

The Basketball Critics

We understand that the members of the national basketball rules committee, composed largely of college and university men, took a lambasting at their recent annual meeting from a small group of 30 or 40 members of the college basketball coaches' association and were told that they should rule out the molded basketball and the new fan-shaped backboards. Furthermore, we understand that a majority of the committee "took water" and tried to crawl out from under the responsibility for making the new-type basketball and backboards official. We are told that these coaches tried to place the blame upon a small group of midwestern high school men and made a number of the committee members believe that they could not afford to accept anything from the high schools, that until such time as the college basketball coaches should make formal recommendations they should not vote any changes.

Since we were not in on the preliminaries to the change in the backboards we cannot speak with any authority. We were informed, however, by the committee that the research division of the rules making body supervised tests and experiments authorized by the committee and that following the report of this committee, which was headed by Dr. F. C. Allen of the University of Kansas, the change to the new boards was authorized and recommended. At the annual meeting of the joint committee in 1941 it voted not only to make the new boards official but put into the guide the statement that, "in all new construction and in replacements the official board (the new one) should be installed." The vote on this change in the rules was 14 to 1—and there are only four high school representatives on the committee.

In this Missouri Valley area not only have the high schools changed to the new-type board but also the colleges and universities. In fact, we do not know of a single college in this section that does not have the new boards installed. Were our Missouri Valley college and university coaches influenced by a small group of high school coaches, or did they make the change upon the recommendation of the national committee, just as our high schools did? Did they think they were to be misled by a group of uninformed rules makers who did not know their own minds or those of their constituents?

The popularity of the new boards among those who have used them is attested by the overwhelming vote of 5 to 1 by hundreds of college and high school coaches throughout the country. Our Kansas coaches are almost unanimous for them, as they are for the molded basketball and we doubt if there will be any going back. In fact, we fear for the safety of anyone who would suggest such a thing.

We are not so much concerned just now with the merits of the molded ball or the new backboard, but we are concerned with the advisability of our high school associations being submitted to the domination of a rules making body that does not know "where it has been, where it is now, or where it is going."