

January 22, 1942,
7403 N. Ridge Ave.,
Chicago, Illinois.

Mr. Forrest C. Allen,
University of Kansas,
Lawrence, Kansas.

Dear Mr. Allen:

Perhaps you will recall we exchanged letters in 1937 and 1938. One of the boys in our office plays with a basketball team and has asked me to coach them. I have not been an active participant for the past two years and accordingly I felt that I should refer to your Basketball Bible. When I did so I found that I had retained your letters and I want you to know that it was a great pleasure to read them once again.

Something you wrote in your last letter has made me curious and although I know you are very busy if you do find a few spare moments I would like very much to have an expression from you as to your reaction to the stages through which basketball has passed to reach the present fire engine speed. In that letter you stated that although it was probable that most teams would as soon as given the ball make an attempt to score through use of a fast break - if such fast break was not successful that the teams would go back to use of plays to obtain set shots. Although I have played but little during the past two years nevertheless I see as many games each week as possible. I now work in Evanston and have therefore seen Northwestern play numerous games although I do go out now and then to see Chicago play. We have a fast amateur league in Chicago - The Metropolitan League - most of the teams composed of former college stars. As an example saw the Acme Steel team play the other night - they feature Joe Stampf and Amundsen two former U of Chicago stars. Except for the professional teams I have yet to see the supposedly better grade teams use set plays to any great extent.

It seems that no team spends any time on defense. When I read these 60 to 58 basketball scores I become disgusted with basketball. While I believe firmly that it was a good move to dispense with the old standing guard certainly there must be some value to having guards who do not spend all of their time under the opposing team's basket. As it now stands no player seems to worry about how many points his opponent scores. I may be wrong but I do believe that the player who scores five baskets and holds his opponent to one or two baskets is of far greater value to a team than the chap who scores eight or ten baskets but doesn't know and doesn't seem to care about how many baskets his opponent has rung up.

But to me the most deplorable feature of the game as played today is the fact that the average player does not know the meaning of a set shot from around the free throw circle - and much less does he know about the shooting - with two hands - of such a shot. In game after game I have seen players suddenly find themselves unguarded in a spot somewhere around the free throw spot. Invariably that player will take off with