

NEW BASKETBALL BACKBOARD

Since the legalization of the smaller streamlined basketball backboard by the National Committee, there have been significant developments. Correspondence during the summer indicates that most of the gymnasiums which have been completed during the past few months and many of the older gymnasiums will use the new type backboard.

Equipment manufacturers have made a contribution to the game by bending their efforts toward construction of such boards of durable and rigid material at reasonable cost. One of the factors which influenced the National Committee was the matter of economy in construction. The first steel backboards of the traditional rectangular design presented many problems and it was not uncommon for such boards to cost one hundred dollars or more per pair. Several excellent steel boards are now being stamped by mammoth stamping machines and the boards are available at a cost of considerably less than half of the stated amount. Several reliable manufacturers are producing the steel boards at a cost of forty dollars or less per pair. Such boards are announced in the National Federation Basketball Rules Book by firms such as the Medart Manufacturing Company, St. Louis, Missouri, and the J. E. Porter Corporation, Ottawa, Illinois.

For those schools where it is desired to have the boards made by the manual training department, plans are available for proper construction. One of these plans is furnished by Schutt Manufacturing Company, Litchfield, Illinois, and is shown in the accompanying diagram.

(NOTE TO STATES: Plates showing exactly how to construct board and one showing gymnasium view of board in use are being sent to those states which have subscribed to this complete press service.)

Goals to fit the new boards have been constructed in such a way that there is a minimum obstruction of view and of interference with activities behind the plane of the backboard. Such goals may be secured at a reasonable cost from any of the above mentioned manufacturers and from similar manufacturers.

(Insert zinc plate 3 by 5)

Reasons for Change

Since the origin of the game, backboards have been rectangular in shape, six feet wide and four feet high. The basket was attached one foot above the lower edge of the board. During the early years of the game, this shape and size were desirable. The space below the level of the basket was necessary because the old style basket braces were fastened to the board about one foot below the basket. In recent years developments in gymnasium equipment construction have made these cumbersome braces unnecessary. Consequently the chief use for most of the space on the backboard below the level of the basket has disappeared. Another reason why the space at the bottom of the board was in use was because the early ball was considerably larger than the present one. The maximum size for such balls was 32 inches in circumference and because of the difficulties in the then known methods of construction, most balls stretched to the maximum size soon after being placed in use. In recent years the size of the ball has been reduced to a minimum of twenty nine and one-half inches and a maximum of thirty inches. Improved methods of construction have resulted in a ball which can be made any given size and which will not stretch during use. Consequently all balls are now made almost exactly twenty nine and one-half inches. The balls also have a slightly faster reaction due to improved methods of construction which has eliminated all sewed seams and consequently all dead spots which were inherent in balls made by sewing panels of leather and cloth together. This change in type of ball is related to the new type backboard. A slightly different technique is used in bank shots. This change in technique has resulted in the lower part of the backboard being waste space.