

Spring 1950

Current Trends In Basketball Coaching

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CURRENT TRENDS IN BASKETBALL COACHING

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirement for
the Degree of Master of Science

by

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer of this thesis wishes to express his appreciation for the consideration, help, and encouragement given to him by his wife, Irene Suran, and by Dr. Robert T. McGrath and Dr. F. B. Streeter of the Fort Hays Kansas State College Faculty.

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The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of the system of basketball on the physical fitness of the students of the Department of Physical Education, University of the Philippines, Manila. The study is a descriptive study of teaching methods and aims to determine the effect of the system of basketball on the physical fitness of the students of the Department of Physical Education, University of the Philippines, Manila. The study is a descriptive study of teaching methods and aims to determine the effect of the system of basketball on the physical fitness of the students of the Department of Physical Education, University of the Philippines, Manila.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The most popular sport in America determined by player spectator participation is basketball. It is outstanding among sports as one which is an American contribution to the field of physical education and athletics. A coach of athletics finds that he is a teacher and that his sport is a branch in the field of physical education and so attempts to subordinate his coaching and basketball to the existing practices in the department. The majority of coaches who make a study of teaching methods and have a knowledge of educational objectives agree that those techniques combined with such things as personality, experience, and ability have no equal. A coach is one of the few teachers who has an opportunity to determine the efficiency of his methods in the actual performance of his students.

The Problem

The problem of the thesis, Current Trends in Basketball Coaching, is a study based upon the systems of various college basketball coaches selected from representative sections of the United States. This study includes information in regard to various phases of the game of basketball as well as the ideas and philosophy of certain coaches.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to portray the following trends

in basketball coaching, past and present, as found in certain schools of thought concerning the game:

- (a) to show the early development of the game of basketball;
- (b) to present the systems of a number of contemporary college basketball coaches;
- (c) to determine and show trends in the offensive and defensive tactics over a period of years;
- (d) to set up a basis for the application of the present systems of coaching basketball;
- (e) to review the system of basketball coaching used currently at Fort Hays Kansas State College;
- (f) to show the proper relationship among players, coaches, and spectators.

The Limitations of the Study

The problem of the thesis is limited to a study of a selected group of outstanding college basketball coaches. No coach was considered who had not furnished written evidence or material in defense of his particular system.

Definition of Terms

Passing -- means of moving the ball from player to player.

Shooting -- action of a player involved in scoring points by putting the ball through the goal.

Offense -- team and individual maneuvers involved in scoring points by putting the ball through the goal.

Defense -- team and individual maneuvers involved in preventing an opponent from scoring points.

Dribbling -- moving the ball by a succession of bounces.

Pivoting -- reversing the position of a player.

Faking -- an action that is used to mislead an opponent and cause him to be out-maneuvered.

Footwork -- any phase of play in which the feet are involved.

Held ball -- two opposing players having a firm grip on the ball at the same time.

Fast break -- means of scoring before an opponent can set up a defense.

Zone -- pertaining to a given area on the court.

Press -- pertaining to a type of defense.

Man-to-man -- pertaining to a type of defense.

The Method of Investigation (Historical Survey)

An effort was made to determine the philosophy and ideas of successful college basketball coaches from representative sections of the United States. The data for this problem was derived from books, periodicals, personal observation and experience. Diagrams and drawings were included to clarify points under discussion.

The representatives of various schools of thought in basketball coaching were chosen as follows:

Dr. W. E. Mearwell, University of Wisconsin -- pivot-pass game;

Dr. F. C. Allen, University of Kansas -- pattern basketball;

Adolph Rupp, University of Kentucky -- fast break basketball;

Claire Bee, Long Island University -- combination basketball;

H. P. Iba, Oklahoma A. & M. College -- ball possession basketball.

A resume of the coaching systems of each of these authorities follows in Chapter Two.

Exploring the field of research for recent investigations which have been made pertaining to the problem of this thesis showed that Frank Lorton, in 1940, at the University of Iowa, in a master's thesis pertaining to basketball, used as his problem A Study of the Relation of Fouls Committed and Free Throws Made to Winning in Basketball.¹ Albert Coldbank, in 1939, at the University of West Virginia, wrote A History of Intercollegiate Basketball in the United States with Special Reference to West Virginia.² David Osborne, in a master's thesis, in 1940, at George Washington University, selected as his problem Coaching Basketball in Secondary Schools.³ Osborne stressed theories of coaching which he found employed in the high schools covered in his study and found several types of coaching being employed but no particular theory pointed out as unusually well-suited for secondary schools.

1. Frank Lorton, "A Study of the Relation of Fouls Committed and Free Throws Made to Winning in Basketball." Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1940.

2. Albert D. Coldbank, "A History of Intercollegiate Basketball in the United States with Special Reference to West Virginia." Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of West Virginia, Morgantown, West Virginia, 1937. 111 pp.

3. David E. Osborne, "Coaching Basketball in Secondary Schools." Unpublished Master's Thesis, Washington University, Washington, D. C., 1940. 76 pp.

CHAPTER II

SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Basketball is the only one of our major sports that is entirely American in origin. The game was invented in 1883 at Springfield, Massachusetts, by the late Dr. James Naismith.¹ The purpose of the origin of the game was to provide a game that would fill in during the winter months between football and baseball season, a game that could be played with little equipment and be played indoors. Because the game was to be played with a minimum of equipment protection, it was necessary that the game be one of non-contact.

In the beginning, peach baskets were used as goals. Since there was no opening at the bottom of the basket, the ball had to be retrieved by the use of a ladder after each goal was made. The number of players composing a team has varied considerably since the game started. At first, there were nine; later this number was reduced to seven and finally, to five.

The major rules have been changed also and these changes have greatly improved the game. For example, one man used to shoot all the free throws and now the man fouled shoots the free throw. Another important change that helped to eliminate stalling made it compulsory to move the ball from the back court to the front court within ten seconds. The elimination of the center jump was perhaps the change

1. Walter E. Meanwell, Basketball. Madison, Wisconsin: Democrat Printing Co., [c1922], p. 1.

that has done more to speed up the game than any other change. There formerly was a center jump after each field goal and each successful free throw. While the elimination of the center jump was done mainly to curb the tall player, it actually popularized the fast break and made for a much faster, higher scoring game. A later important rule change restricted the offensive players to three seconds in the free throw lane.

