

T. World Jan. 27, 1937

Dr. Naismith Recalls First Basketball Game as New York Plans to Re-enact Scene

The young instructor, a soccer ball in hand, addressed the group of lightly-clad youngsters whose gaze wandered questioningly toward two peach baskets, one nailed to the balcony railing at each end of the gymnasium.

"The idea," he explained, "is for one side to get the ball in a basket without running with the ball, striking it with the fist, or holding, tripping, pushing or shouldering an opponent. Let's see, there are 18 here. That will make nine on a side."

That scene, enacted at the Springfield, Mass., Y. M. C. A. college back in 1891, marked the origin of basketball. The originator, now sturdy, erect, 75-year-old Dr. James A. Naismith of the University of Kansas physical education department, expressed keen interest today in plans for the reenactment in Madison Square Garden, New York, January 27 of that first game.

"I recall very clearly the boys' reaction when they entered the gymnasium that day and saw the baskets," chuckled Dr. Naismith. "They said: 'Oh, ooh, just another game,' but, full of vigor and vitality, they welcomed any change from the 1-2-3-4 routine of dumbbells and Indian clubs.

"Yes, that first game was a pretty wild affair, but the boys soon

caught on."
"The gymnasium was next to the street," he recalled. "The laughter and shouting lured passersby, and among them was a number of teachers from a nearby public school. Soon they asked if they couldn't organize a team. Consequently women were playing the game within a month after our first efforts."

The original 13 rules drawn up by Dr. Naismith were typewritten and posted on the gymnasium door. Twelve still are in effect. No mention was made of the number of players.

Oddly enough, Dr. Naismith never played the game, except a few times on faculty teams.

"I had some good workouts as an official, though," he said. "Play was more spontaneous then, the primary purpose of all players being to get the ball to the forwards so they could score."

Dr. Naismith suggested that the original game might well be reenacted when basketball coaches and the rules committee meet in New York in March.

Eugene Libby of Redlands, Calif., a real estate operator and Duncan Patton of Toronto, Canada, retired Y.M.C.A. secretary, captained the two original teams. They correspond frequently with Dr. Naismith.

MRS. NAISMITH DIES

Heart Attack Fatal to Wife of Basketball Inventor

Mrs. James Naismith, wife of the internationally known professor of physical education, died early this morning at her home at 1708 Mississippi street. Altho in failing health for several years, death came unexpectedly following a heart attack in the night.

Mrs. Naismith had been a resident of Lawrence for nearly 40 years, coming here in 1898 as a young woman with her husband who had accepted a position as physical director at the University of Kansas. They were married five years earlier in Springfield, Mass., while Dr. Naismith was a student instructor at the Springfield Y. M. C. A.

She was born in Springfield in 1869 and became acquainted with Dr. Naismith while he was a student at the Y. M. C. A. It was there that Dr. Naismith invented the game of basketball and his bride-to-be was a member of the first girls' basketball team.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by five children; Mrs. George B. Stanley of Ordway, Colo.; Mrs. Leslie Dodd of St. Louis; Jack Naismith of Kansas City; Mrs. Thomas Dawe of Lawrence; and James Sherman Naismith of Dallas, Tex.

Funeral services will be conducted by the Rev. Theodore Aszman at the First Presbyterian church, Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

NAISMITH ON TRIP

Accompanied by Duke D'Ambra, He Visits in Canada

Dr. James Naismith of the University of Kansas physical education staff, and Duke D'Ambra, Lawrence photographer, will leave Monday evening by auto for a month's trip which will take them thru the eastern section of the United States and into Canada.

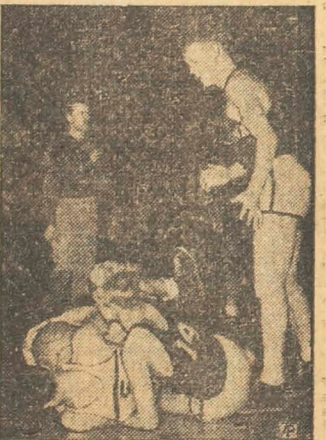
Dan Rhule, K. U. football player from Aspinwall, Pa., will accompany Dr. Naismith and D'Ambra as far as Pittsburgh.

Dr. Naismith will attend the Springfield, Mass., Y.M.C.A. college commencement week which will be held June 10 to 14. He was graduated from the school in 1891.

After that the two men will go into Canada where they will visit McGill University, Montreal, which Dr. Naismith attended as a young man. Dr. Naismith also will visit his birthplace near Ottawa.

D'Ambra will combine business and pleasure on the journey. He plans to take pictures of interesting sights and places and also do some fishing with Dr. Naismith.

What! No Contact?



The good Dr. James Naismith who invented the great game of basketball as an indoor winter sport based his game upon the idea of no contact by the players. It perhaps is hard for Dr. Naismith to recognize his brain child in some of its present day manifestations. Above is a picture taken at a recent Madison Square Garden game in New York City. The scene is not unlike many seen at games here. Basketball has aped football in some ways, and contact of players is the rule rather than the exception as the game is now played.

NAISMITH ON TRIP

Accompanied by Duke D'Ambra, He Visits in Canada

Dr. James Naismith of the University of Kansas physical education staff, and Duke D'Ambra, Lawrence photographer, will leave Monday evening by auto for a month's trip which will take them thru the eastern section of the United States and into Canada.

Dan Rhule, K. U. football player from Aspinwall, Pa., will accompany Dr. Naismith and D'Ambra as far as Pittsburgh.

Dr. Naismith will attend the Springfield, Mass., Y.M.C.A. college commencement week which will be held June 10 to 14. He was graduated from the school in 1891.

After that the two men will go into Canada where they will visit McGill University, Montreal, which Dr. Naismith attended as a young man. Dr. Naismith also will visit his birthplace near Ottawa.

D'Ambra will combine business and pleasure on the journey. He plans to take pictures of interesting sights and places and also do some fishing with Dr. Naismith.

J. World Jan. 27, 1937

J. World June 3, 1937