

Edward Hall used to say in the football back that any dope can run around and end, if you permit the offense to hold a defensive end. No player can score in basketball if you permit holding by the defensive side. Basketball is such a highly developed, skillful game that requires freedom of movement in shooting that you spoil the game utterly when you permit holding and too easy body checking.

Someone says that there is no other game that ejects a player for making a certain number of fouls. Well, there is no other game just like basketball that requires the freedom of movement in shooting for a goal that basketball does.

If most coaches spent as much time teaching the players on their team not to foul as they do in screening, which shades into blocking, and if they spent time on the offensive, then you would have less fouling and the players would stay in the game more. I contend that Nick Kearns was right. The crowd should boo many of the coaches who teach screening and when the screening shades into blocking they jump up and scream their heads off because this so-called coach would not teach his player to screen instead of block. It is poor pedagogy on the part of the coach that caused the boy, and incidentally the team, to get into trouble.

So let's teach better individual defense and better team defense, and not try to crowd the issue by saying the best player goes out of the game when in reality the poorest player goes out of the game because he has not learned enough to keep from fouling sufficient to keep him in the game. A rule that has stood the test and decrying of so many coaches must have some good points in it. People like highly developed skills and they do not like awkward body-slaming contacts which are sure to result unless the game is kept open and clean. And only by calling fouls closely can you keep this game on a highly skillful basis.

Dr. Naismith has always emphasized that the player should play the ball and not the man, and when you play the man you have a five-team wrestling match. The ball is apt to roll out on the floor without anyone to play it. So let's emphasize clean teamwork rather than a slam-bang, rough and tumble shinny game.

Sincerely yours,

Director of Physical Education,
Varsity Basketball Coach.

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