Along with the changes in offenses has come the development of a number of defensive systems. In the early days of basketball the defense consisted of each man guarding the player who happened to line up beside him. It was the duty of each player to guard his opponent no matter what his position on the court might be. Following this type of defense was the one which consisted on one of the five players remaining in offensive territory at all times. In this type it was necessary for the team in possession of the ball to leave one man to guard this defensive player to prevent the ball being intercepted by the other team, who could, by using a long pass, make an easy basket.

When the game of basketball was started, it was prohibitive for a player to take a shot at the basket from a distance greater than ten to fifteen feet. It was because of this that the zone or team defense was inaugurated. The coaches brought all five players in to guard the area around the free throw key and as a result, the scores of games were very low. It is easy to see how the zone or team defense brought about the fast break type of offense. It became apparent to the coaches that one of the better ways of attacking this zone defense was to get

men into a scoring position before the defense could be set.

It is evident how through the years the changes of defenses have brought about changes in offenses and vice-versa. Changes that used more men on the team in the defensive play brought about an increase in the number of men used in offensive maneuvers. Since much research is being done on the rules of the game, other good changes will probably follow. Basketball is still in the experimental stage as compared to our other national sports such as football and baseball. The modern day types of defenses as well as offenses will be considered in a later chapter of this thesis.

Outstanding among the exponents of various systems of successful basketball coaching are Dr. W. E. Meanwell of the University of Wisconsin, who used the pivot-short pass game; Dr. F. C. Allen of the University of Kansas, who advocates pattern basketball; Adolph Rupp of the University of Kentucky, who proposes fast break basketball; Claire Bee of Long Island University, who believes in a combination style of play; and H. P. Iba of Oklahoma A. & M. College, who follows the ball possession game. A closer examination of the aforementioned systems of basketball coaching affords an interesting comparative study.

In discussing his system of basketball coaching, Dr. W. E. Meanwell says:²

I have found the pivot and pass game to be steadier and more consistent in my hands than other styles of play, and more likely to produce a leading percentage of victories regardless

2. Ibid., pp. 142-47.

of occasional defeats, usually inflicted by teams trained and pointed for that particular contest, than any other type of game. . . . To those who feel that the highly developed individual and team play is too advanced for boys of high school age I cite the fact that I originated the pivot-pass game for Settlement House teams composed of boys 16 years and under, and that those teams played as well and as successfully as any of my subsequent ones. . . .

This particular systematization of the short passing attack, with the pivot usually preceding a bounce, shove or underhand pass, I originated in Baltimore and have used, with slight variations and combined with five man defense, in all my conference seasons.

This style of game is fundamentally sound in that it throws two forwards, the center and one guard into every attack, while keeping the men so concentrated and close to the ball that a good five man defense position can be readily assumed when the ball is lost. The chief point in this offense is to retain possession of the ball until a point-blank shot is obtained. No long, "hope" shots are attempted and the ball is passed, backwards if necessary and then forward again, until a fairly close-in shot is possible.

This offense is only possible with a group of men skilled in the fundamentals of the game and who can pass and pivot especially well. The pivot and short-pass attack is a floor-play that resembles the mixed-pass play. It throws all but one man actively into each offense, one player remaining back of center for defense purposes at all times.

A number of principles are followed absolutely in the pivot-pass attack; (1) do not hold the ball—pass quickly; (2) pass ahead if at all possible and if not, pivot and pass back; (3) use the bounce, shove and underhand passes almost entirely; (4) after passing ahead, cut behind and then run ahead of the man passed to; (5) run from side to side, instead of up and down the court, that is criss-cross; (6) always be in motion when receiving and passing the ball; (7) meet the pass; (8) after passing, dash fast behind your teammate and toward the side lines.

When the ball is gained during a scrimmage all five men close in so as to be within ten to twenty feet of it. If picked up by a guard the forwards and center dash ahead and spread out in a line across the floor, about ten feet apart, and ten feet ahead of the ball. The ball then goes from the guard to offensive man, and the guard then establishes himself back of the line of three, in position to back up the attack

and to receive a back-pass when further progress of the ball among the offense men is impossible.

When the offense men secure the ball, it is passed forward to a teammate. The latter is usually criss-crossing in front of the ball. If a guard attacks the man receiving the pass, the latter pivots, turns his back to the guard, and passes backward to the man crossing behind him or to his own guard, the trailer. The man not occupied in the passing goes ahead so as to be available for the next pass forward, and is ready to step in for the ball as it comes to him.

We find in the field of pattern or set-offense basketball that Dr. Forrest C. Allen of Kansas University is a leading authority. The entire offensive approach as explained by Allen follows a prescribed pattern or as he refers to it, a set offense. He uses prescribed plays that are supposed to be effective against individual defensive situations. That is, his system includes plays that are to be used as offensive screens against man-for-man defense, screens against zone defense, pivot plays, out-of-bounds plays and tip plays.

In explaining his conventional system, Dr. Allen states that the offense employed for the use of screen plays is three men out and two men in. The space near and around the basket should be kept clear of offensive men to make quick breaks for the basket possible. The center man out in front of the defense indicates the play to be used; however, either of the three men may indicate the desired play. The offensive plays used against the zone and man-for-man defense should appear the same; however, the path of the ball is very different. All plays should be numbered for clarity and discussion purposes, but they need not be called by number during a game. The play will be identified by the player initiating it.

Dr. Allen describes his screen play procedures as quoted in the following paragraphs:³

These screening practice plays must first put the offensive men in set positions. . . . In actual floor practice the offensive players. . . change their relative positions. The fact that the guards must for reasons of safety play between their opponents and the basket makes it possible for the offensive men to pass the ball to one another and to interchange positions in a normal and natural way. In actual practice, these three offensive players will manipulate the ball back and forth, with dribbling, faking, and passing interspersed. Each defensive man will closely guard his opponent. The strategy of the offense is to pull the play just at the moment when the defense is feverishly intent upon its endeavor to capture the ball. Simultaneously, the rear or lateral offensive man will set up the screen on his own teammate's opposing guard. Then the freed offensive man will cut for the open, immediately receiving a pass from his teammate, who is, at this time, faking his opponent into submission.

A coach must recognize that it is very difficult for beginners to initiate these screen plays. By placing three offensive men in the front court and three defensive men against them, a coach should first walk his men through these possible screen plays and thus demonstrate to them the various screens which are possible, together with their necessary timing and faking situations. . . . When trios have learned to work together, the coach can then go into the more intricate setups and use five men in the screen plays.

