions. The game is now accepted in seventy-five other countries and approximately 20 million players compete in this sport from December until March every year. Ninety million ardent fans annually pay admissions to see the game played on every court from Madison Square Garden's polished quadrangle to playing spaces laid out in small hamlets. The game has undergone many changes since it was first instituted. First, it was played with seven men on a side. Then it was nine, then eight, and now there are five players on a team. At first there were three periods of 20 minutes each; now two are played for the same length of time. Goals once counted 3 points each instead of 2. There used to be a free throw expert on each team to shoot free shots granted because of fouls. During one game a Fordham expert once made 28 of these free shots.

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Today, basketball is one of the most popular and widely played games in our colleges and high schools. It has been streamlined into one of the fastest of competitive games.—Paul O'Boynick.