B O X S C O R E

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IHSBHS, c/o Rocky Kenworthy,
710 E. 800 S., Clayton, IN 46118. E-mail: rock2@tds.net

All proposed articles & stories should be directed to

Cliff Johnson: cliffjohns36@hotmail.com or 16828 Fairburn St., Hesperia, CA 92345.

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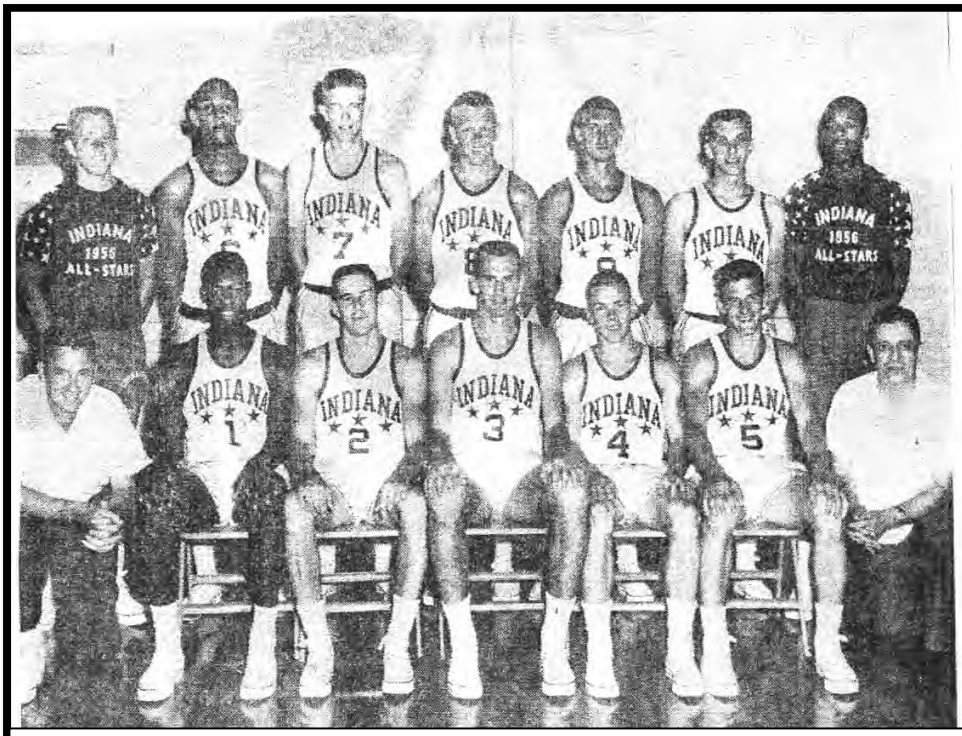
CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

The 1956 Indiana All-Stars…….. 1
Indiana BB Origins Revisited…. 3
The 1954 Montezuma Aztecs….. 9
Rush Co. Early Basketball……. 11
IHSBHS Membership Form….. 12
IHSBHS Profile Form…… 13
Hall Of Fame Membership…… 14

THE 1956 INDIANA ALL-STARS
by
Cliff Johnson

After the split of two games with Kentucky during the 1955 All-Star match-ups, the 1956 Indiana All-Stars could no longer be so confident about winning all these inter-state June contests, even though they had dominated their southern rivals to date by scoring 12 victories in the 13 games played between 1940 and 1954. Nevertheless, there was much reason for optimism among the Hoosier faithful again this June. One of the most heralded high school players ever produced within the boundaries of the U.S. was to lead the Indiana team. His name was Oscar Robertson, the basketball prodigy from state champion Indianapolis Crispus Attucks. Kentucky followers were not without hope, however, since they had a



INDIANA ALL-STARS: Front row, Coach Angus Nicoson, Oscar Robertson, Bob Hickman, Frank Roadovich, Dennis Tepe, Ron Fisher, Trainer Jim Morris. Back Row, Bob Wilkinson, Harold Johnson, Lavern Altemeyer, Paul Conwell, Joe Simpson, Bob Bradtke, Stanford Patton.

player in 6-3 "King" Kelly Coleman whom they believed was every bit the equal of Oscar. Coleman had been the most prolific scorer in Kentucky high school basketball history. During his four varsity years at little Wayland High School, situated in the coal-rich hills of eastern Kentucky, he had produced 4,263 points for the Wasps, and had averaged an amazing 46.8 points per game during his senior year.

