

His Influence Lives



Dr. James Naismith, inventor of basketball and professor emeritus of physical education at K. U., died early today at his home following a heart attack.

MOURN HIS DEATH

Chancellor and Coach Allen Comment on Passing of Naismith

Praising his contribution to the sport world as well as to the youth of all nations, Chancellor Deane W. Malott and Dr. F. C. Allen, head basketball coach, today expressed sorrow at the death of Dr. James Naismith.

The flag atop Fraser hall was at half-mast this morning when students came to classes and word spread of the death of the famous, beloved man. Funeral services will be held Friday while students are away on the Thanksgiving vacation.

"In behalf of the University of Kansas I express sorrow at the death of Dr. James Naismith, professor emeritus of physical education," said Chancellor Deane W. Malott today.

"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 the 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."

"The youth of the world has lost a great benefactor in Dr. James Naismith, the father of basketball," said Dr. F. C. Allen, K. U. basketball coach. "Eighteen million young men all over the world are playing his game of basketball which he originated for eighteen trouble-

some young men in a class at Springfield, Mass., Y.M.C.A. college in 1891. Dr. Naismith is directly responsible for all the large field houses, the large auditoria and gymnasia where basketball is played today. Before this game was originated there were few large indoor arenas that were used for any indoor sports. Dotting the middle western states are high school gymnasia that are much larger in size than the entire school buildings were 30 years ago.

"Dr. Naismith is indirectly responsible for the forward pass in football. Until the popularity of basketball which began to spring up in the colleges of America in 1905, the forward pass in football was not thought of. Then the football rules committee incorporated the forward pass or basketball pass in football, and immediately the open game became the element that spread the defense. Basketball has become footballized and football has become basketballized. The forward pass of today is a Naismith innovation. Today it is the most spectacular of all plays on our gridirons.

"Frederick Froebel gave to the world the theory of the kindergarten—education thru play. Dr. Naismith gave to the youth basketball, a game that takes the youngster from the eighth grade to maturity. I once heard eight nationally known educators speaking from the same platform declare that basketball had all the qualities necessary to teach the educable child: Poise, rhythm, grace, coordination, development of skills and the development of physical vigor. The speakers were not competitive coaches nor were they athletes. This game, the only international game that is the product of one man's brain, stamps Dr. Naismith as a great educator, a kindly humanitarian and a practical Christian.

"He loved youth. He and Alonzo Stagg both 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
arise and call
blessed."

BASKETBALL GREW POPULAR RAPIDLY

Invention of the Game
Raised Dr. Naismith From
Obscurity

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DRAFTED FIRST RULES

Dr. James Naismith, who died here today, rose from the obscurity of an instructor in physical education to become known as the "father of basketball."

The game, originated as a means of winter exercise for a class at the Y. M. C. A. training school at Springfield, Mass., now Springfield college, met with popularity from the beginning.

Unlike other games which evolved from middle century sports or resulted from years of changes and perfections, basketball came into being almost on the spur of the moment. That was back in 1891 when the physical training class at Springfield consisted of 18 men.

Dr. Luther H. Gulick, then head of the physical training department, was hard put to keep the men busy outside the regular class exercises during the period from December to March. He wanted something that would keep the men in the top of physical condition during the winter so they could take up their spring activities without undue fatigue or over-exertion.

He Got the Assignment

Discussing with Dr. Naismith the problem that confronted him, Dr. Gulick instructed his assistant to invent some sort of a game that would occupy all the men and which could be played on the gymnasium floor.

Dr. Naismith began a study of various games and forms of exercises, including duck-on-the-rock, la crosse and Rugby football. In a short time he presented his plan and it met with immediate approval. Duck-on-the-rock suggested to him the tossing in an arc rather than hurling an inflated ball, la crosse contributed the arrangement of the players and Rugby furnished the means of putting the ball in play.

A goal on the floor was deemed too easy to defend, so it was decided to elevate them. The balcony around the gymnasium was ten feet above the floor and that served to solve the problem of the goal's position. The baskets, as they were named, were attached to the balcony at the end of the court and that elevation became the standard for the game.

Nine-Man Teams

Basketball as originally played at Springfield college had nine men on a team because of the necessity of taking care of the 18 members of the class. The number later was reduced to seven and finally to five.

When a member of his class suggested the new game be called "Naismith ball," in honor of the originator, Dr. Naismith immediately disapproved the idea with the comment: "Such a name would kill it instantly." Another member of the class, Frank Mahan, suggested "basketball," which was approved by Dr. Naismith, and it was adopted.

In the beginning there were only the fundamental rules governing the scoring. The first important change in the code was that which prohibited spectators from touching the ball. Previous to that they often helped their favorite team or hindered opponents in the scoring on a goal.

When the popularity of basketball extended outside the confines of Springfield there was a demand for a set of fixed rules. Dr. Naismith drafted these in 1892.

Played At Yale Early

Yale is said to have been the first university to play basketball. Its adoption by others as well as by athletic clubs came rapidly until virtually every college, university, high school and athletic club was represented on the basketball court.

Organization of leagues in various parts of the country helped extend the popularity of the game and necessitated amendments to the rules from time to time. A joint committee on rules, which included representatives of the various organizations interested in the game, resulted. Dr. Naismith was honored with appointment as honorary chairman for life.

Dr. Naismith devoted his entire life to physical training and the development of physical education. When basketball was criticized as too strenuous he made a study of several years of the exact time all players in a game were in action. He made a tabulation of the results and declared that he failed to find the sport too strenuous for boys and girls of high school age; further he expressed the belief that the game could be played with safety for girls and young women.