The. . . charted diagrams (that follow) have attempted to show only a type of attack that can be used successfully in penetrating a man-for-man defense. However, when two teams of equal offensive and defensive capabilities meet, regardless of systems or styles used, the determining factor for mastery usually rests with the team that is the better grounded in fundamentals. Of course, physical condition still plays a dominant part in the success of most championship teams. . . .

It should be noticed in all these practice diagrams that the space around and near the basket is kept open and clear of offensive men, thereby giving opportunity for quick cuts into the basket. . . .

3. Forrest C. Allen, Better Basketball. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1937. pp. 199-200.

The following key and diagrams will help to clarify the screens that are used in pattern basketball as advocated by Dr. Allen:⁴

- ⊗ Offensive Player, who initiates the play
- Defensive Player
- Offensive Player
- 1 Left Forward
- 2 Right Forward
- 3 Center
- 4 Floor Guard
- 5 Rear Guard
- Path of Offensive Player
- - - -> Path of Defensive Player
- > Path of Dribbler
- Direction of Pass
- (Screen

4. Ibid., pp. 194-99.

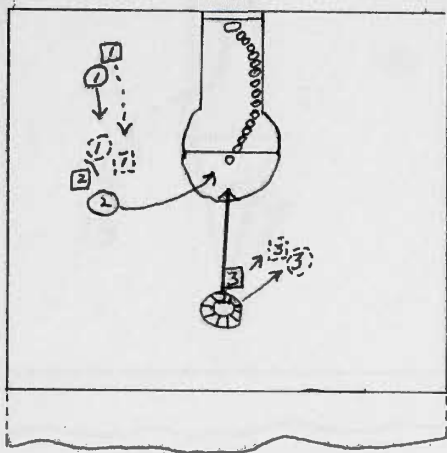


Diagram 3. — Example 1. Anterior-posterior screen. Inside.

In this play (Diagram 3) the passer (3) is holding the ball in mid-court, with his opponent (3) playing between him and the basket. The other two offensive men (1) and (2) line up on one side of the court, directly behind each other, and separated by a space of about fifteen feet anteroposteriorly. Their respective opponents, guards (1) and (2), are directly behind them. The rear offensive man (1) comes forward calling for a pass from his teammate (3), who is holding the ball. But in reality (1) moves forward and slides off to the rear and inside his teammate's opposing guard (2), thereby effecting a stationary screen upon (2). With timing as the keynote, the front offensive man (2) slips off and in toward the center of the court to receive a pass from the offensive center man (3), who is stationed in mid-court. (2), now being free, dribbles on into the basket for a lay-up.

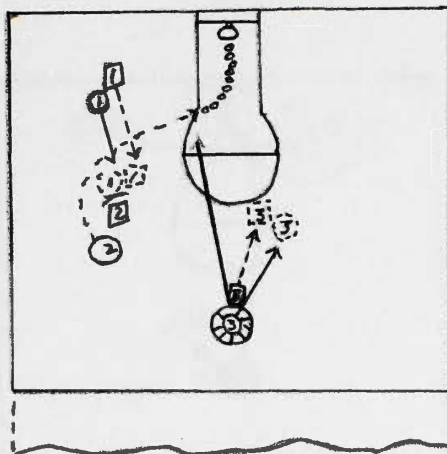


Diagram 4. — Example 2. Anterior-posterior screen. Outside.

The passer ③ in Diagram 4 is holding the ball in mid-court with his opponent ④ playing between the passer and the basket. The other two offensive men ① and ② line up on one side of the court, about fifteen feet apart and directly behind each other, with their respective guards ① and ② opposing, in their usual close proximity. The rear offensive ① comes forward as if to receive a pass from his teammate ③, who is holding the ball; but in reality he completes a screen upon ②, to the rear and the outside. Immediately ② slides off to the outside and rear of his opponent ② and cuts for the basket, ready to receive a pass from ③. Player ② now dribbles to the basket for a lay-up shot.

This companion play is executed exactly as is Example 1, Diagram 3, except that in the former the screen is on the inside and, in the latter, on the outside of ②. This gives wider latitude in freeing the man who is cutting into the basket for a pass.

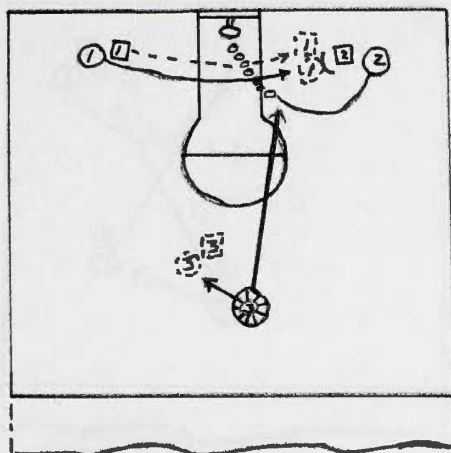


Diagram 5. — Example 3. Lateral Screen.

In the lateral practice screen (Diagram 5) the passer ③, facing the basket, is holding the ball near mid-court. His opponent ② is playing between him and the basket. The other two offensive men ① and ② line up about ten feet from the endline. An approximate distance of thirty feet separates the two. The guards ① and ② play between their men and the basket. ① swings over across the court on the front and inside to screen ②. The guard ① follows ① across the court. At the proper timing juncture, ② swings rapidly across toward the center of the court to receive a pass from ③. ② now dribbles on into the basket for an easy lay-up shot.

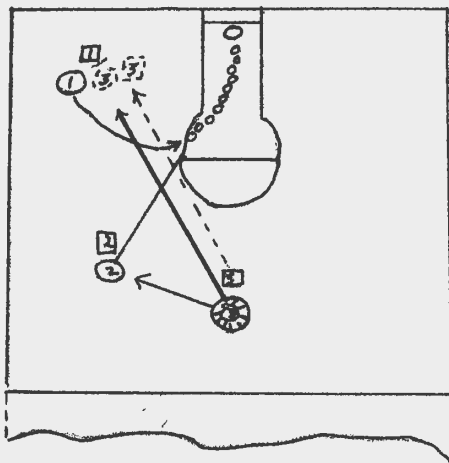


Diagram 7. — Example 5. Diagonal Screen.

