

705327 5.13.1936

Back From Olympics, Dr. Naismith Has Tales of Sportsmanship in Games

Highly pleased with the way basketball made its initial bow in Olympic competition, and with the reception given him by the basketball teams from 21 nations, Dr. James Naismith, inventor of the game, returned to Lawrence late Sunday night.

Dr. Naismith attended the Olympic games as the guest of the American basketball fans, who last February observed "Naismith nights", and raised a fund of several thousand dollars for his use.

Dr. Naismith was honored while in Berlin by being elected honorary president of the International Federation of Basketball Leagues.

For the opening of the basketball games, a demonstration was organized in Dr. Naismith's honor by Karl Diem, general secretary of the Olympic committee, R. W. Jones of Rome, Italy,

Honorary President



Dr. James Naismith, inventor of basketball, complimented by the International Federation of Basketball Leagues.

secretary of the International federation, and Mr. Tobin of New York.

"It certainly was an impressive sight as the 21 contesting teams, each with their national flags, lined up on the field, to be addressed by Dr. Diem and myself," said Dr. Naismith. "And then I must extend my greetings to representatives of each of the teams."

Splendid Sportsmen

Dr. Naismith was impressed both by the high quality of play of the various teams, and the splendid sportsmanship

shown. Considering the varied nationalities, and the different languages spoken, there was a surprisingly small number of disputes over decisions.

"The final game, that between the United States and Canada, was especially noteworthy in this respect," said Dr. Naismith. "One Chinese officiated and there was not a single questioning of his rulings.

"An especially interesting game was the one in which the draw brought together Uruguay, champion of South America, and Esthonia, champion of Europe.

Teams Limited to Seven

"Another illustration of the fine sportsmanship came in a game—which one, I do not exactly recall—but one team had no eligible players to replace one banished for four personals. The captain of the opposing team at once appealed to the officials to permit another player to go on. He did not want to play his five against four."

"The Olympic rules limited a team to seven, and permitted a player, withdrawn from the game, to return but once. I like the idea of limiting the team, but believe seven is too small a number. Ten would be better, I believe."

Dr. Naismith said the outdoor courts occasioned little difficulty, even in the rain. The surface, as well as that of the tracks, were covered with a composition made up of sand, sawdust, and salt. Like sea sand, it packed harder when wet than when dry.

No Center Line

The inventor of the game liked also the Olympic rule that did not include the present American center line.

"The players were all over the court," he said. "There was no stalling, and not infrequently a player would rush in get the ball, and dash the length of the court for a score."

Dr. Naismith left the United States late in June and visited first in Glasgow, ancestral home of his parents, then to England, Holland, Belgium, and German. After the Olympic games he visited Switzerland, and attended two games between the Swiss and the Philippine teams. While there he was honored again by being named honorary president of the Swiss basketball league and, much to his embarrassment, was presented with a huge bouquet of flowers.

Douglas Co. Republican 7.13.1936

One of the great needs of the world is for someone to do for the girls what Dr. Naismith has done for the boys by inventing the game of basketball. Coaches and school men all say that athletics and especially basketball is their greatest aid in keeping boys from forming the wrong health habits. They become interested in the game and will train diligently to keep physically fit. There is no such incentive for girls. Social engagements become their chief interest and the social elite seem to have but little use for, or interest in, character and good health.