

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

By ELIZABETH WOHLGEMUTH

"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 38 years, has proved it can be coached and in tribute to his coaching ability the board of regents has named the new fieldhouse after him.

Naismith drive, leading into the fieldhouse, has been named after the basketball inventor.

It was in 1891 when Naismith was training 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 1898 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 expounding 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 coaches, when he breaks away from the restraint of training."

In 1913, he made a suggestion to the board of regents that it provide better and safer equipment for Potter lake.

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 started his school career he adopted as his motto, "I want to leave the world better than I found it."

He was the possessor of three degrees—an A.B. from McGill university in Montreal in 1887, master of physical education in 1891 from the YMCA college in Springfield, Mass., and in 1898 earned a doctor of medicine degree from the University of Colorado.

He was born in Almont, Canada, in 1861. When he was 9 his parents died and his uncle raised him on his farm.

When Dr. Naismith died Nov. 28, 1939, Dr. Allen said, "The youth of the world has lost a great benefactor in Dr. James Naismith."

Both Dr. Allen and Dr. Naismith worked for the admittance of basketball to the Olympic games. But it was due to the single-handed effort of Dr. Allen that the game was adopted at the Berlin Olympic games in 1936. In 1952, 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 become known for his way of "sounding off" on issues he does not like.

u.o.k.
3/1/55
Daily Kansan
Sports



—D'Ambra photo

The nickname "Phog" came about through a process of evolution. He acquired the name when he was refereeing baseball games. It was not long before he was nicknamed "Fog." A Kansan sportswriter de-

cidied he liked it better spelled "Phog," and so the name has remained.

'Horrible Hoch' May Be Converted

Hoch auditorium, the scene of KU basketball history, will be a deserted hall tonight.

The famous hall will now be used only for convocations, concerts and other University functions.

Keith Lawton, administrative assistant to the chancellor, said there are no immediate plans for changing any of the interior structure of the auditorium, but, he said, there are hopes that the pitched 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 stueled and then revitalized Thursday in Topeka.

Thursday afternoon, Rep. Karl Brueck (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 1955-56 is his last season.

Brueck Talks to Principals

But Brueck 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 teacher but remain as a coach.

House Approves Action on Phog

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

The resolution, bearing signatures of 74 of the 125 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, 1959 if he so desires.

Coach Allen was contacted at his office today by the Journal-World after the action by the House of Representatives and the veteran of 38 years as K.U. head coach issued this statement.

"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 lead a useful life. This I intend to do always to the utmost of my ability. Any Kansan so recognized would be justly proud."

The Kansas Board of Regents announced the naming of the \$2½ million fieldhouse last Dec. 17. Dedication of the arena 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," Brueck 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't remain in athletics beyond 70 years of age."

75 Signatures Claimed

Brueck claims that 75 House members, many of them with no affiliation with Kansas basketball, have signed the resolution.

Allen declined to say directly if he would remain at K.U. coach if the bid by the legislators 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 so stated publicly many times. I've also stated this to Chancellor

(Franklin) Murphy and Director (A.C.) Lonborg.

45th Season for Allen

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

Allen is in his 45th season of basketball coaching, having started in 1908. That season, he coached both K.U. and Baker, and the following year coached those two plus Haskell. Then he spent seven seasons at Warrensburg.

He returned to Kansas in 1920. Overall, he has produced 31 conference champions, and has won every honor in the game and made many direct contributions to it.

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

70x