

THE ALL-AMERICAN MENACE

By Nat Holman

I have always felt that much will result from open discussion in which problems pertaining to business or sport, where facts are presented, are aired out and carefully examined. However, the "All American Menace" is the loose talk that creeps into our newspapers toward the tail end of each basketball season, in which our coaches go on a "fault finding spree." The rules, the officials, the ball, the backboards, etc., etc., are in for severe criticism. It seems to me that any sport that will attract millions of people, is physically wholesome, mentally stimulating and socially sound. There is no sentiment in the person who puts his money across the counter at the box office. Basically, he wants entertainment.

Is there anyone who can deny the fact that our game of basketball is the most exciting, thrilling, pulse rendering sport than any other activity on the entire winter calendar? What we need more from our teachers of the sport is a "Boosters Club" who will broadcast the good things about the game rather than condemn it. The game is always affected more by censure than by praise. Constructive criticism is good. But, when individuals, or groups, develop a "destructive philosophy" airing their "brainstorms" which are harmful to our great game, I believe, and I am not alone in that opinion, that action should be taken to eliminate that group from our "inner circle".

Before "popping off", any man, who has been stricken with the lightning of an idea, should submit his idea privately to the natural body of coaches. After due consideration by the coaches, including "clinic games", discussion by rules committees and any other means of scientific testing, then the idea should receive publicity. With all of the present unconsidered criticism, the spectators, who are paying the freight, will begin to believe that something is wrong with the game.

Somewhere in my readings, I ran across the following lines which are apropos at this time. It reads: "Once an eagle struck by a dart, said after examining the length of its shaft, with our own feathers and not by other hands, are we now smitten."

Summarizing that statement, we can safely say: "If our great game is harmed in any way -- it will not be by the existing rules, the officials, the backboards or the ball -- but by loose-tongued men affiliated with the sport who continually seek the headlines. Coaches who have endured, who have made contributions to the game, who have been affiliated with the sport over an extended period of years have seen it grow, feel, I am sure, the need of rounding up these men and compelling them to "soft-pedal" on any comments which may be injurious to the popularity of the sport.

This publication is eager to publish articles and news items that will be of interest to coaches all over the country. Do you know of any topic that would be worth discussing? Why not submit it to the Editor for publication in the next issue? All contributions will be duly acknowledged.

Springfield College, which represented New England in the national collegiate tournament, has but one regular remaining, but Coach Eddie Hickox is promising another good team to maintain Springfield's fine reputation.