

April 30, 1945.

Cpl. Ted Lins, 36289070,
Finance Office,
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APO 333, c/o P.M.,
New York, N.Y.

Dear Corporal Ted:

Your aunt, Dr. Beatrice Lins, delivered your message regarding the 10 ft. basket. I had no notion of asking for 10 ft. baskets only for college and independent players. This last winter I saw the Western Championship play-off between the University of Arkansas and Oklahoma A. & M. This boy, Bob Kurland, exactly 7 ft. tall, was not forced to jump for the basket at all. He merely sailed in close under the basket and when a shot was rim high he reached his hands and without flexing his fingers over the ball, just extended them and pushed the ball right into the basket.

He did this three or four occasions without getting off his tip-toes. When it is considered that a player's height of 7 feet is further extended by the elongation of his arms, which arms are in proportion to his height, you can see the tremendous advantage of a man 7 feet tall under a 10 ft. basket. And Henry Iba, the A. & M. coach, issued a statement only a week or so ago in which he said that next year he would have a player 7 ft. 3 in. tall.

You can begin to appreciate, Ted, that the reason a basket was ten feet in the beginning was because the running track on which Dr. Naismith tacked the basket happened to be ten feet. If the running track had been 12 feet we would have had 12 ft. baskets. In only the small high schools now are the ceilings low enough that they would not permit a higher basket.

We have had 12 ft. baskets erected in our gymnasium for 15 years, and we have intentionally placed tall men under the basket for experimental purposes and then passed them the ball. The poorest place in the world for a fellow to shoot at this basket is directly underneath the 12 ft. basket. The bank shots out 10 and 15 feet are much easier made than right under the hoop. Therefore, I think if you will study this problem a bit you will not be against a 12 ft. basket because the 10 ft. basket gives the tall fellow such a decided advantage and a 12 ft. basket will take nothing away from the shorter fellow, but will reduce the advantage of the taller player.