"King" Kelly Coleman

These two superb ballplayers were anything but one-dimensional point-producing specialists, however. Each possessed multiple floor skills that could elevate any team to a higher level of play via inspiring teammates while thrilling spectators with their exciting style of play. Each was endowed with height & strength for rebounding, innovative moves, excellent passing, lightening-like reflexes, and could rely on foot speed whenever the occasion called for it.

Robertson's playing career continued to flourish after his high school graduation. He enrolled at the University of Cincinnati where he established all sorts of national records while being recognized as a consensus All-American for three consecutive seasons. A 13-year career in the NBA followed, during which Oscar was generally recognized as the greatest all-around player in professional basketball.

Coleman spent his college years mainly at Kentucky Wesleyan, a school with an estimated enrollment of about 700. While not nationally heralded as much as Robertson during his college playing career, Kelly nevertheless was able to put an astounding 2077 points onto the Panthers' scoreboard during his three years with the varsity. He also led the nation in total points scored for small colleges in his senior year with 848, an average of 30.3 points per game (3rd best nationally). His point average for all three years with the Panthers was nearly that high too, at 27.7 per game. He pulled down 904 rebounds, to boot. Legendary Kentucky coach Adolph Rupp had declared that Coleman was the best high school player he had ever seen perform on a court. After graduation, "King" Coleman became the NBA's 11th overall draft selection, and was therefore in high demand. The New York Knicks offered him a contract that he turned down since the salary was less than was available to him in the private sector (non-basketball) at that time. Although he never played pro ball, Coleman is generally regarded as legendary among Kentucky's all-time greatest ball players.

Now, in the very early stages of their careers, these two highly acclaimed players were to be matched up at Butler Fieldhouse on Saturday, June 23, and again in the Louisville Armory two nights later. It seemed to the news media and the general public almost as if the results of the two contests might matter less than the floor magic expected to be delivered jointly by the two players. As expected, and because of all this hype, the first contest became a sell-out with standing room only available to any late-arriving VIPs.

Indiana's ten-member squad included many other highly touted boys besides the 6-4 Oscar. There was big 6-8 Frank Radovich from Hammond High, 6-0 Bob Bradtke from neighboring Hammond Noll, 6-2 Joe Simpson from Southport, 5-11 Ron Fisher from Lafayette Jeff, 5-10 Dennis Tepe from Elkhart, 6-1 Bob Hickman from Terre Haute Gerstmeyer, 6-5 Harold Johnson from New Albany, 6-7 Vern Altemeyer from Scottsburg, and 6-4 Paul Conwell from Kokomo. The Kentucky members accompanying Kelly Coleman were 6-3 Corky Withrow from Central City, 6-6 Don Mills from Berea, 6-10 Martin Holland from Heath, 6-4 Edgar Smallwood from Louisville Central, 6-4 Roger Newman from Greenville, 6-3 Byron Pinson from Henderson, 5-10 Mike Kelly from Louisville Flaget, 6-2 Dave Denton from College Heights, and 6-3 Bob Shepherd from Carr Creek.

The first game was won handily by the Indiana All-Stars 92-78, as Oscar pumped in 34 points on 12 for 28 field goal shooting and 10 for 15 at the charity stripe. All ten Indiana players put points on the scoreboard to help with the win. Kentucky was led by Coleman, as expected, who finished with 17 points on 7 for 18 shooting and 3 for 3 at the line, but his stellar play was nevertheless overshadowed by the wholesale dominance of the "Big O", in this first game.

"Big O" Oscar Robertson

The second game, like the first game, was attended by a sold-out crowd at Louisville. It was a disappointing evening for the Kentucky fans, as the game degenerated into a rout that favored the Hoosiers. The final score was 102-77, as Robertson again put on an overpowering display of shooting and rebounding. He scored 41 points on 17 of 33 FG attempts, while sinking 7 of 8 free throws from the foul line. Radovich and Fisher chipped in with 22 and 15 points, respectively, to help put the game on ice. King Coleman, on the other hand, was experiencing a very tough night. He could not break free from the Hoosiers' smothering double and sometimes triple-teamed defense that denied him the ball. He was essentially imprisoned in coach Nicoson's strategic blockade for the entire game, attempting only nine shots and missing eight of them. He wound up with four points, probably the lowest game total of his entire playing career. Smallwood, a future little All-American with the Evansville Aces, came through with 29 points in the Bluegrass team's losing effort. By all appearances, the Hoosier All-Stars were intent on initiating a brand new winning streak.

