

grown man actually to propose to devote his life to the game he invented. About 1910, Dr. F. C. Allen, now one of the country's greatest basketball coaches, told Dr. Naismith that he was going to Baker university in Baldwin, Kas., to coach basketball. Dr. Naismith was incredulous.

JUST A GAME TO HIM.

"Why, basketball is just a game to play," he told Allen. "It doesn't need a coach."

Yet basketball was responsible for what Dr. Naismith regarded as the greatest experience of his life. In 1936, as a gesture of honor to basketball's inventor, one week of the season was set aside and a penny from each admittance charge went into a fund to send Dr. and Mrs. Naismith to the Olympic games in Berlin, where basketball was played for the first time as part of the international athletic games. Illness prevented Mrs. Naismith from going, but her husband saw the United States win the first Olympic championship, and was suitably honored and recognized for his invention.

Upon his return home he told a friend that seeing the game played by teams from many nations was the greatest compensation he could have received for his invention, from which he never profited by as much as a cent, except for royalties received from sales of a ball bearing his name.

STUDIED FOR THE MINISTRY.

Dr. Naismith was born in Almonte, Ontario, November 6, 1861. He was graduated from McGill university in Montreal in 1887, and was director of physical education there three years while he studied for the ministry at Presbyterian college. He decided that he could be of more value in Y. M. C. A. work than in the pulpit, so he went to the Y. M. C. A. training school at Springfield, Mass. There he studied and then became a member of the faculty. The gymnasium at Springfield was the birthplace of the game of basketball in the winter of 1891-92.

Dr. Luther H. Gulick, head of the physical education department at the school, assigned Dr. Naismith the task of devising some game to occupy the students in the winter months when the weather kept them from playing games out of doors. Dr. Naismith has recalled that he tried to dodge the assignment but Dr. Gulick was insistent.

As a Rugby football player and enthusiast, Dr. Naismith sought to accommodate Rugby to indoor play. Tackling had to be eliminated since it was far too rough for indoor play. So, Dr. Naismith ruled that the ball should be passed rather than carried.

BEGINS TO WORK OUT IDEA.

First he thought of putting boxes at each end of the floor for goals but decided they would be too easily defended.

Then he placed the goals above the players' heads. The problem of what to use for goals was solved when somebody suggested peach baskets. Since there were eighteen players in the class the first games were played between teams of nine. Later the number was cut to seven and then to five. The game has changed little.

Dr. Naismith opposed most of the rules changes since about 1925, although his colleague, Dr. Allen, has been a rip-roaring radical when it comes to the basketball rules. Frequently the two disagreed as to the worth of certain proposed changes. While Dr. Allen on the second floor of the gymnasium was telling reporters why the 10-second rule required the offensive team to speed up play was a great thing, down in his office Dr. Naismith was giving out a statement putting the blame for stalling on the defensive rather than the offensive teams.

Yet the two men were friends and in their discussions of the game were always good tempered if sometimes argumentative.

Dr. Naismith's game caught on at once among the members of the gymnasium class, and they carried the game to many schools.

HE GOES TO DENVER.

Dr. Naismith left Springfield in 1895 and went to Denver to become physical director of the Denver Y. M. C. A. He studied medicine at Gross Medical college in Denver and was graduated in 1898. That year he went to K. U. where first he was director of chapel (a position long since abolished with the end of compulsory chapel) and later professor of physical education. He headed the department until about 1925. In 1937 he retired from active teaching.

As chaplain of the 1st Kansas infantry, Dr. Naismith spent four months on the Mexican border in 1916. He engaged in Y. M. C. A. work in France after the entry of the United States in the World war.

Dr. Naismith was himself a rugged sturdy man and if the matter had been left to him he might not have tried to take all of Rugby's roughness out of basketball for he liked rough and tumble physical contests. In his youth he played lacrosse, the Indian game, often referred to as legalized murder. Until a few years ago he fenced with his students and joined in their other exercises.

When he was at Springfield Dr. Naismith played on the football team. A mate was A. A. Stagg, later one of the most famous coaches in the game. Both men believed in the strenuous life, and the Springfield team consisted of eleven men and no substitutes. Dr. Naismith originated a forerunner of the headgear while

playing at Springfield, but it was characteristic that his headgear didn't really protect the head, it just kept the ears from getting torn off.

A GENEROUS TEACHER.

For years Dr. Naismith taught the freshmen men's hygiene classes at K. U. The course was required and met once each week with several hundred students in attendance. If you went to enough sessions you were sure to pass so the students naturally hit on the idea of letting a friend answer "present" for them, if they felt like cutting the class. Often a student with a good voice range might answer to five or six names. Dr. Naismith undoubtedly knew about that practice but he never showed that he did.

Dr. Naismith usually came to Kansas City for the opening games of the Naismith league which was named in his honor. He attended all of the K. U. games where year in and year out he saw basketball played very nearly to perfection by the teams developed by Dr. Allen.

He sometimes went East and saw games there and his arrival in any city was the signal for sports writers to descend upon him for the inevitable interview about his invention of basketball.

Yet he was never a conspicuous figure and a stranger sitting beside the rugged man with the black mustache, would never know that his neighbor was the inventor of the game which was sending ten young men darting about furiously while thousands yelled unrestrained encouragement. Dr. Naismith never yelled at a game.

