

DECATUR FANS MUCH AROUSED OVER RULING

Dissension Follows Decision Made in Springfield Game

The following story appeared as the lead item in George Kreker's column in the Decatur Herald-Review this morning. It is re-printed here in full:

DECATUR, Ill., Jan. 20.—Good Morning! We can't remember an incident since Bob Campbell, D. H. S. guard, was disqualified from the 1937 state tournament championship game against Joliet which has aroused the Decatur basketball fans more than the unfortunate situation which occurred in the closing seconds of last Friday's Decatur-Springfield game.

Controversy continued yesterday as Decatur folk still maintain that Johnny Wasilewski, Taylorville official, illegally took away a Decatur chance to tie the score seconds before the final gun. This happened, as most of you know, when Ev Inman, acting Decatur captain who had been awarded two free throws, stated he would shoot the first one and take the second out-of-bounds.

It is alleged that Wasilewski informed Inman that he didn't have to make his decision until after the first throw, but after Ev hit the first, then elected to shoot the other one, Johnny insisted on Inman carrying out his original choice. This brought a futile Decatur protest.

Opinion is divided on the correct ruling. Along with Eddie Cole, Herald sports writer, we talked to numerous officials and coaches and we found disagreement which suggests that it is a matter of interpretation. One prominent official in this vicinity, inclined to approve Wasilewski's decision, on the facts at hand, has written to the IHSAA office for clarification and this verdict will govern all future cases of this kind.

Two well-known Decatur officials said that the rule, 13, of the basketball rules book, clearly shows that a player can make his option after the first of two free throws and that anything said before the first one should be disregarded. Another said that he would rule the same as Wasilewski, basing his decision on an interpretation which appeared in a supplementary sheet issued by the state association last September which says: "If a captain has exercised an option it can't be changed unless some subsequent rules infraction changes conditions."

And so it goes. Some interpret the case one way and others disagree, but no one knows for certain because this is the first time such a case has come up in Illinois. Regardless of any official ruling from the state office the 19-18 Springfield victory will stand. Coach Gay Kintner yesterday branded as "ridiculous" reports that Decatur would protest the outcome. "It's a closed incident," said Kintner.

This writer, for one, was surprised at the conduct of many Decatur fans who remained after the game ended to lustily boo Wasilewski as he left the floor for his dressing room. We realize how such incidents can stir up emotions, but after all the official was honestly carrying out his job and it's quite possible that he ruled correctly.