INDIANA BASKETBALL ORIGINS REVISITED

by

Roger F. Robison

Canadian James Naismith (1861-1939) was an 1887 graduate of McGill University where he majored in physical education (P.E.) and an 1890 graduate of the university's Presbyterian theology school. After seven years of college, 1883-1890, and active participation in soccer, rugby, lacrosse and gymnastics, he declined to enter the clergy. Instead he enrolled at the YMCA Training School in Springfield, Mass., which offered two year programs leading to certification as either a P.E. Director or a YMCA Secretary (in this capacity, an administrator). There were four college graduates among the 21 students entering for 1890-91, the first year of operation for the YMCA school. In 1891-92 it had 42 men.

After finishing the two year P.E. program, Naismith stayed another three years on the faculty at Springfield before leaving for Denver in 1895. He worked part-time at the Y there while going to the Gross Medical College where he graduated in 1898. He was then employed at the University of Kansas from 1898 to 1937--his only job outside of YMCA work. He never ascended the pulpit or "hung up a shingle" (practiced medicine) but he did invent basketball. [1]

Joining Naismith in the P.E. program was Amos Alonzo Stagg (1862-1965), who had been at Yale for six years, 1884-1890. Stagg had attended Yale on a work-study program while pitching five baseball teams to the championship of the elite big three--Yale, Harvard, and Princeton. His two post-graduate years were spent in the Yale Divinity School. He also played football for Yale, where he made All-American in 1889 [2]. Yale and its alumnus adviser/coach Walter Camp had essentially invented American football and was selected as mythical national titlists in '83, '84, '86-88, '91,'92,'94, 1900, '07 and '09 by the Helms Foundation [3]. The Helms committee was later revealed to consist of just one individual [4].

Stagg "did not drink, smoke, chew, or go with girls that do". He was an active YMCA member and confidant of many Baptist luminaries, such as Dwight Moody and W.R. Harper, Dean of the Yale Divinity School. In September 1890, John D. Rockefeller offered Harper the presidency of the future Baptist oriented University of Chicago which was set to open in October of 1892. Being a Yale man, Harper knew that the first priority for a university was a football team and he recruited Stagg immediately [5]. Thus, Stagg had two years to prepare, and he promptly organized his first football teams at fledgling Springfield College in '90 and '91. The first year, he recruited eight men from the P.E. school and three from the secretaries [6]. **Figure 1** depicts rugby veteran Naismith, who played center. In 1890 the school won five of eight games. For 1891, Stagg scheduled 14 games including national powerhouses Yale (lost 0-28) and Harvard (lost 0-34). The "Stubby Christians," as Stagg called them, went 5-8-1 in 1891 [6].

Figure 1

College grads Naismith and Stagg were made instructors by the second year. Stagg had left the divinity school because of inadequacy as a public speaker, so ironically the YMCA put him on a speaking tour! Naismith was assigned a rowdy P.E. class of 18 that included six from the football team. His task was to devise a game to occupy the men between football and baseball seasons. The class was notorious for disdaining calisthenics and other gym work. Just before Christmas vacation of 1891-92 and after several failures, Naismith came up with 13 rules and several suggestions for "basket-ball."

The first suggestion was that any number could play. As Naismith had 18 in the class, each team had nine men.

The first games were played in Springfield at the two YMCA gyms there--Armory Hill and Central—on Feb. 12 and March 15, 1892. The first game was a 2-2 tie and Armory Hill won the second, 1-0. At the same time, Naismith selected the nine best players for a travel team to demonstrate the game in nearby Providence and Newport, Rhode Island, and also in Albany and Troy, New York. The nine-man travel team (Figure 2) has been elected to the Naismith Hall of Fame, but the other nine who played in the first game have been ignored (Table A1). On March 11, the travel team beat the faculty 5-1 with Stagg scoring the only goal for the latter. Also in March, Naismith taught the teachers and girls at a Springfield grade school to play. Two years later he married player Maude E. Sherman (1870-1937) [7].