The ball is in possession of ③ (Diagram 7), who snaps it to ② and immediately cuts diagonally across the court to screen ① to the front and inside. ③, who is guarding ③, follows his man-for-man opponent, keeping between him and the basket. ① now swings off the hips of the screening ③, cuts for the basket, and receives a hook pass from ②. ① now dribbles circularly into the basket for an easy lay-up shot.

The success of the fast-break offense depends upon the ability of the offensive team to get two-on-one, three-on-two, or a four-on-three situation and decoy defensive men away from the basket, so as to get its odd man free. In order to do this it is necessary that the team must be sound in fundamentals. The players must have excellent footwork, be able to catch and pass the ball as well as shoot baskets.

It is equally important that the team realize quickly when their team is to go from defense to offense. Fast break situations most commonly occur from rebounds, interceptions, and jump-ball situations. It is possible to get a fast-break situation from out-of-bounds but this is not easily done. It is a good policy, however, to let the players know that a fast-break may develop at any time and it is at that split second that all players must realize that they must go from defense to offense.

It is also important that the players must be taught to realize that a fast-break is not possible every time possession of the ball is gained. The players must be alert enough to know that they must have an advantage in the number of players over the defense or they will have to set up their pattern of offense.

There are two systems which may be used -- the long-pass and the short-pass. If players adapted to both systems are available, the systems may be used alternately. Speed is one of the most important factors in the fast-break because it means getting a scoring opportunity before the defense can get set. Speed not only means getting the

ball off the backboard and up the floor, but it means also how fast a goal can be scored. Speed in these departments plus speed in breaks from interceptions from tip-offs together with speed in passing and shooting all go to make up the so-called fast-break.

Guards, in taking the ball off the backboard, must be drilled in the skill and technique of getting the ball to start the break. A long pass to an unguarded teammate breaking toward the basket behind his guard is the first threat to score. If this pass is not open, then a pass to the forward on the side of the court should be made. The ball should always be passed to the forward cutting to the sideline or away from the sideline to keep the opponents from intercepting the pass.

Fast-break basketball is being used more and more by high school and college teams. The teams that use fast-break draw a better crowd than the teams that use a slow, deliberate type of basketball. Some people think the fast-break is just a wild game, but the fast-break is very effective and will be used more and more in years to come for good basketball.

Adolph Rupp, basketball coach at Kentucky University and coach of the team that for the past two years has been National Champion is an advocate of the fast-break type of basketball but also uses pattern basketball when necessary.

In speaking of combination basketball we mean the incorporating of the fast-break and possession of ball types of offense as well as set-patterns. Along with these types of offense we like to think of

combining with the offense the type of defense that is best for the chosen type of offense. It is well to have as sound defensive as offensive principles, believes Claire Bee of Long Island University.

A team prepared with the combination offense of the fast-break, set plays, and some type of continuity play in which the players are free to utilize their individual ability would be well prepared offensively. Perhaps one of the greatest mistakes made is to prepare a team with only one of the above weapons. There is no doubt that the material at hand will determine what type of offense as well as defense can be used most effectively but there is no doubt that at certain times teams must have more than one type of offense and defense. It goes without saying that perhaps there are just as many types of offenses as there are basketball coaches. It is commonly understood that most coaches are agreed on the principles of fast-break basketball. On the other hand, when speaking of pattern basketball, we must consider single and double-post play. In the matter of just the double-post there are a number of variations as to where the post men may be placed on the court. By the use of the single-post system one man may be used on the post at all times or the situation may be an interchanging one in which the post man rotates. These two formations, with variations, along with the figure-eight and the weave are perhaps the basic formations insofar as pattern basketball is concerned.

In modern day basketball the majority of basketball coaches, as well as the spectators, are of the opinion that possession basketball is out. However, in the case of colleges and high schools this is

not so true as in professional basketball. The supporters of a certain team are naturally concerned with winning and it goes without saying that possession ball and good defense are essentials to winning basketball games.

It is evident that good defense and possession basketball go hand in hand in that a team cannot score on the team which has possession of the ball. Coaching possession basketball does not necessitate the neglect of offense. Controlled basketball is most effective when it keeps the pressure on the opponent and constantly maintains the possibility of scoring. When a team is in possession, they must keep the ball moving and always maneuvering to get more desirable shots at the basket. There is no doubt that in coaching possession basketball the greater emphasis must be placed on defense. In coaching this type of basketball the players must be taught that the basketball is precious. They must not shoot at the basket until they are reasonably sure where it is going or that it is going to account for two points.

There has to be more to basketball than merely throwing the ball through the hoop. It is not the object of ball possession to trade shots with the other team but to work for two points just as long as it takes to set up the scoring opportunity. Good ball handling is fundamental in any basketball offense but it is more true in coaching ball possession. The players must know that a bad pass is a serious mistake because it is useless to get the ball into a scoring area and then lose possession before a shot is taken. Wild shooting and

"hope shots" have no place in possession basketball. The object of ball possession is to make the opponent play defense and most teams do not want to be on defense but want to have possession of the ball in order to score themselves. It is the purpose of this type of offense to retain possession of the ball until the defense in desperation makes a mistake which results in an easy shot for the ball-controlling team. Without a question of doubt, Oklahoma A. & M., coached by Henry Iba, is one of the greatest exponents of possession type of basketball. The record established by Oklahoma A. & M. under the tutelage of Mr. Iba is evident that ball possession basketball is even in this day worthy of consideration by any coach of basketball.

CHAPTER III

COACHING AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

There is considerable work to be done by the coach long before the basketball season opens. Every detail should be taken care of as far ahead as possible so that when the time arrives for the selection of the material and the process of building a team, the coach will not have other details on his mind.

One of the responsibilities of the coach is seeing that the gymnasium is in very good order. A school is rated by appearance. If a coach is in a small school which cannot afford a good gym and facilities, he must make the best of the existing situation. No matter what a team has, it can always be improved. Better playing facilities make for better ball teams. The gymnasium should be cleaned, painted, and in perfect condition before the season starts. Showers should be kept clean and in working order. It might be a good idea for the coach to give the boys who cannot make the team certain responsibilities relative to keeping the place attractive and in this way let these boys feel that they have a certain part in making their team a success. The lighting should be checked and the scoreboard should be in a position so that all can see the score from all parts of the gymnasium. These are mostly problems of coaches in smaller schools. In larger places most of these will be cared for by paid employees.

