

Care and Conditioning of the Basketball Team in Early Season

By Blair Gullion, Basketball Coach, University of Tennessee



Blair Gullion

All coaches recognize the proper value of conditioning of the athletic team and realize that condition is the factor that means winning or losing the close games during the season. While this final effort is an important point it is well to go further and study the immediate value of a proper training or conditioning program in early season. A player in good physical condition will learn faster and will retain his habits, skills longer than the poorly conditioned one; an injured player or a stiff, sore athlete must lose valuable practice time and retard the work of the entire squad and in many cases

Editor's note:—Mr. Gullion has written two excellent treatises on basketball. They are "One Hundred Drills for Teaching Basketball Fundamentals" and "Basketball Offensive Fundamentals Analyzed." These may be obtained from your sporting goods dealer. Either or both of them will be of great assistance in preparing your team for a successful season.

get so far behind other members of the squad that he may fail to prove of value to the team. Therefore, a careful program of teaching in relation to conditioning value is worth while.

One of the first problems of the coach is the development of proper attitudes toward minor injuries such as bruises, sprains, blisters, and abrasions. Many players feel that they are going "sissy" when they take these small ailments to the trainer. The coach should insist that all such trivial things be reported at once.

As for preventive measure it is well for the coach to insist on good clean equipment and laundry service to keep it clean. This not only aids in the promotion of morale of the squad but is a splendid hygienic factor in the elimination of boils. The same is true of towel service.

Since the feet are the PHYSICAL FOUNDATION of the game, proper care should be given to them, and the following procedure is recommended:

1. Equip each player with properly fitted, NEW basketball shoes. This should be imperative for the better or key players.
2. In purchasing basketball sweat socks, buy a heavy wool and cotton sock that will offer a good cushion for the feet.
3. Provide thin, cotton inner socks to be worn under the heavy sock. This is effective in the prevention of blisters.
4. Use a good skin hardener on the feet prior to each practice session.
5. If at all possible furnish clean socks for each practice session.

The practice work should start slowly with emphasis on fundamentals that do not involve much hardship on the feet, ankles and knees. The use of dribble-shooting relay races, the pass and go-behind the receiver drills, and other set-up of this type are valuable in teaching fundamentals as well as in conditioning. Work the players hard while at work but "sprinkle" the practices liberally with rest periods of about five minutes duration.

Half-court and full-court keep-away under regular rules are good conditioners. Lots of half-court or "dummy" scrimmage is effective and "wind sprints" are also of great value. In using "wind sprints" have the players line up along one end of the court; the coach blows the whistle and the players sprint until the whistle blows again which is a signal for them to walk. The next blast of the whistle starts them sprinting again. It is well for the coach to vary the length of the sprints and the walks.

This early season work has the psychological danger of staleness. The coach should study the weight chart carefully as it is one of the best signs of this difficulty. The best way to avoid this is through the careful planning of the material to be taught and through the medium of making the practice sessions interesting to the player. This is accomplished main-

ly through varying the practice work by the use of a large number of drills and stunts. If the same drills are continually used the players lose interest and the response is not as effective.

Since most of our players live in fraternity houses or boarding houses it is especially hard to control diet to any extent. We merely ask the boys not to eat the foods usually banned for athletic teams and to eliminate any other foods that do not agree with them.

An Olympic Coach



Alvin Ulbrickson, Crew Coach, University of Washington

Born within the sight of the University shell house in Seattle, Alvin Martin Ulbrickson rowed across Lake Washington each morning and evening to attend Franklin High School. He completed high school in three and a half years—an "A" student.

Al entered Washington in the fall of 1922 and stroked the 1923 Freshman crew, who finished second at Poughkeepsie. In 1924, he began his career as varsity stroke, and that year the Huskies won from California and took the Intercollegiate Championship at Poughkeepsie. In 1925, Washington also beat the Bears of California, but the Navy won on the Hudson; the Huskies placed second. In 1926, Ulbrickson's third and last year, Washington again defeated California, defeated Princeton in a dual regatta, and won again at Poughkeepsie, Navy being second. Ulbrickson was captain of the crew during his last year, and rowed the last mile of the Poughkeepsie with the muscles of his back wrenched but stroked his fellow crewmen through even the final sprint.

Al was hired as freshman crew coach in 1927, and then succeeded Rusty Callow as varsity coach in the fall of 1927. As coach he hit his stride in 1930 and since then has only lost one Pacific coast championship (1932 to California). At Poughkeepsie, Al's