

## ABOUT WALTER HUSTON, HENRY VAN PORTER AND ME

Bob Burns, who has a mean uncle and ought to know, says that Walter Huston played the devil in his last picture in the guise of Mr. Scratch. Another picture is "The Man Who Played God". A report of a sub-committee of the National Basketball Coaches Association, which has been sent to me by a friend indicates that the writer of the report knows of these movies and has assigned me the role of Mister Scratch and has cast himself as Mister God. The drama outlined in the report attributes to Mister Scratch and his Satanic co-workers a sinister influence on the development of basketball into the unpopular, unskilled and uninteresting game that it is. To Mister God is assigned the omniscient vision to tell the National Collegiate Athletic Association who they shall appoint on the rules committee and how appointments shall be made, to tell the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations how they shall conduct their business, to tell the manufacturers of athletic equipment what they may or may not advertise, to tell the high school, Y.M.C.A. and Canadian basketball groups how unimportant their views are, and to tell the National Basketball Committee what it may do. Even a code of ethics is set up for the group. This last is an inspiration which is the climax to the drama. The question might be asked as to whether the code applies to the sub-committee as well as to the Rules Committee -- but as set up, it works only one way. That adds novelty.

### Let's Get Personal

I did not start this personal angle. The sub-committee needs a devil to chase around the bush. Otherwise, tilting at windmills gets monotonous. The sinister high school representatives on the Rules Committee (the whole 4 of them on a committee of 13) are obliging cusses and have been tagged "it". I will play Mister Scratch if that will help clear the atmosphere. Family names have been dragged into the above mentioned report, so this statement is in order. The Porters may or may not have come over in the Mayflower. I have never traced the ancestry. There are probably about the average number of horse-thieves up the family tree. The name is common and one group may have originated in Africa and another in Kamchatka. The family line that named me (before the Scratch handle) is engaged in many occupations but I have never been able to find any of my line (even a fifth cousin) who is or has been in the business of making mule shoes or toilet seats, or basketballs or basketball backboards or playground equipment. Probably some of us would be on a higher economic level if we could have profitted from these industries. I don't know. They probably have troubles of their own. The maker of the sub-committee report makes a dirty minded insinuation in connection with the name of a J. E. Porter. I have never had the pleasure of meeting the gentleman. He may be alive or dead. In the latter case, Mister God ought to be able to contact him.

Andy, of the radio team "Amos and Andy," grew up in my home town of Peoria, Illinois. He lived in the next block. One of his characters is Henry Van Porter. The sub-committee ought to look up that sinister connection. It would be a great catch phrase, "Campbell's soups harbors the Devil in black face."

The Porters have always been interested in basketball and this particular one has coached, managed tournaments, conducted interpretation meetings and done other odd-jobs in helping develop the game for more years than need be mentioned. Like hundreds of other game enthusiasts, I have given these efforts freely and without regret. If time is worth money, someone owes me a lot of cash but no one seems to have got around to telling any paying teller about it. Some lucky individuals write a basketball book or get their autograph stamped on a basketball and thus cash in. Lack of industry or something has kept me from doing this. Besides, basketball books go out of date when a rule is changed and molded balls do not carry autographs. In common with thousands of other lovers of the game, my returns come through a satisfaction in seeing a great game keep pace with progress in related industries and institutions. I am convinced that the rules changes of the last