

BASKETBALL MILEAGE

NASHVILLE BANNER, Jan. 1, 1941 -- Sideline Sidelights by Fred Russell.--

A cinch for a violent basketball argument is the premise: "Resolved, the game is too strenuous and is detrimental to the health of the participants."

Ever since the elimination of the center jump and the consequent increase in actual playing time, this subject has troubled the better minds of the game.

Figures have been published on both sides of the argument. They are just like the figures used by life insurance salesmen--they can prove anything. Interesting, though.

How much mileage does a basketball team cover in an average game? How much mileage will an individual performer, say Pinky Lipscomb, for instance, run up in the game against Kentucky here tonight?

An Eastern college coach recently attached pedometers to his players and discovered that in a regulation contest his team covered 24.01 miles, an average of 4.8 per man. No player traveled more than 5.31 miles in the full forty minutes. One did only 4.25.

Too strenuous? Harmful? You answer.

Proved Pace.--

Tom Scott, coach at Central Missouri Teachers College, writing in the current issue of "First Aider" magazine, takes the stand that basketball is not injurious.

"Basketball is like any other major sport in that it requires the individual to be in condition to participate, particularly so if a team uses the fast-breaking offense," he writes. "Players become mentally fatigued and they become physically fatigued, but if they are in good physical condition before a game there is no worry."

"Players are not in as continuous running motion as they appear to be. Most spectators, in watching a game, watch the ball rather than the individual in action. The ball moves with great rapidity, and the spectator marvels at the ability of the players to keep going at this fast pace."

"Actually, they are not going at such a pace. In a Kansas City tournament last year fifteen players were timed throughout the game for the amount of time they were out of a walk. The greatest time consumed was 17 minutes and 48 seconds and the least 8 minutes and 48 seconds. The average time for all fifteen boys was 12 minutes and 59 seconds, which is an average of 31 per cent of the total time of the game."

"That means that the average time they were walking or standing still was 27 minutes, 1 second, or 69 per cent of the time. This did not include rest periods during time outs, free throws, jump balls or out of bounds."

Mebbe so, mebbe so, but I doubt if you find any player who thinks he stands still 69 per cent of the time.

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The editor will try to make the next issue the feature one. Why not each coach put himself out a little and contribute a small item of interest?

The N.C.A.A. Tournament will be held in Kansas City, Mo. - preliminaries March 21 & 22 - Final March 29.

The Sports Writers Tournament - Madison Square Garden - March 18-19-22 & 24. Plan to attend the coaches' meeting and the games in New York City.