

Your report makes considerable point out of the fact that the defense seems to have so many fouls called on them, yet why is that so strange? The offensive team has the ball and the team with the ball has less opportunity to make fouls than the team that does not have the ball. If, therefore, one team has the ball most of the game, there is every reason in the world for the fact that the defense has a greater share of the fouls called upon it. Of course there are those, who insist both in basketball and football, that a game isn't well worked unless the score sheet shows that each side has the same number of fouls and penalties. Actually I have had coaches tell me that, and one of them a college coach this year.

It is but natural for the defense to make more fouls, because they are after the man with the ball. In the same way, most of your fouls occur in shooting territory because it is there that the defense tries to stop the man with the ball who is shooting.

During the last few years the Rules Committee has done a wonderful job of clarifying the rules, and of explaining them, the purpose being, I judge, to make it easier for the players to understand what constitutes a foul and to make it easier for the official to call that same foul without dispute. I am supposing too, that one reason for this clarification has been to bring basketball up to a plane where it belongs, namely a fast passing game, making for more open work, more shots, and hence more baskets, and to get away from the bone-crushing rough house of the good old days.

That means therefore, I take it, that the team putting a premium upon the rough stuff should be penalized thru fouls, because it is preventing the other team from doing its stuff, in other words, from playing basketball. And I take it, too, that the rules committee has made the rules the way they are because it wants both coaches and players to play the game that way. Yet how often haven't we seen the "metamorphoses" of a coach from season to season, depending upon his material. If he has a light team, he is all for the official calling them strictly and closely upon the bigger and possibly rougher team. Next year his material is heavy and awkward, and he at once begins to question the official as he continues to call them that way. That, of course, is his privilege, and all power to him, and I bring it in just to illustrate my point that after all, it isn't the official that is very apt to spoil the game. A great deal depends upon the players and how they have been coached, - or not coached.

But I am taking a long time to get to my point, the point that I started out to make when this letter was begun. In thinking over the material in this year's report, the thought came to me that I would have some one check on the items that I have mentioned, namely baskets made and missed by both teams, and substitutions made, and I am sending the figures of one of the games to you. I am sending the figures of this game because it was a close game, and because it seems to show what I am driving at. Please understand that I am not stating that it proves what I have been saying, but I think that the figures show enough to indicate that there is plenty of room for study.

I have chosen this close game between two high school teams, which ended in a tie, and which required one overtime period, simply because it shows up the tendency which a fan might have after having read your report. He might have read your report just before going to this game, and then after looking at the box score of the game the next morning, his first reaction would have been, "That official certainly won that game for Team A."