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May 11, 1939

Mr. R. E. Weinzettel
Fred Medart Manufacturing Co.
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Mr. Weinzettel:

I have your letter of May 9 and am enclosing copy of that section of the minutes of the National Basketball Committee meeting which deals with the modified backboards.

You will note from the enclosed sheet that I am attempting to get definite agreement on the part of members of the committee relative to the board size and shape toward which we should work. It is my belief that one approximating the proposed diagram will be sanctioned. Note that the cut out space below is contingent on developing a basket which will clamp to the bottom of the board with only metal braces extending below. Of course, if such a basket cannot be satisfactorily developed, it will be necessary to leave at least three inches below the level of the basket. However, the board space below the ring is entirely waste and if it can be eliminated, it will allow much better vision from behind the backboard.

In my opinion, boards of several years in the future will be of this type although no one could guarantee that this prophecy is an accurate one. Probably the best way to secure the transition is to encourage those who are erecting new equipment to arrange the braces in such a way that they will be not more than 54 inches from left to right and not more than 30 inches vertically. I believe this is a wide enough spread to support the smaller board since its weight will be considerably less than the present one.

As far as the convex surface is concerned, I believe this has just as much merit as the smaller size. However, it is my belief that it will be more difficult to make a transition from the flat surface to the convex surface. If it is purely a matter of size a team could very well practice on the large board and not be handicapped when playing on a floor which might have the small board. This is not the case if the surface is changed. It would probably take a team some time to get adjusted to a convex surface after having practiced on a flat surface. For this reason it might be necessary to proceed on the assumption that the first change which might be made is the change in size and shape. If desirable, the convex board could then be substituted at a later date for the other..

You will understand that I am attempting to look at this from the standpoint of practice in making the transition as well as in connection with the theory underlying the desirable features of both the changed size and contour.

As far as curvature is concerned, I believe that a curvature such that the middle part of the board will be from four to six inches thicker than the edge (measured on the board which is 6 feet wide) is about right. It may be that the six inch curve would be more desirable than the four in case the carrower board is used.