

In another year I look to see the wise coach swinging to a very slow set and tantalizing offense. Certainly if I had no extra reserves I would play the slow set, screening game on the offense, and on the defense I would break rapidly back and set my defense for the fast break ball handler. My contention is that this game as now played is entirely too mechanical. There is a break up the floor and then a break down the floor, ~~then~~ exactly like hockey. The center play offered some variation.

The game is for the players first, and for the spectators secondly. I say the players first, because it is the health of the players that is foremost to be considered.

The writer has already coached 30 years of actual and continuous college basketball. At the present time I am the oldest coach in the United States in point of service who is now coaching collegiate basketball. I have seen a good many rules changes since 1900, since I have been playing high school, college and independent basketball, and have also coached high school, independent and college basketball. But in the 30 years I have coached 30 years of college basketball. During that time I have seen many rules changes.

I played in a college game when the colleges could not dribble but just play the one bounce, and then they permitted the colleges to dribble, and changes have come thick and fast. The rules makers have been saying to leave the rules alone, but just this last year the rules makers legislated into the game the most drastic change that has been made in years. Ten years ago the rules committee legislated the dribble out of basketball. The dribble was so spectacular - it is akin to the broken field run in football - that I personally took a shot at the rules committee for doing it.

Knute Rockne was lecturing at Des Moines before the National Education Association on the pedagogy of football, and I was lecturing at the Drake field house before the same body on the pedagogy of basketball. It was just after the rules body had made their change in April, and I flayed them on account of their dictatorial and uncompromising attitude in not ascertaining the wishes of the coaches before the rule was made.

This was before the organization of the National Association of Basketball Coaches. I received 160 telegrams from coaches over the United States who were adverse to the elimination of the dribble. We, the coaches, met in Des Moines at the time of the Drake Relays in the latter part of April, and voiced our disapproval of the rules bodys' change. We further agreed to meet in Chicago at the time of the National Collegiate A.A.U. Track meeting in June and form a coaches' association. By this time the rules body had changed the rule back to reinstating the dribble.

In June I was elected first president of the National Association of Basketball Coaches. I was re-elected the second year. At no time have I ridden the hobby of trying to get through some pet rule. I have considered in my estimate of the changes what would be good for the players and also what would be good entertainment for the spectators.

Dr. Naismith says to me that he is not standing in the way of progress, but wants to be sure that the rules makers are going in the right direction. This is his answer to my query of him after I received your letter and put the question to him of the "peach basket" stage. Dr. Naismith is not hidebound, nor is he contracted in any way. Doctor has never really coached basketball, but he travels all over the United States each year and witnesses basketball from the girls and boys game to the high school, college and independent basketball, wherever played in the U. S. It is my opinion that he is much more mellow and much more responsive than most any coach in the country.