Naismith, Father Of Basketball, Dies at Lawrence

Invented Cage Sport With Pair of Peach Baskets Back in '91

Lawrence, Kan., Nov. 28.—(A. P.)—Dr. James A. Naismith took two peach baskets forty-eight years ago, invented the game of basketball and started the construction of gymnasiums and fieldhouses all over the world.

Personally, the seventy-eight-year-old educator, who died today, thought wrestling and fencing better exercise. In his later years, he was much more likely to be found watching athletes in those sports.

He opposed a majority of the basketball rules passed since 1925. If the decisions had been left to him, it is probable that not all of Rugby's roughness would have been deleted from the game he designed.

Quickest Way Out

He recalled that during the early days it was the final duty of the team's captain to open the dressing-room window before leading the players onto the floor.

This was done so that if the customary after-game squabble became too violent both the players and the officials would have an exit.

Naismith, an ordained minister, came to the University of Kansas in 1898 to lead chapel exercises and instruct physical education classes upon recommendation of Amos Alonzo Stagg, his classmate at the Springfield, Mass., Y. M. C. A. College.

DR. NAISMITH'S CONTRIBUTION

The death of Dr. Naismith at the state university closes the life of a notable man who gave something to his generation. It was a game—the game of basketball, a lively, diverting and dramatic kind of play. He invented it. Millions of people have lived a few golden hours watching and playing the game. They have been taken away from themselves. They have relaxed. They have enjoyed seeing their children and their friends disport themselves in basketball.

Here is a man who has done a real service to humanity. The game he invented has lasted through a generation and probably will persist through this century. What a privilege it must have been, what a satisfaction for him to realize that he had done something worthy, something to make people happy, something really useful in this vale of tears. He had not a high talent, but he used what God gave him and made his life count. That is all any of us can do. May his ashes rest in peace!

W.A. Umite



Dr. Naismith With First Basketball Team—

The game of basketball was given to the world 48 years ago by Dr. James Naismith. At the time he was physical director at the Springfield, Ill., Y.M.C.A. Dr. Naismith, professor emeritus of the department of physical education at Kansas Uni-

versity, died following an extended illness. The above photograph of the first basketball team, taken in Springfield in 1892, shows Dr. Naismith seated at the extreme left.

NAISMITH FUNERAL AT LAWRENCE FRIDAY

Lawrence, Kan., Nov. 29.—(A. P.)—Messages of condolence were received at the home of Dr. James Naismith today from sports leaders in Canada and all parts of the United States.

Dr. Naismith, 78, the "Father of Basketball," died Tuesday. He was professor emeritus of physical education at Kansas University, where he began teaching in 1898.

Funeral services will be conducted by the Masonic Blue Lodge at 2:30 p. m. Friday at the First Presbyterian Church. Dr. Naismith was past master of the Lawrence lodge.

Naismith was the center on Stagg's first football team at Springfield in 1890 and the now famous gridiron tutor was away on a two-weeks tour of the Midwest when Naismith hung up the two baskets and created his own memorial.

Stagg, who still has stereopticon slides showing the original baskets, recalled today in California that captains of the first two basketball teams to play the new sport were S. Libby, now a real estate agent at Redlands, Calif., and Duncan Patton, living in retirement at Toronto, Calif.

Doctor Naismith's first wife, who died in 1937, played on the first girls' team before their marriage in 1893. Altho he invented the game Naismith had only modest success as a coach. In contrast, the present Kansas coach, Dr. F. C. (Phog) Allen, has given the university one of the best basketball records in the nation. The two men had many sincere but friendly arguments.

Opposed New Rules

Especially did Naismith dislike the rule which requires the offensive team to speed down the floor 10 seconds after gaining possession of the ball. One day while Doctor Allen, whose cage teams have won 322 of 392 games played, was lecturing on the value of that regulation, Doctor Naismith sat at a nearby desk and authored a blast against it.

It was his theory the defensive team should come up the floor and try to take the ball away.

Daily World Nov. 10, 1939

Funeral services for Dr. James Naismith will be held at 2:30 o'clock tomorrow afternoon from the First Presbyterian church. The Rev. Theodore H. Aszman will officiate and burial will be in Memorial park cemetery.

The body was taken to the Naismith home at noon today where it will lie in state until noon tomorrow.

Emporia Gazette Nov. 24, 1939

DR. NAISMITH'S CONTRIBUTION

Here is a man who has done a real service to humanity. The game he invented has lasted through a generation and probably will persist through this century. What a privilege it must have been, what a satisfaction for him to realize that he had done something worthy, something to make people happy, something really useful in this vale of tears. He had not a high talent, but he used what God gave him and made his life count. That is all any of us can do. May his ashes rest in peace!

W.A. Umite

K.C. Journal

Friday Nov 29, 1939

One Man's Life

From all quarters come expressions of appreciation of the good which Dr. James Naismith accomplished in his life of 78 years. In Lawrence, where he lived and worked thru more than half of those years, he held the esteem of his neighbors and friends as a man of energetic nature guided by high principles. He held to his course without pretensions and some of his neighbors may be surprised to learn, in the summing-up of his life work, how widely he was known and how appreciatively his work was judged in this and other countries.

In young manhood he became impressed with the idea of living a life from which only good influences should radiate upon others. More than most men he realized the desire to contribute something of permanent benefit to his fellows. There was something more than chance in his invention of the game of basketball and in the spread of that game into many lands. For he sought to fill a need. His aim was to encourage young people to be clean and active in body and mind and the game which he developed was in conformity with that aim. How well he succeeded is shown by its continued and expanding use.