

KANSAS - CRADLE OF BASKETBALL

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On November 28, 1939, when Dr. James Naismith, the inventor of basketball, died at his home in this quiet college town of Lawrence, Kansas, he had firmly established Kansas as the cradle of basketball. In his forty years service at the University of Kansas Dr. Naismith had accomplished something no other man had done for sport in this state.

After originating the game at Springfield Y.M.C.A. College, Springfield, Mass. in 1891, Dr. Naismith migrated to Denver, Colorado, in 1895, as director of the Denver Y.M.C.A. He then moved to the University of Kansas as director of physical education. In addition to his duties as director here, his primary engagement was caused by the fact that he was a minister of the gospel and the Chancellor engaged him to lead prayer in student daily convocations at the University. He and Alonzo Stagg were ministers and they both followed the same course in physical training at Springfield Y.M.C.A. College.

"The happiest moment of my life," Dr. Naismith said, "came in 1936", when he attended the Olympic Games in Berlin and saw the game of basketball played for the first time in international Olympic competition. The Father of Basketball was sent to Berlin following a drive for funds, sponsored by the National Association of Basketball Coaches, among spectators, officials and players who wanted to have Dr. Naismith present when the teams of all nations filed in behind their respective flags. Dr. Naismith addressed the assembled players before the start of the tournament and admitted that in so doing his eyes were misty.

It has indeed been a durable pleasure to have been associated with Dr. Naismith from 1902 to 1939. For thirty-nine years I had come to know the good doctor as a virile, aggressive, forceful, Christian gentleman. He was a man's man. Being a Canadian of Scottish extraction he loved the hard and rigorous struggle for human welfare. Basketball, the product of one man's brain, stands alone as one of our