

## KU's Dr. Naismith to be Commemorated

*Kansas 10-15-41*  
New York, Oct. 13 (UP)—The golden jubilee of basketball will be celebrated during the next six months by a campaign designed to commemorate the name of Dr. James Naismith, its inventor, with a suitable monument at Springfield, Mass.

The celebration begins in Madison Square Garden Nov. 19 with a golden jubilee tournament that will conclude on Nov. 24.

Four of the country's outstanding amateur basketball teams—20th Century Fox of Hollywood, National A. A. U. champions; Phillips 66 of Bartlesville, Okla.; Legionnaires of Roanoke, Southern and Middle Atlantic champions; and Ohrbach A. A. Metropolitan champions—will participate in the metropolitan division.

The nationwide observance will include a drive for the establishment of a basketball hall of fame at Springfield—birthplace of the sport—which will include a museum and a model court.



*At the left* is a picture of Dr. Naismith, inventor of basketball, as he looked in 1939, at Kansas University, as told in this article

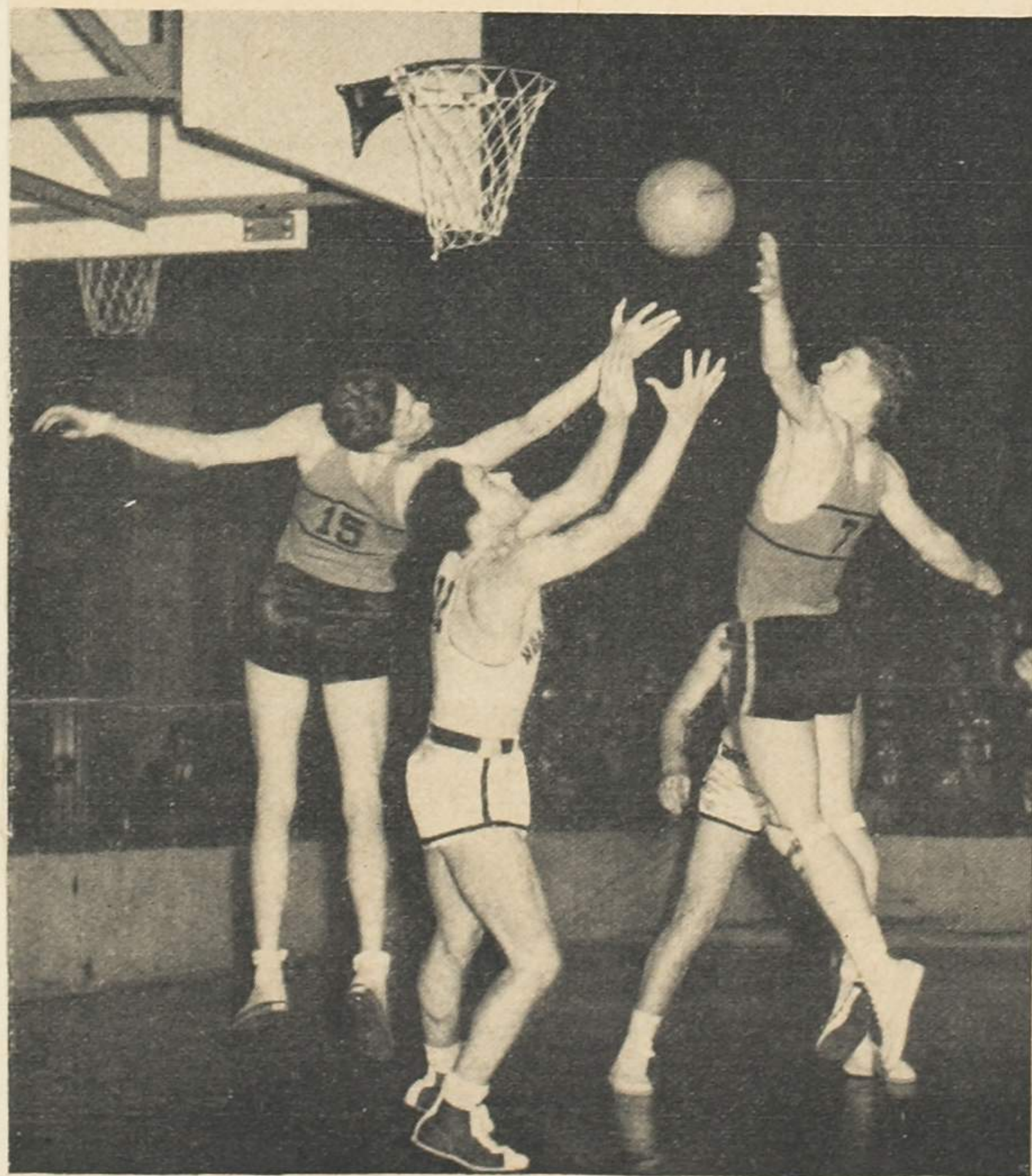
By  
*M. Whitcomb Hess*

**F**FIFTY years ago this fall a young Canadian, James A. Naismith, came from Montreal to Springfield, Massachusetts, to assist Dr. Luther Gulick in his physical education classes in the Y. M. C. A. College. The new assistant was asked to take charge of a class of eighteen boys during the winter months, keeping them occupied outside the regular class exercises from December to March. To interest those boys and to maintain them in good physical condition so they could take up their spring activities without fatigue or over-exertion the twenty-nine-year old instructor invented basket ball. It was as simple as that. The game was simple too, at first, taking no equipment except what was at hand—two half-bushel peach baskets, a soccer ball, and rules worked out as they went along. For basketball, unlike any other modern sport, was not evolved through centuries of change. It sprang essentially full-grown—like Pallas Athene from the brow of Zeus—from the intellect of a very determined Scotch Canadian to meet a challenge, a job-to-be-done, and it met also unprecedented popularity.