Figure 2

The YMCA organization had been founded in London in 1844 and arrived in Boston and Montreal in late 1851. In 1869 its first four gyms were opened in New York City, Washington D.C., Chicago, and San Francisco. By 1885 there were 100 gyms, and by 1900 there were 444 gyms in the 466 YMCA centers [8]. The nation's only other gymnasiums were in National Guard armories. In January of 1892, the YMCA house publication, The Triangle, printed the rules for the new game and then continued to publicize them nation-wide. New York City had the most YMCA gyms and quickly began intramural play. In April of 1892, the 23rd St. Y defeated the Student Union Y by a score of 1-0 in the fourth ever competitive game and the first one played outside of Springfield. Intramural games were reported in Washington D.C., Iowa City, Geneva College in Beaver Falls, PA., and at the reformatory facility in Elmira, N.Y. [7]

During the second school year of basketball in 1892-93, 21 rules replaced the original 13. There were three intra-city YMCA tournaments played--in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. They were won by Brooklyn Central, West Philadelphia, and Ravenswood, respectively. Inter-city YMCA competition also saw Cincinnati claim the championship of both Ohio and Kentucky. Herkimer, in the Mohawk Valley, and West Troy, in the upper Hudson Valley, also captured championships. In Iowa, Iowa City beat Cedar Rapids with five men only playing for each team.

Local YMCAs also initiated competitive games with colleges such as Vanderbilt, Toronto, Hamline (in St. Paul, Minn.) and Geneva. The latter two were coached by Springfield alums Kaighn and Bemis. However, there were as yet no inter-collegiate contests. Colleges playing intra-mural games in 1892-93 included Chicago, Yale and Amherst (Mass.). At Vassar (in Poughkeepsie), Wellesley (in Boston), Smith (Mass.), Mt. Holyoke (Mass.), Mt. Union (Ohio), California-Berkeley, and at Carleton (Minn.), the women played.

Stagg took over as athletic director at the University of Chicago in October of 1892, and coached football, baseball and track. He began teaching basketball in the gym classes for both men and women. Teams were organized from the residence halls for intramural competition. Two years later, the captain from Kelly Hall, teenager Stella Robertson (1875-1964), married Stagg after she had completed her sophomore year [2].

In 1892, Indiana had 26 YMCAs with gyms in six cities; Indianapolis, Evansville, Crawfordsville, Ft. Wayne, Lafayette and South Bend. S.C. Lighty at the Indiana State Library has reviewed digitized 19th century newspapers from Evansville and Indianapolis to find that the YMCAs there were also playing intra-mural contests during 1892-93[9]. On November 24, 1892, the Evansville Courier reported a game between the YMCA Seniors and the "Business Men." However, no subsequent boxscore was reported. In February and March of 1893 they played again and seven men plus a

TABLE A1: FIRST TWO BASKETBALL TEAMS 21 DECEMBER 1891

TRAVEL TEAM	***from***	***2nd Team***
*L.W.Archibald	Nova Scotia (N.S.)	F.E.Barnes
W.R.Chase	Mass.	W.E.Carey
*W.H.Davis	Mass.	G.E.Day
E.S.Libby	Calif.	B.S.French
*F.Mahan	Tenn.	H.Galan
F.G.MacDonald	N.S.	E.G.Hildner-to Princeton IN
*T.D.Patton	Quebec	G.S. Ishikawa
*E.P.Ruggles	Mass.	*R.P.Kaighn-to Hamline
J.G.Thompson	N.S.	G.R.Weller

(*indicates a football team player as well)

captain were listed as available for each team. But again, no boxscore was reported [9].

At the Indianapolis YMCA from 1890 to 1894, its P.E. director and coach was William. A. McCulloch (1864-1944). In March and April of 1893, the Indianapolis News reported on four teams at the Y playing a round robin intramural schedule, using nine-man teams. No boxscores appeared in the News [9]. Crawfordsville has long reported that the Rev. N.C. McCay (1860-1938)—misspelled "McKay" in many written accounts--, an 1890 Springfield graduate and the secretary at the Crawfordsville Y from '90 to '93, also started intramural play in the spring of 1893 [10].

