

## *Player Application and Uses of the Fatigue Curve*

Coaches of individual sports such as track and field, boxing, golf, wrestling, or tennis, have little difficulty in selecting their best performers or in predicting with relative accuracy what these performers will do in competition. In these activities numerous tests have been conducted and objective records are at hand to show exactly who, for instance, is a track team's best sprinter or shot putter, and to indicate with what degree of success he may compete against another sprinter or shot putter whose record is known.

However, in team games such as basketball and football accurate ratings of players are much more difficult since the factors involved are so numerous and complex that they are not easily measured. In fact, coaches of these sports usually admit their inability to tell just how good a player is; how much he has improved; or how well he will perform in a forthcoming contest. Notoriously they often predict defeat while hoping for victory. The track coach can make positive ratings because he has statistics to back his statements; the basketball coach cannot be positive because he is prone to rely upon judgment which, at best, is sometimes inaccurate.

Probably every basketball coach has tinkered with methods by which he may be certain that his judgment is sound. He has kept charts and records dealing with goal shooting, freethrow accuracy, passing and dribbling errors, and other elements of game performance; then pored over this mass of material only to discard most of it and guess that player "A" is better than player "B". Often he discovers that his judgment is disputed by the players themselves, by spectators, and by fellow coaches. Note, for instance, the wide variety of opinions expressed by coaches who try to select All-Star teams. Recognition of the need for objective grading of players has resulted in a number of tests claiming to supply the coach with accurate ratings of ability and condition. With few exceptions these tests are complicated, difficult to administer, and consume so much time that little energy is left to practice the skills of the game.

It is contended here, and not without considerable experimentation, that the compilation of production efforts, and the plotting of fatigue curves will provide coaches with significant information