

("Take Away the Backboards," is the Question Stanley Frank asks in an article on basketball in this week's Saturday Evening Post. Here's what Dave MacMillan, coach of the Gopher basketball team, says on the subject.)

By ELWOOD HAULDER

"Take away the backboards,--sure, I'll be in favor of it." Dave MacMillan was emphatic in his opinion that the backboard had outlived its usefulness in basketball.

And so, the University of Minnesota coach went on record last night as to a question which has been puzzling the cage experts for years.

"Take away the backboard and you'll take what Mr. Stanley Frank calls 'the giraffe' out of the game," said Dave. "I've always contended that the emphasis in basketball has been too much on the tall man and not enough on the fast and smart man."

Paul Mooney, Columbia university coach, recently sounded the first gun in this attack on basketball as it is played today. "Take away the backboards!" Mooney is quoted in the Post, "Make the players shoot at open baskets as the old professionals did, and you'll see science and skill replacing sheer luck and height as the most important factors in the game."

No man in midwestern basketball circles is better qualified to accept or deny Mooney's statement than MacMillan of Minnesota. As a member of the old New York Celtics, Dave played the game when no backboard was used.

Dave does not hesitate to back Mooney on everything he says. "The folly of the backboard is obvious," says Mac, "it gives a taller team an unfair advantage over the shorter team by lending itself to the tip-in, pivot and rebound plays."

"A tall team doesn't always have to play smart basketball to win," MacMillan points out. "It can send its tallest men down under the basket, get it for a long set shot to carom off the backboard, and then tip the ball in for an easy score--that doesn't take any great skill."

"Big men are usually dunsy," the Gopher coach contends. "The smaller man is usually speedier, more scientific and more graceful--he's a more interesting player to watch in action. Of course, I don't mean to discriminate against tall players; I'll use a big man over a small man every time if he can play a smarter, better game than a small fellow--but that's the exception rather than the rule."

Some critics maintain that a removal of the backboard would take the scoring punch out of the game. MacMillan denies this by saying, "This change would cut the scoring some but not very much. I know that from my own experience."

"This much is sure," MacMillan concludes, "a good shot in basketball is good whether there's a backboard or not, and I believe that by doing away with the backboard we could do away with luck and give the game back to skill."

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WHERE COACHES HANG ON

Laramie, Wyo.--(A.P.)--The obly newcomer to basketball coaching ranks in the Mountain Big Seven conference this season is Everett Shelton, a transplanted Oklahoman, who coached the Denver Safeways to the national A.A.U. title in 1937. The dean is Dick Romney, starting his 22nd season at Utah State.