Coach Alonzo Stagg, who was Naismith's friend at Springfield, and on whose first football team the basketball inventor played center, said last winter that no one person has made a greater contribution to the athletic development of young men than Dr. Naismith. The players grew from eighteen to eighteen million; the game spread from Springfield to the last reaches of civilization. Y. M. C. A. secretaries took it to India first, in 1894. The next year it was introduced in France. Japanese youth were playing basketball in 1900, Persians in 1901. Missionaries also helped in its spread, notably in Syria and Turkey. It reached Panama through the canal builders; our American soldiers carried it to China during the Boxer rebellion, and they played it in the Philippines at the time of the insurrection there. For from that first crude setup with peach baskets and nine men on each team (to take care of the Naismith charges at Springfield) there was to appear a great world sport. At home, thousands of county, hundreds of state tournaments, and at least seven great national tournaments were to develop with four international championships in a game that reached round the world, and was played in the 1936 Olympic games at Berlin. February 7 to February 15 in that last Olympic year was designated "Naismith week" and games in the inventor's honor were played from coast to coast. The one cent from each admission charge during that week was put into a fund which made possible what Dr. Naismith called "the happiest moment" of his life. For, sent to Berlin on this money, he saw the teams of all nations filing in behind the flags of their countries; and he addressed those assembled players before the start of the tournament—and, he said later, his eyes grew misty.

The boys at Springfield had wanted to call the game "Naismith Ball." This their instructor would not permit. "Such a name," he told them, "would kill it instantly." A member of the class, Frank Mahan, suggested "basketball," and the title was approved and adopted by the inventor for his game that proved enormously popular from the start. In 1892 it was being played in New York City, and in that year the original rules were formally drafted; Yale, Cornell and Chicago had basketball teams in 1893-95, and the Missouri Valley took it up in 1899. For the first schools were swiftly followed by other universities and athletic clubs until about the turn of the century there was no college, high school, or

## And HE Called It BASKETBALL



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A Northwestern-Princeton game in which Princeton lost

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