

board, the only reason a 6 ft. 4 in. backboard was put up was to keep the spectators from kicking the ball away or knocking it away from the basket when the player shot. And there are still a lot of unprogressive basketball coaches, like the coaches in the Big Ten, who still stick to the 6 ft. 4 in. rectangular board. And it was used as a protecting wall, not as a shooting space. Any fello who cannot shoot close enough to the basket to hit the kidney shaped board should lose the ball out of bounds, yet the Big Ten coaches will not agree to a smaller board. And it was put up for no purpose of rebounding at all.

You may think I have digressed a bit in bringing in the backboard, but I am showing you that a parallel case is the basket in height, being 10 feet because Dr. Naismith tacked it on a running track and the track was 10 feet from the floor. Now through all these years we have argued about the player interfering with the ball at the basket, and all we would have to do to eliminate all difficulties of that nature, and delete many of the rules that are now in the book would be to raise the basket. And yet there are many people who will not agree to this because either the drive-in or some other of their pets would be slightly curtailed. The drive-in calls for the awarding of an extra shot.

Statistics have been made to show that between 72 and 92 per cent of all the fouls are made within a radius of 18 to 20 feet of the basket. We say that there are too many free throws, yet the very people to argue that point will not agree to a rule that would eliminate most of those fouls. They go way around the measure by asking for five and six personal fouls on a player to disqualify rather than four. Yet, if you would raise the basket there would be very few players go out of the game because most of the fouls are made on driving in for the basket, or being right under the basket when a player jumps up to shoot and is fouled by a player too closely guarding the offensive man. The most disadvantageous position for an offensive man is directly under a 12 foot basket. He should be out a piece to bank his shot or to shoot in for the goal.

Harold, why don't you get Bruce to put up a 12 foot goal and let his players shoot at it for a while? I have found that most of the objections to the 12 foot basket are from coaches who have never shot at one. I am just venturing a good-natured guess now that Bruce has never shot at one, and of course the thing that causes Bruce to be extremely emphatic now is this 7 foot boy down at Stillwater.

Several years ago I wrote a short article and had it mimeographed on the 12 foot basket for college and independent teams. You will notice that I stress college and independent teams, and if you do write the article I think you should set out definitely that it is not for high school players. I am enclosing one of these mimeographed copies which answers most of your questions. However, I will take your questionnaire in order and answer the same so that you will get the stuff you desire in the way you ask it. But I did want to bring some other points out in this epistle to you. If there is anything else that you desire, please feel free to call upon me because I am not unduly interested, as I told Bruce, in the Rules Committee and its members, or the Coaches Association and its members. You can use any or all of the quotations you desire. I am not particularly anxious to wet-nurse any of the boys on the Rules Committee. I worked a good many years for what I considered the best interests of basketball and I find that the majority of these fellows are a group of basketball politicians who try to get some