Another problem a coach has is the selection of equipment. Shoes are the most important item of equipment. A basketball player is just

as valuable as his feet are sound. Other items which should be taken into consideration are warm-up clothes, suits, and all personal equipment which is needed to round out the players' needs. It is true that a team never looks too bad if they are well-dressed. It is through this means of care for their equipment that much teaching can be done relative to personal appearance and habit formations which will have carry-over in everyday living. If the players are given the best of equipment, these teaching processes are greatly enhanced.

A suitable place that is clean and in order should be provided for visiting teams. Referees should also have their own personal dressing room if it can possibly be arranged.

It is well to have as many basketballs for practice as possible. If each player can have a ball, he will be helped a great deal in gaining confidence in ball handling and shooting.

In connection with the games, a good ball should be provided for each game and a water and towel cart should be provided for each team. If possible, individual cups and towels should be used. This is essential for the protection of the health of the athletes.

If these problems can be worked out by the coach in the school in which he is teaching, he will quickly be on the road to success. Many of these problems are applied to coaches of both small and large schools. A change is often made by coaches and a coach should be able to cope with any of these things that arise in his new environment.

Some coaches are "dyed-in-the-wool" advocates of certain theories of basketball. It seems that if material were plentiful at all times

which would fit into a given type of basketball, this would be sound reasoning. In most cases this situation does not exist and in such cases the coach should consider just what theories or types of basketball could be best fitted for the material at hand. The coach should make a thorough study of different theories and know just what kind of material is needed in order to be successful with any chosen type of basketball. This study must take into consideration not only the type of offense to be used but the defense as well. As an illustration, it would not seem feasible to plan on employing a fast-break offense if the players were all small. It is essential to have speed in a fast-break offense but if a team is unable to control the backboards, it is useless to think of employing a fast-break offense. By the same token, if a coach has a squad of tall but rather slow players, it is useless to consider using a man-for-man pressing defense. It seems that for these reasons it would be essential that the coach must have a teaching knowledge of a number of theories and be able to apply his chosen theory to the best advantage with the material at hand.

After the coach has studied his material and has chosen the type of basketball he is to play, he is confronted with the problem of selecting from his squad the men who are best-fitted for the different positions. Naturally, one of the first things the coach considers is the physical make-up of the player. There are, however, a number of other qualities that a coach should look for in a basketball player. One of the first qualities to look for is the amount of competitive instinct and courage he possesses. This competitive spirit is what

makes a player desirous to meet the best the opponents have to offer. Courage is that attribute which will carry a player through when conditions are the toughest.

It is also essential that a player must possess a spirit of sacrifice. He must be willing to give up some of the things he might like to do in order to taste the fruits of victory but once. The real spirit of sacrifice means the willingness to give all that he has for the success of the team and a desire to acquire all the moral and physical attributes he possibly can. After these have been given due consideration, the coach must consider the ability of the player to play basketball. It is true that every school has a number of boys with the proper courage and spirit of sacrifice who cannot play the game well enough to make the team or make a successful team. It is true, however, that good basketball players have been of no value to the team because they did not possess the moral qualities. It is a positive fact that a team of proper spirit and mediocre ability will do better than a team of greater ability that does not possess the proper moral attitude.

As a general rule, the big men are better than the small men. The small, active type of players will appear to advantage early in the year since they move faster and have, as a rule, better muscular control. It is no doubt true that the tall boy has a definite advantage over a short boy if he is equally coordinated. The strain of the season will gradually wear down the small man while his larger and slower competitor has gradually improved in his ability and withstood

the strain more easily. It is a difficult matter to get five big men to move but slowly and awkwardly as a unit. It is very likely that using one player of the small, fast-moving type will help to a great extent to speed up the entire team. The team as a whole must be considered from an offensive and defensive angle and it is sometimes necessary to make a sacrifice in defensive strength to build up more offensive power or vice versa.

The type of offensive play the coach finally decides will best fit his situation will greatly determine the type of boy he will want for forwards. It is usually poor policy to have both forwards of the same type. If possible, it is well to have one forward big and rugged to use as a key man to the offense and tip shot artist; the other may be of the fast moving type. The smaller of the two forwards should be a good defensive man and because of his speed, more than likely will be. The tall boy selected for the other forward should be a good ball handler and the key man of the offense and a steadying influence on the team.

In the selection of a center, height, jumping ability, and ball handling are the first considerations. However, he must have some offensive and defensive abilities or it will be better to sacrifice the height. When a center has been found who, in addition to controlling the tip-off, can play good defensive and offensive ball, many difficulties have been solved. He may be made into the key man of the offense and thus take the place of the tall forward who may not be available. In present day basketball the guards are considered as much of

the offense as are the forwards. If possible, it is well to have a tall, rugged guard to take care of the defensive rebounds especially if a tall center is not available. The guards must have good foot-work, an asset essential to good defensive play. The guards must also have offensive ability because of the part that guards now play in all offensive patterns.

After the coach has selected his material and made a thorough study of the type of offense and defense he will use, he must be able to observe and know if he is getting beneficial results from his chosen theories. This will be a situation of which the coach will have to be the judge. A coach to be a success must be a teacher. He must also be able to analyze and know what can be done to improve a given situation. If an offense and defense is what is to make a team successful and the team is losing, the coach must be able to take these two elements apart and correct the weakness, be it in either or both. A coach must know when his boys are performing to individual capacity and when the team is functioning as a unit. He cannot wait until too many games are lost to find a criteria for diagnosing his case but must have an understanding knowledge of what will make the defense and offense click. If ball handling and timing are the basic fundamentals of making an offense work and the offense is not successful, the coach must be able to analyze the situation quickly and know what player or players are causing the difficulty. The coach must make a thorough study of his players in practice so that he can quickly realize when a boy is not performing to capacity offensively and defensively in a ball game.

This is the reason that perfection and best ability must be insisted upon in practice.

Sportsmanship should play a large part toward the achievement of the idea that sports build character and citizenship. An attitude of good sportsmanship on the part of players, coaches, student bodies, and spectators should make for better relations between schools. If sports are to maintain a dignified place in the educational process, sportsmanship must hold the spotlight against the idea that winning at any cost is the all-important thing.

