

There is the story Phog Allen, coach of the Kansas team, tells about the referee who called a foul on a player who neither had the ball nor was near anybody else on the court.

"Foul!" screamed the player. "What did I do?"

"Nothing," answered the ref, "but I detected evil in your eye!"

Another thing that made the game unpopular in many corners was the lack of scoring. That was because under ordinary circumstances, only one man shot the ball at the basket. I remember one evening in 1919, when the Parkersburg (W. VA.) High School team was winning on its home court, 18 to 17. The clock in the referee's hand showed 35 seconds to play when a young fellow named Clair Bee, Grafton's running guard, got his hands on the ball. He dribbled half way up the court, and then let fly for the basket. Luckily, the ball swished through, and Grafton won by that point.

I say "luckily," because as I shot the ball I could hear the gasps of amazement and consternation from my team mates, from my coach, and from the substitutes on our bench. If that ball hadn't registered those winning points, I'd have been orally tarred and feathered, because running guards weren't supposed to shoot for the basket in those days. Good Godfrey, No!

That was part of the set plan and you can see how dull and dreary it could become if a team wanted to stall after it had the lead. In fact, stalling reached such proportions that one game, Homer versus Georgetown, in an Illinois district tournament, ended with a score of 1 to 0! Georgetown scored on a foul early in the first period, and stalled for the remainder of the contest. It wasn't much fun.

You know how many people who saw that game cared if they ever saw another basketball game, don't you,

Compare that with the fifty points registered by one player in a regulation game against Duquesne University on New Year's Day, 1938, and you have some indication of how much difference a few years have made. Those fifty points were tallied by the greatest basketball player I ever saw, Hank Luisetti, of Stanford. I never hope to see another as great, but if I do, I pray that he'll be wearing an L.I.U. uniform.

Basketball B.G. (Before the Garden) was a localized sport. The East played according to certain interpretations of the rules, the South another way, and the West still a third way. It wasn't until the teams from various sections got to playing against each other that basketball became a real national sport.

There is still great cleavage between Eastern and Western styles of play, mind you, but that, I am certain, traces back more to a difference in material than in coaching ideas. The Western coaches get big, rawboned kids who have grown up in the "wide, open spaces". The kids have a physical stamina that is the result of generations of hard living. Therefore, the Western coaches base their game on sheer speed, constant running, quick cutting, and long one hand shots.

The Eastern schools play a game based on short fast passes, and the set shot. This game is obviously much more mental than the Western.

We in the East play it because most of the members of our squads are from cities, instead of from open spaces, and are, therefore, smaller, lighter, and possessed of less reserve energy. Because there is no uniform size for a basketball court, the cages in the West, where space is there for the taking, are very large; here in the East, where space is at a premium, the courts are much smaller. Thus both our courts and our players force us to play the style of game we do, whereas the same forces, in antithesis, make John Eunn and the other Western coaches play the "hell and high water" game.