

MODIFICATION OF THE CENTER JUMPJohn Bunn, Stanford University  
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EDITOR'S NOTE: In twelve championship games last season the Southern Division of the Pacific Coast Conference experimented with rules adaptations which practically eliminated the center jump. The results of the test were incorporated in the following article read at the last convention of the Association. A motion to recommend the modification to the Rules Committee lost by a small margin, but made such a favorable impression that the idea now is found in the new rules under which the jump is eliminated following a successful free throw after a personal foul. Coaches will do well to study this report carefully, as the plan has many adherents who will advance it again next spring.

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In Bulletin No. 2, published by this Association, appeared a preliminary account of an experiment which modified the center jump rules. This experiment has been diligently carried through to completion during the season just closed by the teams of a number of conferences and leagues on the Pacific Coast.

The facts concerning this experiment are repeated here for the purpose of a complete record.

The idea for such an experiment on the Pacific coast first arose in 1933. Among the four coaches in the Southern Division of the Pacific Coast Conference, Works of U.C.L.A. and Barry of U.S.C. were heartily in favor of trying out some plan of modification. Price of California was just luke warm on the idea. Bunn of Stanford, who had been reared in an environment which taught that the control of the tip was worth four baskets a game, was unalterably opposed to the whole proposition. However in 1934 when California, U.C.L.A. and U.S.C. all came out for the experiment, Stanford swung with the majority in the interest of research for information that would help in the better administration of our games. The reasons which these coaches advanced for advocating the modification of the center jump rule were these:

1. The center jump presents one of two or three situations which is most difficult for officials to control. (The pivot play and under-basket play are the other situations.)
2. The center jump is responsible for a very large number of fouls. One estimate places the average at six per game. The number of fouls committed largely exceeds the number that are detected or called. Many of these fouls are of the type which tend to cause serious injury to the players.
3. The officials are often in the way of play and are subject to many collisions which have often resulted in injury to either the players or the officials.
4. Even the best of officials are inconsistent in tossing the ball up between the two centers. It is tossed too high or too low or over to one side or the other.
5. The two centers are seldom satisfied as to conditions. One wants the ball thrown higher, the other lower. One center is jumping into the other or is pushing or elbowing on the jump or is hitting the wrist of his opponent or hitting the ball before it reaches its highest point.
6. There is continual jostling for position by the eight players about the center circle, all of which is very difficult if not impos-