By Ignoring Naismith's Opinion
Phog Is a Coach Second to None

By ELIZABETH WOHLGMUTH

"You can't coach basketball—you just play it," Dr. James Naismith, originator of the game, once told Dr. Forrest C. "Phog" Allen.

The inventor of basketball actually had no idea the game could be coached. But Dr. Allen, coach here for 28 years, has proved that it can be coached and in tribute to his coaching ability the board of regents has named the new fieldhouse after him.

Naismith drives, leading onto the fieldhouse, has been named after the basketball inventor.

It was in 1891 when Naismith was teaching at Springfield, Mass., to become a physical education director that he first conceived the game of basketball so the physical education classes would have something to do when the weather would not permit outdoor sports.

The popularity of the game was immediate and it soon became a national sport.

Dr. Naismith began his duties at KU in 1891 and resigned from full time teaching in 1937. Dr. Naismith, who had been educated for the ministry, came to Kansas because the school was in need of a physical education director who could at the same time lead the chapel service.

Dr. Naismith was always exasperating a cause, a trait both he and Dr. Allen seem to have in common.

In 1919 he was quoted as saying, "College athletes are not injured by athletic training. It isn't athletics that kills a man. It is what he does when not under the control of his coach, when he breaks away from the restraint of training."

In 1919, he made a suggestion to the board of regents that it provided better and safer equipment for the athletes.

When the game was accused of being too rough, Dr. Naismith said, "Basketball is a gentlemanly game, the disregard of rules in the East has caused the trouble and the sport should not be abandoned."

When Dr. Naismith saw the sport take off, he changed his school career as his route. "I want to leave the world a better man than I found it," he is quoted as saying.

He was the possessor of three degrees—a B.A. from McGill university in 1919, a B.S. in education from the SMACA college in Springfield, Mass., and in 1919, a doctor of medicine degree from the University of Colorado.

He was born in Almont, Colorado, in 1847. When he was 8 his parents died and his uncle raised him on his farm.

When Dr. Naismith died Nov. 28, 1934, Dr. Allen said, "The youth of the world has lost a great benefactor, Dr. James Naismith."

Both Dr. Allen and Dr. Naismith worked for the advancement of basketball to the Olympic games. But it was due to the single-minded effort of Dr. Allen that the game was adopted at the Berlin Olympic games in 1936. In 1937, the University's NCAA championship team made up half the Olympic team at Helsinki and Dr. Allen was one of the coaches.

During his career at KU he has been known for his "smashing off" on issues he does not like.

The nickname "Phog" came about through a process of evolution. He acquired the name when he was struggling baseball games. It was not long before he was nickname "Phog." A Kansas sportswriter described him as having an "old maidsman's way" of speaking.

"Phog" was a great friend of Dr. Naismith and it has been said that he was the name given to the "Phog" in the fieldhouse.

House Approves L.D. W. 2 Action on Phog

TOPEKA — The House adopted a resolution today which would permit Dr. Forrest C. "Phog" Allen to remain as basketball coach at the University of Kansas for three seasons beyond the date he normally would be forced to retire.

The resolution, bearing signatures of 13 of the 22 House members, was presented at the start of today's House session and promptly adopted.

Under present policy established by the State Board of Regents, professors must retire at the age of 70.

Dr. Allen will reach 70 next fall, but the resolution would allow him to continue coaching until June 30, 1939 if he so desires.

Coach Allen was contacted at his office today by the Journal-World after the action by the Kansas Senate of the bill and was present in the Legislature as its sponsor.

"The action of the Legislature of our great state coupled with my greatest honor in the naming of the Allen Fieldhouse makes me most happy."

"My ambition has always been to keep a useful article. This is what I intend to do and to the utmost of my ability. Any Kansas so recognized would be justly proud."

The Kansas Board of Regents announced the names of the 50 million fieldhouse last Dec. 15. Dedication of the fieldhouse is set for March 1, date of the Kansas-Kansas State basketball game here.

The resolution of the representatives now will go to the Board of Regents for approval or veto.

"We won't introduce the resolution Friday as we once planned," Bruck said. "But we may do it in a few days. Some of the men behind the resolution have been looking into the thing and they think Phog may be able to stay on.

"There's nothing that says a coach can't stay on the job, or a man can remain in athletics beyond 70 years of age."

53 Signatures Claimed

Bruck said that 53 House members, many of them with no affiliations with Kansas basketball, have signed the resolution. Allen declined to say definitely if he would remain at KU, coach if the bid by the legislature is successful. He issued this statement Thursday night:

"The recent activity of my friends, desiring me to continue as varsity basketball coach after my retirement comes as a distinct surprise to me."

"Naturally I had expected to retire after next year and have stated publicly many times. I've also stated this to Chancellor (W. Franklin) Murphy and Director (A.C. I) Longhorne.

4th Season for Allen

"Sometimes it makes a fellow feel years younger when friends desire him to do something beyond his years."

Allen is in his 4th season of varsity basketball coaching, having started in 1936. That season, he coached both KU and Kansas State, and the following year coached both KU and K-State in the NCAA basketball tourney.

He returned to Kansas in 1919 after a 28-year stay at the gymnasium at Williams College.

He will be honored at the dedication of the new 17,000-seat Allen Fieldhouse on March 1.

Horrible Hoch May Be Converted

Hoch auditions, the score of KU basketball history, will be a deserted ball tonight.

The famous ball will now be used only for decorations, concerts and other University functions.

Keith Lawton, administrative assistant to the chancellor, said there are immediate plans for changing any of the interior structure of the auditorium. In this way, there are more ways to pitch the floor on the main level of the arena can be extended to the orchestra pit.

But he said these plans are only tentative, and there has been no money appropriated for the move.

Move to Retain Allen as Coach Still in Hopper

The move in the Kansas Legislature to get a postponement on the forced retirement of Kansas University basketball coach Dr. Forrest C. (Phog) Allen was first sneakched and then revitalized Thursday in Topeka.

Thursday afternoon, Rep. Karl Bruck (D-Paola) announced he was abandoning his plan to introduce a resolution in the House of Representatives that would allow Allen to remain on the two years beyond his mandatory retirement age of 70. Allen is 69 now, will be 70 next November and technically 1956 is his last season.

Bruck talked to Paolaites but Bruck said Thursday night that he had talked to Allen and University officials and added that the resolution is not dead. He said it may be possible for Allen to retire as a tenured but remain as a coach.

—D'Ambris photo

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