

The introduction of basketball into the Olympic program was a success in many ways. First, it gave many representatives who attended the tournament an opportunity to observe the game and to judge its qualities. Some of the countries not represented by teams had observers to watch the games. Second, it gave each country a chance to see the game as played by other nations; to note the similarities in style and the points of difference. Third, it helped in the development of an international set of rules, and in the method of conducting international contests.

Fourth, it emphasized the differences in physical make-up of the different nations. eg: The tallest man on the Philippine team was 5 ft. 11 in., and the tallest man on the American team was 6 ft. 9 in. This brought out the fact that tall men were monopolizing the game, and that the shorter races were handicapped greatly, not alone in the center jump, but in the whole game. So apparent was this that it has been suggested that there be two classes, - the short and the tall, - following the plan of weight divisions used in wrestling and boxing. The next Olympics will be held in Japan whose men are less than 6 feet, and whose neighbors, China and Philippines, also are short. The only team with extremely tall men was the U.S.A. squad. A medium range of from 5 ft. 10 in., to 6 ft. 2 in., was found on teams from Turkey, Egypt, Switzerland, Italy, France, and Canada. These teams have set their estimate of extreme height as 6 ft. 3 in., or 190 c.m. Such a limit still would be too tall for shorter teams, particularly those from Oriental nations.

Fifth, it gave a splendid opportunity for the development of friendly feelings between the men of the teams, as they worked side by side, and yet did not try to injure each other. A fine spirit of sportsmanship prevailed and was encouraged by all connected with the tournament.

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

The following twenty-two nations entered the Olympic Basketball competition: U.S.A., Canada, Mexico, Poland, Japan, China, Philippines, Switzerland, France, Egypt, Germany, Turkey, Hungary, Uruguay, Brazil, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Estonia, Peru, and Chili. Spain entered a team but the civil war prevented its appearance.

THE COURTS

The courts were outdoors and were covered with the same surface as the running track. This was made of a mixture of sawdust, sand and salt. It resembled in appearance the sand on the seashore that is solid when damp but powdery when dry. The surface was wetted down after each game and usually was in good shape. The main objection was that the surface gave way beneath the foot on a rapid turn and made pivoting much more difficult. There was no covering over the court and, while the weather was fine for most of the games, the finals were played in the rain on a sloppy surface.

In Berlin there were in the Reichsport Field several gymnasiums connected with the Jahn Platz and used for the school of physical education. These would have made excellent courts. The schedule, however, had been prearranged making it impossible to shift events.

For the basketball tournament there were in all six courts, one of which was larger than the others and for which the bleachers would accommodate more spectators. This court was scheduled for use in the semifinals and finals, but when used for the semifinals in the rain, it proved so poor that the finals were shifted to a smaller court. I believe that it would be possible to arrange