

SPORTS STATIC

by *Dan Desmond*

"PHOG" ALLEN has made basketball his life and his profession so it's not at all surprising that his enthusiasm has resulted in a method of rating that probably will be followed by all coaches in years to come. As "Phog" says:

"I get my kick, and I know other coaches do, out of figuring out new ideas, seeing them used gradually and finally being in a position to say: 'Well, I helped pioneer that.'"

The University of Kansas basketball coach described his rating system at a session of the physical education meeting Friday. He's quite frank in his admission that the purpose is to help himself and all coaches who use it by providing the players with deeper motives than those of point scoring alone. Study of the system reveals encouragement for team play and, most of all, for fundamentals.

Coach Allen calls it basketball batting and fielding averages—"every kid knows baseball and has a respect for batting and fielding averages. In no sense is it an out and out rating system. Yet by giving points for certain offensive and defensive maneuvers and deducting for lapses, I have found the boys look forward as eagerly to the compilation of their averages as baseball players do to their records."

Briefly, the system gives so many points for certain offensive gestures and so many for defensive work. Likewise, errors are penalized by deduction of points. Perhaps you'd get a better idea of the system if I ran the points used:

(Positive are plus and negative minus, of course).

OFFENSIVE

Positive Items:	Pts.
1. Field goals	10
2. Free throws	5
3. Immediate assists	4
4. Secondary assists	3
5. Recovers ball off own backboard	2
6. Recovers teammate's jump ball	1
7. Recovers opponent's fumble	1
8. Good pass to a teammate	1
9. Catches teammate's pass	1
Negative Items:	
1. Error of omission	1
2. Held ball forced by opponent ..	1
3. Fumbles ball and it goes out of bounds	2
4. Fumbles ball and it is obtained by opponent	2
5. Taps ball out of bounds	2
6. Wild pass out of bounds	3
7. Wild pass to an opponent	4
8. Violation of rules	5
9. Offensive personal foul	8

DEFENSIVE

Positive Items:	Pts.
1. Blocking opponent's shot	4
2. Recovery from opponent's	

backboard	4
3. Intercepting opponent's dribble	3
5. Forcing held ball with opponent	2
6. Batting ball from opponent's hands and recovering	2
7. Batting ball from opponent's hands and not recovering	1
8. Cuts off opponent's pass, but not recovering	1
Negative Items:	
1. Fouling opponent with ball ..	8
2. Fouling opponent without ball ..	8

Coach Allen conceived the idea in 1937 and since that time, has used it in 17 home games played by the Jayhawkers. Correct evaluation of technique requires a fairly large staff of helpers but "Phog" says:

"It's always possible to draft some former player or some red hot fan, a basketball nut in other words. At Kansas, I used 12 men—six to check and six to write the points. Of course, three of each group checked the offensive work and three defensive."

The averages for the 17 games seem reliable for there's no great variation between seasons.

The coach detected a drop in negative offensive tabulation points indicating that the team made fewer mistakes this season than last.

"It is possible," he said, "that the team summary posted in the dressing room the day following each game made the individual players more conscious of their mistakes."

It will be noted that the penalty for a personal foul is almost as great in points as the reward for a field goal. The reason:

"The penalty should be high because if a player commits a foul, he immediately gives the opponents a chance to make five or 10 positive offensive points."

So there's more to basketball than an arching shot from midfloor or from under the mesh. Coach Allen admits that research of this type depends to a great extent upon the accuracy of the observers but evidently, he made careful selections for he has come to the conclusion that the system is foolproof. He cites these factors that give the study considerable merit:

"It points out the mistakes during a game, thus causing the players to be more conscious of them. Besides providing an itemized history of the contest, the plan stresses the importance of game fundamentals and makes possible a more accurate means of comparing individuals and teams."