During the third year of basketball; 1893-94, a third edition of the rules was issued by Naismith in Springfield. In Indiana, the YMCAs began inter-city competition [9], as Evansville defeated visiting Terre Haute 26-15 in a six man game on Jan. 24, 1894. This was prior to the well-known Crawfordsville win over visiting Lafayette, 45-21, on March 16, in a nine man game [11]. Ray Ewry (1873-1937), the 6'3" Lafayette center, was an 1894 and 1896 Purdue grad and professor of Mechanical Engineering until 1900. Ewry won eight Olympic gold medals in the standing high, long and triple jumps [12]. Meanwhile, Brooklyn Central, W. Philadelphia, and Ravenswood repeated as YMCA city champs in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago. Albany claimed the New York state title that year, while Trenton claimed both the New Jersey and Pennsylvania titles [7].

Chicago University got Bartlett gym in 1893-94, and Stagg got Horace Butterworth to coach the varsity team, which played a schedule against YMCAs and other clubs for the next three years--probably the first college to do so. In 1894, Chicago U. played five YMCAs and Morgan Park Academy twice—finishing with a 6-1 record. Stagg would help start the Western Conference (later, the Big Ten) in 1896. He made basketball a Big Ten sport in 1906 with Chicago sharing the title in '07 and then winning it outright in '08. '09, and '10. Under his guidance it became a major sport in '08 when Chicago began awarding monograms to its players. He also sponsored a National Interscholastic Tourney from 1917-30. For his contributions to the game, Stagg was inducted into the first Naismith Hall of Fame election in 1959 [2,5,13]. He was also a football Hall of Fame inductee. His notable accomplishments were in basketball and football, although he scored many other championships in baseball and track.

Year four, 1894-95, was the final year Naismith helped to write the rules. That year, the soccer ball was replaced by a larger sized laced basketball and the free throw was invented. It counted for one point, the same as a field goal and was to be shot from 20 feet. The free throw restraining lane was made six feet wide. Brooklyn Central YMCA won its third straight New York city title. Chicago Central YMCA won its city league title, the competition including the University of Chicago,which had gone 6-5-1 against non-collegiate competition. Also, in the college ranks, the Minnesota Aggies and Bucknell won over local YMCA competition [7].

The *first inter-collegiate games* saw the Minnesota Aggies beating Hamline twice in February, while Haverford later won over Temple in March. In Connecticut,Yale, Trinity, and Wesleyan all began intramural play and Trinity defeated a local Hartford high school[7]. Wabash began its intra-mural play at the Crawfordsville Y court, since it would not get its own gym until 1917.

In 1895-96 (year five), the free throw distance was shortened to 15 feet, since hardly anyone was making tosses from 20 feet. The five man team was recommended but it was not made mandatory until 1897-98. This was the last year for Springfield to write the rules. The A.A.U. would assume control of the game and the rules by 1896-97. Among Chicago YMCAs, Central again won the city league title, while in New York the 23rd St. Y ended Brooklyn's three-year hegemony. Minneapolis and St. Paul started a round robin Twin Cities League, with the University of Minnesota, Hamline, Macalester, the State School of Agriculture (Minnesota Aggies), the Minneapolis YMCA and the National Guard participating in it. There were few intercollegiate games outside of this league [7]. When the conference took up basketball in 1905-06, the Aggies were ready and won the first title in 1906 and then tied for first in 1907.

A window into 19th century basketball has been provided by writer Pat Premo, a New York college professor of accounting and Phil Porretta, a computer programmer [14]. They have used their talents to review and rank the college basketball teams playing between 1896 and 1948. They found fifteen colleges to rank in '95/'96 and then ranked twenty per year. Yale would dominate the college basketball scene for several of the first eight seasons that were studied by Premo and Porretta; See Table A2.

In 1895-96, four schools played only seven or eight games: #4-Bloomsburg, #5-Chicago, #8-Iowa, and #11-MN A&M. Eight colleges played four games or fewer: #6-Wesleyan, #7-Savage P.E. School,

#9-Bucknell, #10-Mt.Union, #12-Allegheny, #13-Central PA, #14-Washington (of St. Louis) and #15-Macalester. Chicago (5-2) played six YMCA games and an independent team called "Hull House." Yale played eleven YMCAs, one National Guard unit and one pseudo-college called the "Savage P.E. School." In N.Y.C., they fell to the 23rd St. YMCA by 9-10. Yale played with five, seven or nine men on a team, depending upon the opponent's preference. A review of the Yale scheduling [15] in the 19th century reveals that their opponents were primarily YMCAs and National Guard Armories until 1901-02; See Table B.

when Purdue and Indiana began play [11]. Yale was again ranked first among the colleges--see Table A2. The sons of Eli took on the famed Brooklyn Central Y twice and managed a split while beating Penn, Wesleyan, and Springfield. They also split two games with Trinity. Yale preferred the seven-man team, but won over Penn 32-10 on March 20 in a ten-man matchup. Twenty colleges were ranked by Premo/Porretta but thirteen of them played fewer than seven games, including: #6-Notre Dame, #7-Wabash, #10-Purdue, and #14-Butler.

