

The east puts a premium on defense, allowing the defense to get away with murder. It is a mild thing for a guard to undress an opponent. The west puts a premium on the offense, and insists that the player must play the ball and not the man. The rule book also emphasizes this point. There you have it. The scores are much larger in the west than in the east for that reason, for, when you play the man you have a five-man team wrestling match. When you play the ball there is a great opportunity for scoring and you have a more open game.

Again, the east has used the professional player to coach her college teams, while the west has used the college-trained coach without professional experience. In former years Ed Wachter, of Harvard, Joe Fogarty, of Yale, Nat Holman, of C.C.N.Y., and other professional players coached the leading college varsities of the east, while in the west Dave McMillan is the only professional coach coaching college players.

Dr. Naismith, the originator of the game, started with this, his first principle, namely that each player is entitled to his position on the floor. The rules still emphasize this point.

I quote Nat Holman, a famous professional player and a college coach, on blocking which is a foul according to the rules. "Frequently an offensive player attempting to sidestep an approaching defensive player may cause contact. In such cases the officials are to be guided solely by the apparent intent of the offensive player." This unsavory and unworkable authority given to the officials certainly would not make the game anything but a guessing contest with the officials able to determine the outcome by their own acts. Quoting further from Holman: "Just as soon as we encourage the use of set plays or key men to check a player in pursuit of his opponent, then we are destroying one of the fundamental factors of the offense." The above statement is in direct conflict with the majority thought of the National Basketball Coaches Association, as well as the expressed statement of the Rules Guide.

The leading college coaches of the country employ set plays using key men to screen the opponents from their objective.

Perhaps it is well to give the definition of screening and blocking or pick-off. Screening is impeding the progress of the man who does not have the ball without making bodily contact. Screening is not a foul. Blocking or pick-off is impeding the progress of the man who does not have the ball by making bodily contact. Blocking or pick-off is a foul.

So, in the east, the professional game has influenced the thought and play in that sector, while in the west the university, college and high school thought has been to play the ball and not the man and to have the official call fouls as he sees them rather than to call them as he thinks they ought to be.