

Allen-- You are exactly right, Jay. We will discuss Dr. James Naismith's findings upon high school athletes and that will show the difference. For the purpose of illustration it might be well for us to think of the United States Military Academy at West Point. The cadets in the Army team generally finish an academic college and then enroll at West Point for four more additional years. This is true of the Springfield College. Many boys play four years in high school and then four years in college, and perhaps the difference in the results of the two tests was due to the difference in the ages of the two groups of players. The wear and tear on the older physical machine is too severe.

Plumley-- How long ago did Dr. Naismith institute his series of investigations to find whether Dr. McCurdy's charge was warranted or not?

Allen-- Well, Jay, back in 1930 Dr. Naismith took as a working basis the players entered in the annual Kansas State High School tournament which then was held at the University of Kansas. Every competitor underwent a thorough physical examination. All the tests were made by the Biochemistry Department of the School of Medicine of the University of Kansas, which would vouch safe for their accuracy. And strange to say that after the fourth championship game the tests showed that the members of the Wichita High School team, the winners of the state tournament and later winners of the National High School Championship at Chicago, were in better physical condition then than at any time during the tournament. Of the members of the two teams that played for the championship, the test of but one man gave any indication of previous opinion that basketball was too severe on hearts and kidneys of the normal high school boy.

Plumley-- The findings arrived at by these research men was that while you are robust and rugged the physique will stand up under strain. Then I guess it would be comparable to a new automobile standing the strain. When the machine gets older it does not function as well as it did in its previous first class condition.

Allen-- Well, I think that is a very good illustration, Jay, and I believe that is the easiest way to explain it. At another time, in the interests of the game of basketball, Dr. Naismith performed some very interesting heart investigations. This time he took for his clinical material a squad of young men with no previous experience in basketball. For 18 weeks this group was given the same daily fundamental drills and team play that a group of regulars on the basketball squad received. Daily tracings of the heart, both before and after play, revealed no increase in size. Indeed, in some cases there were decreases in the size of the heart. You know, many people are of the opinion that Glenn Cunningham's heart is large or hypertrophied, but I am told on very good authority that the heart of Glenn Cunningham, the great Kansas runner, is smaller than the normal sized heart. A heart muscle, to have tonicity and strength, is not dependent upon size.

Plumley-- Well, Dr. Allen, many parents who watch their sons play cannot understand why the heart is not affected because in their opinion their son is continuously on the go. He is driving here and there, and it seems that there is never a let-up in play. It seems as if the boys would literally run their hearts out.