

The pre-season and post-season tests were taken under ideal conditions without the emotional strain of a game. The post-season test shows that the boys' heart rates are higher while their blood pressures are lower. The high heart rates and low blood pressure indicate periods of fatigue that naturally place a strain on the circulatory system. The authors are unable to say with any final degree of authority, but the probabilities are that if this type of strenuous exercise is practiced year after year during the adolescent period, it will produce a weakened circulatory system, which may develop into a handicap in later life. They conclude that basketball as played under the present rules is too strenuous for junior high school boys unless several boys, given each at least one quarter of the four to rest in, participate in one game. (3) Their conclusion is substantiated by S. J. Morris, M.D. of the Health Unit of West Virginia University.

Lon Jourdet, basketball coach at the University of Pennsylvania, believes basketball takes too great physical toll. Basketball rule-makers must return the center jump to the game before secondary school authorities legislate against the sport, he declared recently.

Jourdet, whose Quaker teams have won eight Eastern Intercollegiate League titles in fifteen years, said the present rules not only are harmful to the players' health, but that the high scoring now possible hurts spectator interest.

"The game as it is played today," the Penn mentor added, "is a running contest that takes too much of a toll physically from the youngsters who play it in high and prep schools. The college boys, too, are finding the going a lot rougher than it was a few years back when the center tap off was the vogue.

The speeding up of the game adds about six or seven minutes more of actual scrimmage as compared with the game when we had the center tap off. Those few minutes are inconsequential (in value) when the physical wear and tear on the players is taken into consideration."

As for spectators, they can't even keep pace with the heavy scoring, Jourdet finds. "Men who have followed basketball for many years as spectators say that the game is too fast and not as enjoyable as in the old days," Jourdet explained. "They tell me that keeping up with the score is almost impossible, because of the rapidity with which field goals are made."

"There has been too much meddling with the rules," he commented. "Return the center jump and basketball will regain its sanity." (4)

What do basketball coaches think of the "speed-up"? Lew Andreas, Basketball Coach at Syracuse University, who has kicked around this basketball game nearly two decades, figures the time is coming when separate sets of rules will be drawn for colleges and high schools to get away from some "horse-race" effects.

"This modern game, with the center jump eliminated," the veteran coach of Syracuse basketball said, "is like watching a table tennis match. The ball is always going back and forth with no stop. It's great to watch, but it puts a severe strain on the youngsters. Physicians have told us that."

(3) "Effects of Basketball on Junior High School Boys", A. B. Bowyer, M.D. and N. S. Anderson, as abstracted in The Journal of the American Medical Ass'n. Vol. 112, No. 15, April 15, 1939, p. 1534.

(4) Buffalo Courier-Express, February 11, 1940.

*Add 7  
time to  
game.*

*Spectators  
can't keep  
up with  
the game*