

KC Times Nov. 29, 1939
Dr. Naismith's Triumph.

It is rare when an inventor lives to see his vision take shape and be acclaimed almost universally but in the case of Dr. James A. Naismith death was tolerant. His conception of a sport, which is basketball, has outstripped both baseball and football in attendance and in the number of participants and has been adopted by countries which never have been tempted by the attractions of other American sports.

Twenty-two nations sent championship basketball teams to the 1936 Olympiad at Berlin. Since then even more have succumbed to the fascination of a contest which began with the cone-shaped peach baskets as goals. Many millions play the game today. The extent of its popularity was indicated in the rapid growth of the sport when, at the beginning, gymnasiums in different parts of the country merely adopted the basic principles and never waited to get the detailed rules from Dr. Naismith. This eventually led to confusion in intersectional play, since at one time there were three or four distinct sets of rules.

The sport, since its inception, has undergone many rules changes, but fundamentally it has remained the same—a contest to attempt to deposit a ball through a hoop. Dr. Naismith observed these changes always with a keen interest, his suspicions being appeased by the ever-increasing attention the sport was arousing. Before his death he had the satisfaction of knowing that scarcely a town was so small but boasted its basketball team. His original plan in 1891 to provide a form of health-giving exercise free from the tedium of ordinary gymnasium work has succeeded.

Kansan 11/29/39
University Mourns
Doctor Naismith

When lovers of sports and sportsmanship contributed in 1936 to a fund which paid the expenses of a trip to the Olympics in Berlin for Dr. James Naismith, they rendered tangible tribute to the living man who exemplified the highest idealistic qualities of physical sports.

No better tribute can be paid. It illustrates as nothing else the love and respect given to Doctor Naismith, spontaneously by those who knew him. They responded to the modesty, the idealism, the gallant sporting spirit that Dr. Naismith possessed. The game of basketball developed far beyond the expectations of the man who invented it by using two peach baskets and a ball to provide indoor recreation for a group of young men, but the inventor's enthusiasm and interest in the game kept pace with its growth.

Basketball was Doctor Naismith's most noted contribution in his field, but his life as a whole represents the achievement of much larger aims. His compensation and enjoyment in that accomplishment came in the later years of his life, for he lived to see a tremendous increase in opportunities for and interest in well-rounded programs of healthful physical recreation for all of the youth to whom he had devoted his life.

Such a reward is not measured in terms of public acclaim or in monetary values. Few men live to see the realization of their life's objectives. Doctor Naismith was deservedly one of those few.

Dr. Naismith Dies Here Early Today

University Kansan Nov 28 1939

Basketball lost its father last night. Dr. James Naismith, who wanted to "build character in the hearts of young men" and spent his life doing it, died at 1:50 a.m. at his home on University Drive.

Funeral arrangements have not been made. The body was taken to Funk's Mortuary and Chapel at 940 Massachusetts.

The 78-year-old doctor had been director of physical education at the University for 40 years prior to June, 1937, when he retired from full-time teaching duties.

Sunday, Nov. 19, he was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage and taken to the Lawrence Memorial hospital. After what was described as a remarkable recovery he was returned home, where he suffered a relapse Friday. Since last Saturday he had been in a coma.

Both Doctor and Minister

Possessor of three degrees, Doctor Naismith was a physician, a member of the Kansas Medical Association, but never practiced medicine. He also was ordained a Presbyterian minister, but never preached.

He preferred, rather, to deliver his message on clean living indirectly through teaching young men to love clean athletics. "My ambition to be a minister turned to physical education," the doctor once said, "after spending winters in lumber camps, attending high school in sub-zero weather two and one-half miles away, and engaging in games and fisticuffs with other boys."

Doctor Naismith wrote a book in 1918 which he called "The Basis of Clean Living." That book and that title characterize the life of the former professor.

A 'Y' Man in France

When Doctor Naismith was with the Y.M.C.A. in France during the World war, he found that too many of the boys got into trouble when they went into town on leave. His clean living and preaching this time took the form of a fight ring. He would start a bout just as the men were leaving and manage to get them so interested that they did not leave the camp at all. It was another example of the practical preaching Doctor Naismith advocated throughout his life.

Doctor Naismith married Miss Maude E. Sherman of Springfield, Mass., in 1894. Three daughters and two sons were born to the marriage. Mrs. Naismith died in March, 1937.

Born in Almonte, Ontario, on Nov. 6, 1861, Doctor Naismith was left an orphan at the age of eight. After making his home with an uncle, he attended McGill University in Montreal, and was graduated with an A.B. degree in 1887.

