

Mayhem at the Box Office

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after a five-minute overtime. Imagine 150 points in forty-five minutes.

Think that's something? In two widely separated towns on the same night in a recent Illinois state prep tournament, there were scores of 106 to 100 and 102 to 100. And 32-minute high school games, too. Perpetual motion? Whew!

"Call it a marathon or a test of endurance, but don't call it basketball," wrote Vance E. Geiger, coach at Hopkins, Missouri, high school, recently in *Scholastic Coach*, a magazine circulated among prep coaches. "Every change over the past few years has been intended to support the fan who thought the game was too slow. They forgot that the game is supposed to be a form of play and exercise in which thousands of boys participate each year."

Various surveys have been taken in recent years to discover what harmful effects, if any, are being shown by the players. The findings show wide variance.

One of the most comprehensive was made at Rockford, Illinois, two years ago. Players were tested over half a dozen games by a group of physicians for pulse, blood pressure and other reactions. Check-ups were made before, immediately after and twenty minutes after each game.

Pulse reading before a game

ranged from 52 to 84. After its finish they were from 80 to 126. Twenty minutes later they ranged from 72 to 114—all for the same group of boys. The findings of the committee, briefly, were:

"1. The hearts of all the players were functioning well after each game and no excessive fatigue was noted.

"2. In no case was there a tendency to a heart rate in excess of the physiological norm after any of the games.

"3. No untoward symptoms were complained of by any of the players.

"4. The medical, insurance and physical education literature offers no *conclusive* evidence of cardiac or blood vascular damage to the individual that can be attributed to his athletic activity, providing his heart was normal before entering the training period."

Good enough. And we do not question the sincerity of the committee. But the medics thoughtfully added this recommendation:

"That the committee on rules increase the rest period of one minute between quarters to two or three minutes and would especially urge that captains, officials and coaches take full advantage of the time out privilege as now granted in the rules. This, we believe, would be an added safeguard

against the possibility of over-fatigue."

Now you see it, now you don't!

Along about the same time two estimable gentlemen in Kenosha, Wisconsin, Fred V. Hein and Dr. A. J. Randall—were conducting similar experiments. They drew this conclusion, in contrast to the Rockford findings:

"There is an appreciable difference in physiological effect in the old and new games... Many may feel that the difference is not sufficiently great to seriously affect a player. However, when one considers that basketball has always been a strenuous activity, that a boy plays not one game, but many during the season, and may participate over a period of years, things appear in a different light."

Down at De Pauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, Paul J. Fay and Lloyd L. Messerschmidt rigged up an apparatus which compared old and new basketball from a ground-covering standpoint. Their gadget revealed that collegians now run from 3.87 to 3.97 miles in a game, as compared to 2.25 to 2.50 under the previous rules, while the mileage of prep basketballers also has been increased from fifty to sixty per cent.

And finally comes a clincher from Dr. Forrest C. "Phog" Allen, coach of the 1936 Olympic basket-

ball team, director of physical education and basketball coach at the University of Kansas. Phog is regarded as about the final authority on basketball in all its ramifications. Says he:

"There is grave danger to the health of junior high and younger high school boys—especially to their growth—by continued strain of the shuttle, hockey type of basketball.

"As chairman of the National Basketball Research Committee, we are constantly doing research work on the effect of the game. And it has shown the new game is injurious to growing youth!"

Dr. Allen offers a plan to restore the center jump, but in a modified fashion. The principal objection was that it put too much emphasis on height (although bean-pole construction is still considered a valuable asset).

"Why not," asks Dr. Allen, "rotate the center jump among the players on each team? Each club would use a 'jumping order' and after a successful field goal or free throw, the players would rotate the center jump exactly as a baseball team follows its batting order. This would eliminate most of the inequalities of the past."

What do other coaches think about the modern game? Viewpoints, perhaps, may be shaded

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