

FINDINGS, REPORT, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RELATIVE TO

THE ELIMINATION OF THE CENTER JUMP

Commencing with the season of 1935, the Southern Division of the Pacific Coast Conference has been engaged in authorized research as regards the elimination of the tip-off in actual inter-collegiate play.

The term "authorized" is used in order to negative at the outset any thought that this move was local or in any way sectional or "insurgent" in its nature. Before the plan was ever put into effect, Dr. J. Fred Bohler of the National Rules Committee was contracted, and, as a member of that body, warmly expressed his approval of the project. Thus, on April 10, 1934, he wrote: "I think it is a fine thing for your group in the South to give this elimination of the center jump play a trial next year and I shall report this to the Committee. I am sure that our Committee will be pleased to get the result of this experiment." And again, on April 25, 1934, he wrote, concerning the Committee: "They were very happy indeed to know that the Southern Division of the Pacific Coast Conference was undertaking some experiments along this line and I am sure they will be anxious to get the results of your findings."

With this open encouragement from the rule-making body, the experiment, as such, was tried in 1935 with such success that it was carried on through the 1936 and 1937 seasons. With this experience as a basis, it seems fitting the findings above referred to by Dr. Bohler be now made. They are as follows:

1. Elimination of Rough Play Incidental to the Center Tip.

The element of rough play in connection with the tip was the moving cause which led to the modification in the first place. It was found that crashing, shoving, blocking, and other illegal contact in connection with the tip was the rule, rather than the exception. Moreover, that the fouls actually committed were greatly in excess of those detected and called, irrespective of the ability of the officials. With the elimination of the tip, this evil has, of course, been entirely removed.

2. Elimination of Held Balls Following the Tip.

When the tip-off was in use, it was found that in a great many cases the player securing the ball was immediately tied up by an opponent, thus resulting in a held ball. The elimination has thus resulted in a marked decrease in the number of held balls, thus leading to less interruptions in the play.

3. Development of a More Smooth, Continuous Type of Play.

With the center tip in use, after a basket there is of necessity a lull in the play during which the ball is retrieved by the officials, the teams line up in their center tip formations, and the ball is finally tossed up at center. This break in the continuity and smoothness of the play is entirely done away with where the ball is played in without the tip. One team scores; the other immediately assumes the offensive and the play goes on without a break in its continuity. The ball is not handled by the official (this was tried and discarded in 1935) and, hence, a rapid counter-attack from the back court may be employed if desired.