If constant and consistent rowdyism in crowd behavior exists at an institution, reflecting on that institution, the coaching staff, and the administrators, steps should be taken to educate and guide the enthusiasm of the spectators. A display of normal and healthy enthusiasm with the average amount of show of disapproval is no problem, but vicious comments and actions are another thing. Given the responsibility of correcting these conditions, the students can aid the administrators a great deal in a concentrated effort to curb the situation by working through their own student organizations.

Although the coach is not solely responsible for sportsmanship, he is a key figure. He directly influences the attitude of his players, who, along with the spectators, quite often take the cue for their reactions to decisions by the referees and actions of the opponents from him. Courtesy, sportsmanship, and proper attitudes on the part of the players should be a definite part of the teaching program of the coach.

Bernard Erdman¹ suggests that the following steps be taken to stress sportsmanship, which has a definite carry-over value:

1. . . . Impress on our athletes the values to be gained from sportsmanship. . . .
2. . . . Post sportsmanship slogans on bulletin boards and in locker room. . . .
3. . . . Teach the boys to be good losers and good winners. . . .
4. . . . Permit no crabbing at officials. . . .
5. . . . Officials do not criticize players; therefore players have no right to criticize them. . . .
6. . . . Emphasize sportsmanship at pep meetings. . . .
7. . . . Ask players to help promote sportsmanship among our rooters. . . .
8. . . . Have proper people on public address system. . . .
9. . . . Make visiting team feel at home. . . .

1. Bernard Erdman, "A Plea for Sportsmanship," Athletic Journal, 30: 57-60, October, 1949.

CHAPTER IV

BASKETBALL COACHING AT FORT HAYS KANSAS STATE COLLEGE

Coaches are agreed that, as a rule, winning basketball is founded on quality of players rather than on the qualities of systems. With this fact in mind every coach should give his boys a thorough schooling in basketball fundamentals. With the development of the individual skills as the guiding principle a coach should strive to implant in the boys certain basic defensive and offensive fundamentals as well as a thorough knowledge of game situations, rules, and various offensive and defensive systems. The coach must have as his objective the development of both mechanical and mental skills.

Perhaps one of the most important fundamentals of offensive basketball is passing. Without good passing there can be no teamwork, and without teamwork, there can be no championship teams. A player must not only be taught that there is a pass but he must also be taught the proper execution of the pass and when certain passes can most effectively be used. The ability of a boy to handle and pass a ball is probably the best indication of his possibilities as a basketball player. All players must master the execution of passes which are important in the particular style of play the team is planning to use. A number of drills can be worked up by the coach which will aid in this development.

Another basic fundamental is the art of catching the ball. Players must be taught to keep their eyes on the ball. Many fumbles

occur when players take their eyes off the ball, and fumbles often result in scores by the opponents. In catching a basketball the player should keep his fingers well spread and pointing up or down, depending upon whether the pass is thrown low or high. The wrists and elbows should be free and the hands should "give" with the ball. The ball should never strike the palms of the hands but should be handled with the finger tips. When receiving a pass, a player should always move to meet the ball. This action will eliminate the possibility of interceptions and will also keep the player's body between the ball and the opponent.

Relaxation is perhaps one of the most important possessions of a good ball player. It is true without a doubt that the greatest athletes have complete relaxation and body flow. Along with relaxation comes body balance. Body balance is a "must" insofar as offensive and defensive ability is concerned in basketball. Perhaps the greatest authority on relaxation and body balance is William H. Miller, former coach of the famous Tulsa Diamond Oilers Basketball Team. Mr. Miller, who has devoted a lifetime to athletics as a player, coach, and student has this to say:¹

Body balance might be defined as the maintenance of the various parts of the body in their correct position in relation to each other, whether at rest or in action, to counteract the natural pull of gravity.

An off-balance posture upsets the muscle and ligament mechanism by causing undue shortening and tightening of one side

1. William H. Miller, How to Relax. New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1944. pp. 31, 32.

and stretching and weakening on the other. Thus a body out of natural alignment experiences fatigue more quickly and has less endurance than the one with perfect balance. All outstanding athletes display body balance; it is the very foundation of their play. To them correct balance means the ability to start instantly in any given direction, to shift weight smoothly and to be perfectly poised at all times, no matter in what position they may find themselves. A cardinal principle of good body balance is that the arms and legs must be properly flexed. Try this experiment. Hold the hand out at arm's length, and see how fast a move can be made with the arm in that position. Now bend the arm fully at the elbow. Note how much quicker the movement can be made.

Mr. Miller has written a book, How to Relax,² which I believe is worth the time and effort for each and every coach to read. Mr. Miller offers methods and procedures for the improvement in body balance and muscle control which can readily be adapted to a team's pre-game and pre-practice warm-up.

While it is true that college coaches get material which has, in most cases, been grounded in fundamentals, it is necessary to school the players again and again in the fundamentals of the game. The coaching of fundamentals is as necessary for the college senior as for the high school freshman. The basketball coach must keep in mind that the better the team is grounded in fundamentals the more successful the chosen pattern of play will be. It is essential that the practice for each day should be so organized as to give an allotted time to the drilling of fundamentals. This should not be for just the first few weeks of the season. It is the test of every coach that he constantly be aware of the fact that although constant drill on fundamentals is

2. Ibid.

likely to become boring to the squad, with considerable thought and effort he can teach fundamentals through competitive drills and maneuvers in such a way that the squad will not realize it is fundamentals that are the basis of the drills.

To conserve time and effort the coach should work out a plan whereby the squad can be working in his drills on patterns of play as well as fundamentals. This integrated plan is gradually becoming the practice of most present day coaches, who, rather than spend time on just fundamentals and then go to the development of a certain style of play, incorporate the two approaches into a system. Body balance, dribbling, passing, shooting, and all fundamentals of the game of basketball are integrated into the scheme of things so that as these are being developed, so is a particular theory or pattern of play.

At Fort Hays Kansas State College our system of basketball can perhaps best be described as a "Combination 2" type relative to both offense and defense. We spend perhaps an equal amount of time in the development of our fast-break and our ball possession game. We have tried to integrate our practices so that at the same time we are working on our fundamentals we are also working on team patterns. This can best be accomplished by a "break-down" of specific offensive and defensive patterns. By "break-down" we mean teaching the procedure of play for two positions and gradually increasing this method to include three, four, and finally five players, thus creating a team pattern.




