

"THE INTERNATIONAL GROWTH OF BASKETBALL"

by

Dr. Forrest C. Allen
Head Basketball Coach
University of Kansas

At present, it is estimated by authorities that there are eighteen million people playing this indoor game.

India, France, Italy, Japan, the Philippine Islands, China, Persia, Czechoslovakia, Turkey, Greece, Mexico, Canada, Poland, Russia, and Germany, as well as the South American countries, have been playing basketball for several years and today are turning out creditable teams.

Some of these countries had their introduction to the game of basketball almost simultaneous with the inventor's first draft. The first printed copy of the basketball rules appeared in "The Triangle", the International Y.M.C.A. school paper, Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1892. At this time, Dr. James Naismith and Dr. Luther H. Gulick were co-editors of the Triangle, and, because of lack of available funds for printing, they deemed it both wise and expedient to get the rules in printed form in this way.

Because of this and because of its origin at Springfield, basketball has spread uniformly to all nations of the globe. The Y.M.C.A. secretaries who were sent out from the Springfield school carried the knowledge of the game along with their other work into "all the world" and taught its principles to all peoples.

Duncan Patton, a "Y" graduate, implanted the game in India, in 1894. Emil Thies, another graduate of the Springfield Y.M.C.A. school returned to his native country, France, in 1895, and established the game there. In 1898, Dr. F. N. Seerley, at present Dean of the Springfield, Massachusetts Y.M.C.A. Training School, secured a leave of absence to spend the year in France. During Dr. Seerley's stay in the land of the fleur-de-lis, he did much to extend the interests of basketball--already well established by Thies. Italy has played the game for a number of years--perhaps taking up the game through contact with its neighbor, France.

At the Inter-allied Games in the Pershing Stadium, outside of Paris, in June, 1919, the United States, in a series of games for the championship, defeated both France and Italy.

Ishakawa, another "Y" student, took the game to Japan, his native land, in 1900. Ernest Quigley, the National League umpire and major sports official, several months ago wrote me from Japan that basketball had taken an unusual hold upon the Orientals. He stated that great throngs of spectators attend all games.

Our United States soldiers established basketball in the Philippine Islands during the same year that Ishakawa took it to his land of Japan.