Took M.D. at Colorado

The second of Doctor Naismith's degrees he earned at Colorado University in 1898 when he was made doctor of medicine. He received a master of physical education degree in 1910 while with the Springfield, Mass., Y.M.C.A.

It was in 1891, while Doctor Naismith was in Springfield, that he conceived the game of basketball, which has become the outstanding winter sport of the nation. Doctor Naismith saw that the young men had no active sport to keep them occupied when weather prevented football or baseball. Two old peach baskets, a ball, and 13 rules were the original equipment of the game which has spread around the world and was played in the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin.

"The happiest moment" of his life, Doctor Naismith once said, came in 1936 when he attended the Olympics in Berlin and saw his game played for the first time in international competition. "The father of basketball" was sent to Berlin following a national drive for funds by spectators, officials, and players who wanted to have Doctor Naismith present when the teams of all nations filed in behind flags of their countries. Doctor Naismith addressed the assembled basketball players and spectators before the tournament began.

Besides many magazine articles, he wrote three books: "Basketball Rules," 1891; "The Modern High School" (section on athletics), 1911; "The Basis of Clean Living," 1918.

Four jobs in physical education occupied Doctor Naismith's career in Montreal in 1887, in 1891 he received his master of physical education degree from Y.M.C.A. college in Springfield, Mass. In 1898, he earned his doctor of medicine degree from the University of Colorado. Doctor Naismith married Miss Maude E. Sherman of Springfield, Mass., in 1894. Three daughters and two sons were born. Mrs. Naismith died in March, 1937. Doctor Naismith, who at the age of eight was left an orphan, was born in Almonte, Ontario, Nov. 6, 1861. This spring, Doctor Naismith and Mrs. George B. Stanley, Pueblo, Colo.; Mrs. Helen Dodd, St. Louis; Mrs. Florence Kincaid, for many years a housemother for Sigma Phi Jack Naismith, Topeka; Mrs. Thomas Daw, Topeka; and James Naismith, Dallas. Jack Kincaid, a son-in-law, also was present.

Married Last June

Last June he and Mrs. Florence Kincaid, for many years a housemother for Sigma Phi University, were married.

At his bedside during his illness were Mrs. Naismith and five children: Mrs. George B. Stanley, Pueblo, Colo.; Mrs. Helen Dodd, St. Louis; Mrs. Florence Kincaid, for many years a housemother for Sigma Phi Jack Naismith, Topeka; Mrs. Thomas Daw, Topeka; and James Naismith, Dallas. Jack Kincaid, a son-in-law, also was present.

Kansan 11/29/39
Naismith Rites

Will Be Held Friday at 2:30

★ Reverend Theodore Aszman, Presbyterian Minister, Will Officiate; Wife, Five Children Survive

Services for Dr. James Naismith, professor emeritus of physical education and inventor of basketball, will be held at 2:30 o'clock Friday afternoon at the First Presbyterian church here. The Rev. Theodore Aszman, pastor of the church, will officiate at the services.

Doctor Naismith died early yesterday morning at his home on University Drive, after having been suddenly stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage Nov. 19.

Among the survivors are his wife and five children: Mrs. Thomas L. Daw and John Edwin Naismith of Topeka, Mrs. George B. Stanley of Pueblo, Colo., Mrs. L. H. Dodd of St. Louis, and James Sherman Naismith of Dallas.

Began Duties in 1898

Doctor Naismith had been actively connected with the University's department of athletics for 40 years, having begun his duties here in 1898. He resigned from full-time teaching duties in June, 1937.

"The youth of the world has lost a great benefactor in Dr. James Naismith, the father of basketball," Dr. F. C. Allen, chairman of the department of physical education and head basketball coach, said yesterday.

"Eighteen million young men all over the world are playing his game of basketball which he originated for 18 troublesome young men in a class in Springfield, Mass., Y.M.C.A. college in 1891.

'He Loved Youth'

"He loved youth. He and Alonzo Stagg working together chose the profession of physical education over the ministry, in which they were ordained, because they could do more for youth, they thought. The youth of the world will arise and call Doctor Naismith blessed."

Chancellor Deane W. Malott yesterday made the following statement on the work and influence of Doctor Naismith:

"In behalf of the University of Kansas, I express sorrow at the death of Dr. James Naismith, professor emeritus of physical education. Not only the University and the state of Kansas, but the United States and many nations of the world as well, will feel the loss of this man who set high standards of personal clean living and was able to infuse these same standards into the lives of hundreds of young men. His contribution to the athletic world of the game of basketball will leave a mark that even time cannot erase."

A.B. From McGill

Doctor Naismith was the possessor of three degrees. He received an A.B. degree from McGill University