In our fast-break offense we use the three-lane pattern with

The positions as indicated are areas rather than players. The reason for this is that the pattern can be used from a man-to-man defense as well as from a zone. In the diagram the ball is retrieved from the backboard to position three, a move which automatically makes the player in area (1) become the first player down the floor. (3) passes to player in position (5). In the event the team is using a zone defense these positions can readily be established, but in the event a man-for-man defense is being used, variations will have to be made which will involve the man nearest that area. It is essential that the men in the (4) and (5) positions make a thrust toward the basket as if they were going to rebound the ball. This will lead the offensive men guarding them to hesitate, thinking the men for whom they are responsible are going to rebound, and will thus enable the man from position (1) to get the break going down the floor. After (4) takes a step toward the basket, he starts down the floor and cuts to the center to receive the ball from (5); the man in position (2) is the third man out on the break and will take the lane at the left side of the court. In the event that anyone is ahead of (4) when he receives the ball, he passes to the lead man if possible; if not, he dribbles to the free throw line. If he is confronted by a defensive man, he stops and passes to (1) or (2). (5) and (3) are the fourth and fifth members of the fast-break and they hold back so that if anything should go wrong, there would still be defensive balance. If it is necessary for (4) to stop and pivot, (5) and (3) criss-cross at the free throw line, and there is the possibility that (4) might hand off

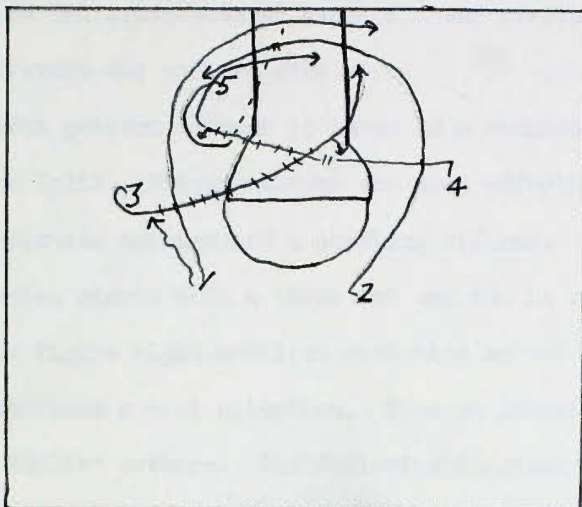
to either of them. This same pattern can be used for fast-break situations which are created by jump-ball situations.

One of the most difficult learning points of the fast-break is for the players to know instantly when a break situation occurs. The team must immediately go from defense to offense. The entire team must be alert so that the offensive advantage can be established. By an offensive advantage we mean a two on one, three on two, etc. situation where the offensive men have more players in scoring area than the defense. It is well to eliminate as much dribbling as possible when using a fast-break and always have the players take advantage of a teammate down the floor by passing to him whenever it is possible. It is always well for the offense to take a shot whenever the defense is out-manned because having the greater number of players, they have a decided rebounding advantage.

We have as a scoring weapon after the defense has been set a pattern we call the "Roll and Reverse." This pattern is started by either of the men in the guard positions. This man is known as the "play-maker." This pattern of offense is very effective against a man-to-man defense that is playing very tight or one that is sagging under the basket. We determine what pattern of offense we are going to attempt to run before the game, during time out, or at the half time period. This "Roll and Reverse" pattern can best be explained by the diagram that appears on the next page. The key that is given below will further clarify this diagram and those that appear on the pages following:

 (pass);  (path of the man);  (path of the dribbler); and
 (shot at the basket).

Roll and Reverse

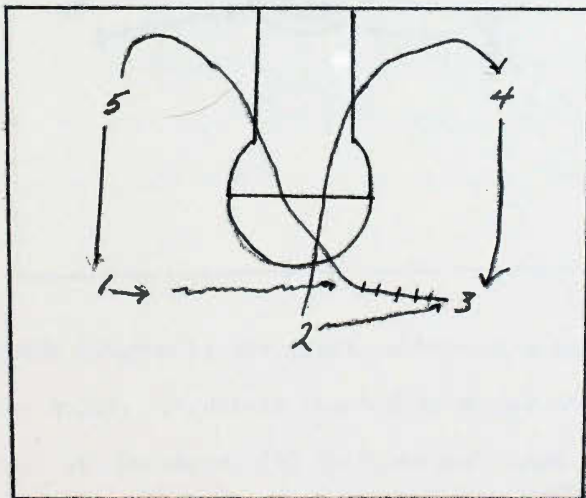


In the above diagram the pattern is started by (1), who passes to (3). He fakes to the right and dribbles across the court and hands off to (4). (4) dribbles across the court and establishes a post situation enabling (5) to get a "chip" shot at the basket. After (1) has passed to (3), he drives inside of (3) for a screen and continues on under the basket. (2) drives in to create a screen situation for (4) and continues on under the basket. In the event that (5) should not get a shot, he would dribble across the court and establish a post situation and screen for either (1) or (2) as they continued on under the basket. After (3) and (4) have handed off, they continue on under the basket in the same manner as (1) and (2). The reverse situation may take place at any time the offensive man dribbling reverses because he feels that by using a pivot and reversing his dribble, he can have an advantage over his defensive man. If he is unable to drive into the basket, he hands off to any of the players that may drive by him as

they have changed from one side of the court to the other. If a good shot cannot be had after several hand-offs and reverses, any player may come out and start the pattern over.

Our next pattern offense is known as a combination of the Figure Eight and the Split. These patterns are most effective against a sinking man-for-man defense and a checking defense. This pattern is a continuity which starts with a three out and two in situation and continues in the figure eight until at such time as one of the offensive players establishes a post situation. Then we immediately go into what we call the "Split" pattern. The following diagrams will clarify the patterns:

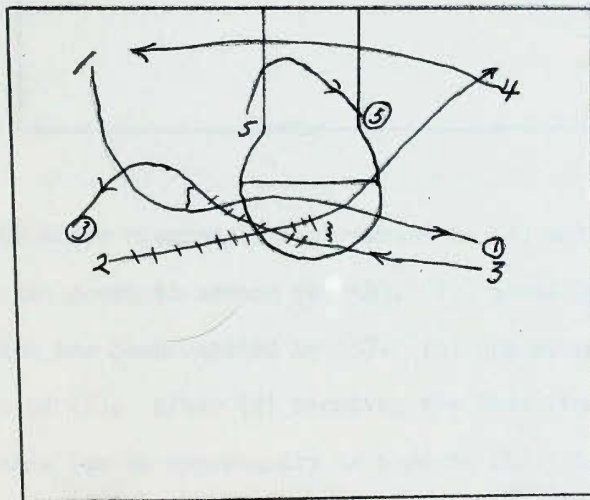
Figure Eight



In the above "Figure Eight" pattern (2) is the play-maker. (2) passes to (3) and drives for the basket; if he does not get a return pass,

he moves into the position vacated by (4). (3) dribbles and passes to (1), or passes directly to (1) and cuts for the basket. If he does not get a return pass, he takes the position vacated by (5). This rotation pattern continues until such time as one of the players cutting for the basket establishes a single-post situation in the free throw area. At this time we go into the following pattern which is known as the "Split."

