

## Bibliography, Dr. James Naismith

The late Dr. James A. Naismith is best known for his invention of basketball, considered today the only major sport originating in America.

Strange as it seems the fact that he authored a sport which was to sweep the fancy of both competitors and fans, gave him less satisfaction than his 39 years of teaching at the University of Kansas.

Dr. Naismith regarded his invention of the game as an episode in a long career devoted to the improvement of the physical conditions of succeeding generations. Naturally, he observed the growth of basketball with satisfaction but he always remained a great deal more calm about the game than did thousands of players, spectators and coaches.

Dr. Naismith thought wrestling was better exercise than basketball. Personally, he would rather go into a corner of Robinson Gym at KU and instruct a couple of eager youngsters in the art of fencing than watch a 100 games of basketball. He drew as much pleasure from the sight of a clever tumbler as he did from watching such Kansas all-Americans as Paul Endacott and Al Peterson perform on the hardwoods.

While experts sat up late thinking of ways to amend the rules of basketball, Dr. Naismith, who died November 28, 1939, at the age of 78, worked away at tabulations of the comparative measurements of the various freshman classes which entered the University.

Those measurements, as well as various other figures for different phases of physical man, Dr. Naismith tabulated mostly to gratify his own curiosity. He seldom published any of his results, and a visitor at his office would see hundreds of dusty cards in and on top of filing cases.

There was a time when Naismith even thought it foolish for a grown man to actually propose to devote his life to the game he invented. About 1910, Dr. F. C. "Phog" Allen, now one of the country's most illustrious hoop mentors, told Naismith he was going to Baker University at Baldwin, Kansas, to coach basketball. The good doctor was incredulous.