

BASKETBALL REBOUNDS

Dave Walsh Urges Court Coaches to Devote More Attention to Defense
By Irving T. Marsh.

A plea to basketball coaches to direct a little more attention to defense was made by Dave Walsh, veteran arbiter and now associate director of the College Basketball Officials Bureau, at the meeting of the Metropolitan Basketball Writers Association yesterday at the Lincoln, and his plea aroused a storm of controversy that continued far beyond meeting time.

Putting the issue squarely up to the coaches and expressing, he insisted, a purely personal opinion, he declared that basketball has become almost exclusively a "firehorse" game in which the value of the field goal has been cheapened and the size of the court has been cut exactly in half because most teams do not begin their defense until the offensive unit crosses the mid-court line.

"Let's pick 'em up all over the court," he said, "and then I think you'll have a better game all round. We have become too offensive-minded, and any game is as good as its defense. That's true in baseball, football or any other game you can mention. This 'firehorse' basketball has outmoded the dribbler and the pivoter. There's no sense any more in dribbling and pivoting, the really skillful and scientific things in basketball, when all you have to do is stand out near or at mid-court and sink 'em with set shots."

Oklahoma Aggies Aid Argument

Then, in answer to the argument that spectators seem to like "racehorse" basketball and t'hell with the defense, he pointed to Oklahoma A. and M., which he thought, was the best defensive team that has appeared here this year.

"And the customers liked them," he added.

Walsh's talk, on the general subject of "What's Wrong With Basketball?" ended a program that also had Lon Jourdet, veteran Pennsylvania coach; John (Honey) Russell, of Seton Hall; Albert Gorton, of Panzer, and Howard Cann, of N. Y. U., as speakers. It preceded an argument in which Walsh had a grand opportunity to test his own defense, because most of the coaches assembled hopped right into the fray.

Jourdet making his first appearance before the writers, said his Pennsylvania team was going to be much better than last year and he hoped that it might be a contender in the Eastern League tournament this year. But Dartmouth, champion for the last three years, is stronger than last year, Princeton undeniably is and Cornell has a good club, he admitted.

Gorton and Russell, neighbors from the Jersey Oranges whose teams do not meet each other, discussed the problems of the small-college coach, and Gorton was a little downcast at his team's set-back by John Marshall last Saturday after Panzer had run up forty-four straight victories. Russell, the old pro player, declared he still was wondering how Seton Hall has managed to win thirty-two in a row.

Cann Explains N. Y. U. Success

Cann, explaining what "made N. Y. U. click," attributed it to the Violets' ability to keep moving and to condition, revealing that his players engage in plenty of calisthenic drills as well as primarily basketball workouts. That, he thought, was really the secret of N. Y. U.'s success.