

DR. JAMES NAISMITH

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Frederick Froebel, a poor, unhappy German boy gave to the world the theory of the kindergarten - education through play. Dr. Naismith, an orphan boy at eight, gave to the youth basketball, a game that takes the youngster from the eighth grade to maturity. Doubtless the poverty of play in a youth's life so emphasizes the need of play that these youths like Naismith and Froebel are able to prescribe for the world plays and games that are "necessary for man in order to refresh himself after labor" And to "flee from empty idleness to active recreation in play". This is why the heart of youth goes out into play as into nothing else, as if in it man remembered a lost paradise.

Eight nationally known educators, speaking from the same platform, declared that basketball had all the qualities necessary to teach the educable child: poise, rhythm, grace, coordination, development of skills and development of physical vigor. The speakers were not competitive coaches, nor were they athletes. This game, the only international game that is the product of one man's brain, stamps Dr. Naismith as a great educator, a kindly humanitarian, and a practical Christian. He loved youth. He and his classmate, Alonzo Stagg, both working together, chose the profession of physical education over the ministry, in which they were ordained, because they felt they could do more for youth. The youth of the world will arise and call Dr. Naismith blessed.

The game of basketball was originated in 1891 by Dr. Naismith at Springfield Y.M.C.A. College to fill the need of a winter sport. Two old peach baskets, a soccer ball and thirteen rules were the original equipment of the game which has spread around the world, and was played in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. A photostatic copy of the original rules hangs in my office, and the original copy of the rules is possessed by the Naismith heirs. At the bottom