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THE GAME OF BASKETBALL was invented deliberately to furnish a vigorous, interesting, indoor game for the winter months. It was devised by James A. Naismith, an instructor in the Y.M.C.A. College at Springfield, Mass., and was first played in December, 1891. Ordinary gymnastics palled on the 18 candidates for Y.M.C.A. secretarial training, so Dr. Luther Gulick, head of the school, directed Naismith to provide a suitable game for the active youths.

Young Naismith analyzed games, and found that carrying or throwing a ball was among the fundamentals. He recalled his boyhood game of duck-on-the-rock, and that the tossed rock was more accurate, even though it did not drive the "duck" as did the hurled rock. He decided to toss the ball, in his new game. Since a goal on the floor would be too easy to defend, he decided on the elevated goal; because the janitor had a couple peach baskets but no boxes, the baskets were used; because the gallery railing of the gym was 10 feet from the floor, that became the established height. A larger ball could be more easily handled than a small one, so the soccer ball was adopted.

Running with the ball involved too much danger to the player trying to stop the ball carrier, so he determined to let the other players run, and require the man with the ball to dispose of it.

There were 18 in the class, so the first teams were of nine men each, later cut to seven, and still later to the present five.

The game "caught on" immediately. It was described in the Y.M.C.A. College papers, and was soon tried by Y.M.C.A.'s elsewhere. New York City had games early in 1892.

The young secretaries, going to far parts of the country and to foreign lands, carried the game with them. Duncan Patton, "Y" graduate, took the game to India in 1894; Emil Thies, to France in 1895; Ishakawa, to Japan in 1900. American soldiers played it during the Boxer rebellion, and the Philippine insurrection. C. Harek, another "Y" man, introduced it into Persia in 1901.