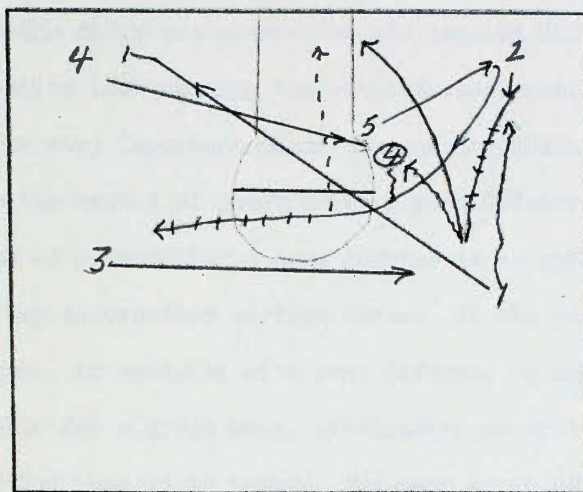
The Split



The above diagram is the first pattern of a sequence which is run during the split. It can be started by either the man in (2) or (3) positions. In the above, (2) dribbles and hands off to (3). (2) continues to position vacated by (4). (3) dribbles and hands off to (1) and continues into position vacated by (2). If (1) does not have a shot at the basket or an opportunity to pass to (4) under the basket,

he continues on to the position vacated by (3).

The following diagram is the second step in the sequence:



In the above diagram (1) has passed to (2) and has cut diagonally across the court to screen for (4). (4) moves into the post position which has been vacated by (5). (5) has moved into the position vacated by (2). After (2) receives the pass from (1), he dribbles out and watches for an opportunity to pass to (4). If (1) cannot hit (4) for an easy basket, he hits him on the post and drives for the basket. (5) cuts immediately behind (2) and if he is open, (4) hands off to him for a set shot on the free throw line. If (5) does not get a set shot, he continues to dribble on across the court. In the event that (5) continues to dribble across the court, he has become the play-maker and he can start the pattern from any sequence he chooses.

In order to conserve time and energy in teaching these various

patterns, we break them down and start with different phases of the pattern and point out to the players the fundamentals that can be practiced at the same time we are perfecting our offensive patterns. As we master the different phases, we add men and different parts until we have an entire team running the complete sequence.

Another very important phase of coaching which cannot be neglected is the method of penetrating a zone defense. We believe the better method of penetrating a zone defense is to spread the defense rather than try to overload certain areas. In the earlier days of basketball when, in speaking of a zone defense, we meant that each man was responsible for a given area, overloading an area was a much more effective method than it is today. The zone as we have it today is so similar to a man-for-man defense that overloading is practically out of the question.

Our method of penetrating a zone is to place our two best set-shots at the side of the court about four or five feet in from the side line, one man in the outer half of the free throw circle and one man on the base line following the ball from side to side as best he can. The fifth man is the best ball handler and he is placed out in front of the defense. An effort is made to get the ball in to the man in the outer half of the free throw circle. He in turn passes to the man on the base line or the men located on the side of the court, depending upon which side he is attacked by the defense.

Relative to the type of defense used at Fort Hays Kansas State College, we use both the man-for-man and the zone defense. We also use

what is called the "down-court" rushing defense. This is perhaps the only part of our defense that needs any explanation as the other types are types that are used by practically every basketball coach in the country.

Our pressing defense is unique in that about the only time it is used by other teams is in the closing minutes of the game when they are desperately trying to get possession of the ball. We go on the theory that if the defense is good when the game is apparently lost, then it should be equally effective during other periods of the game if it is properly taught. Our pressing defense is fundamentally a two-two-one zone defense moved into the front part of the court. The only time the players on the right side of the court go across the middle of the court is when they feel there is a definite possibility that this action will cause a two-on-one situation and that they have a very good chance of tying up the man with the ball or stealing possession of the ball. The most difficult part of teaching this pressing defense is to get the players to take chances. Many situations arise when the players will have to take chances which are contrary to good defensive fundamentals. However, it is getting the boys to take these chances which makes a pressing defense effective.

It should perhaps be further explained that this type of defense should well be considered as an offensive maneuver in that when a team is taught this type of defense, they must know that when it is being used, the object is to outscore the other team. This defense is used with the thought in mind that no matter what the other team might score, you are planning to score more than the opponents.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this thesis has been presented a condensed history of the game of basketball in order to show its progression and changes in interpretation from its beginnings in 1883, to the present time, 1949. To trace differentiated interpretations of the original game a study was made of exponents of various schools of thought concerning the coaching of basketball in selected sections of the United States. The coaches and their systems of coaching selected for the comparative study were: Dr. W. E. Meanwell of the University of Wisconsin, pivot-pass game; Dr. F. C. Allen of the University of Kansas, pattern basketball; Adolph Rupp of the University of Kentucky, fast-break basketball; Claire Bee of Long Island University, combination basketball; and H. P. Iba of Oklahoma A. & M. College, ball possession basketball.

In a discussion of coaching at high school level, such things as the following were taken into consideration: responsibilities of the coach prior to the basketball season, suggestions for setting up a system of coaching, application of chosen theories to coaching in relation to material at hand and environment, observation of results obtained, and the place of sportsmanship in relation to the coach, the players, and the spectators.

In explaining the system of basketball coaching in use currently at Fort Hays Kansas State College, preparation of the players for a season, fundamentals of the game, and style of play relative to both

offense and defense illustrated by diagrams were points given. The coaching system explained in a "combination" type.

An attempt was made to present briefly the most important aspects of varied types of coaching in use in the game of basketball to show the applicable value of each system. The study has shown that more than one type of interpretation of ways of playing and winning the game prove successful.

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