In 1898, Notre Dame was ranked #17 and Rose Hulman #20 (2-2). In 1899, Wabash was #6 and Notre

TABLE A2 PREMO/PORRETTA RANKINGS: '96-'03[14]

Year	*# 1*	*# 2*	*# 3 / # 4*
95/96	**YALE: 8-5**	MN Aggies: 10-2	Temple: 15-7
96/97	**YALE: 11-6**	Bucknell: 4-1	Chicago: 5-2
97/98	Mt. Union: 8-1	Westminster: 4-2	**YALE: 11-9**
98/99	**YALE; 9-2**	Bloomsburg: 10-0	Nebraska: 4-0
99/00	**YALE: 8-6**	Nebraska: 5-0	Dartmouth: 22-4-1
00/01	Bucknell: 12-1	*Purdue: 12-0*	**YALE: 10-6**
01/02	MN: 15-0	Allegheny: 12-1	# 4 *Purdue: 10-3*
02/03	MN: 13-0	**YALE: 15-1**	# 4 *Purdue: 8-0*

TABLE B YALE VS. OPPONENTS: 1896-1903 [15]

YR[rank]	**W-L**	YMCA teams	National Guard	Athletic Clubs	College teams
95/96[1]	08-5	6-5	1-0	-	1-0
96/97[1]	11-6	3-4	2-1	1-0	5-1
97/98[3]	11-9	4-7	2-2	2-0	3-0
98/99[1]	09-2	1-2	3-0	4-0	1-0
99/00[1]	08-6	2-1	1-5	1-0	4-0
00/01[3]	10-6	2-1	3-4	-	5-1
01/02[9]	13-8	1-2	2-0	0-2	10-4
02/03[2]	15-1	2-0	1-0	2-0	9-1

In 1896-97 (year six), Indiana colleges began playing. Wabash and Butler began yearly schedules, although they were sparse--see Table C. The first inter-collegiate game to use only five-man teams was played on Feb. 19, 1897, when Wabash beat visiting Purdue 23-13. There would be no further intercollegiate competition in Indiana until 1901,

Dame #12. At the turn of the century, 1899-1900, not a single Indiana college was ranked in the nation's top 20. However, during 1897-98 and '98-'99, the Indianapolis Y went undefeated both years, defeating state and regional YMCAs as well as Butler and Wabash [16]. This led to delusions of grandeur in 1899-1900, so a game

was ultimately arranged against #1 Yale in Indianapolis. But a little background on that is needed first.

When the A.A.U. took over from the YMCA organization in 1896, it was decided that an annual tournament should be played in the east. The event was held in New York City from 1897-1900. The N.Y.C. 23rd St. Y won the first two in 1897 (season record was15-0) and 1898 (season record was 33-1). The Knickerbocker Athletic Club then won in 1899 and 1900, but the Knicks were considered mediocre champions and the AAU moved the tournament to Chicago to boost the number of entries.

Yale was the perennial contender for top honors and the sons of Eli were intrepid in taking on the best of the A.A.U. teams. Yale had traveled to New York City to take on the city champ 23rd St. Y as well as the Harlem Y in 1896. Both were losses, 9-10 and 3-8. In 1897, Yale split games with Brooklyn Central, the city champs of 1893-95. The team then returned to N.Y.C. in 1898 and 1899, and bested the Knickerbockers twice, 27-7 and 5-2. However, the Knickerbockers were not considered the real A.A.U. champions in either 1899 or 1900. The best team was considered to be the National Guard Company E, 2nd Regiment, at Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. This team was called the Fondys. Therefore, as they had done earlier in New York City, the Elis sought out the Fondys to challenge them to a three-game series for the 1900 "world's championship" [7,15,16].

This marked the first of an almost annual Yale "western" tour over the Christmas holidays to play top teams between semesters. With a few exceptions, this continued on for decades. This year the tour consisted of seven games between Dec. 26, 1899 and Jan. 8, 1900 [15]. The Elis

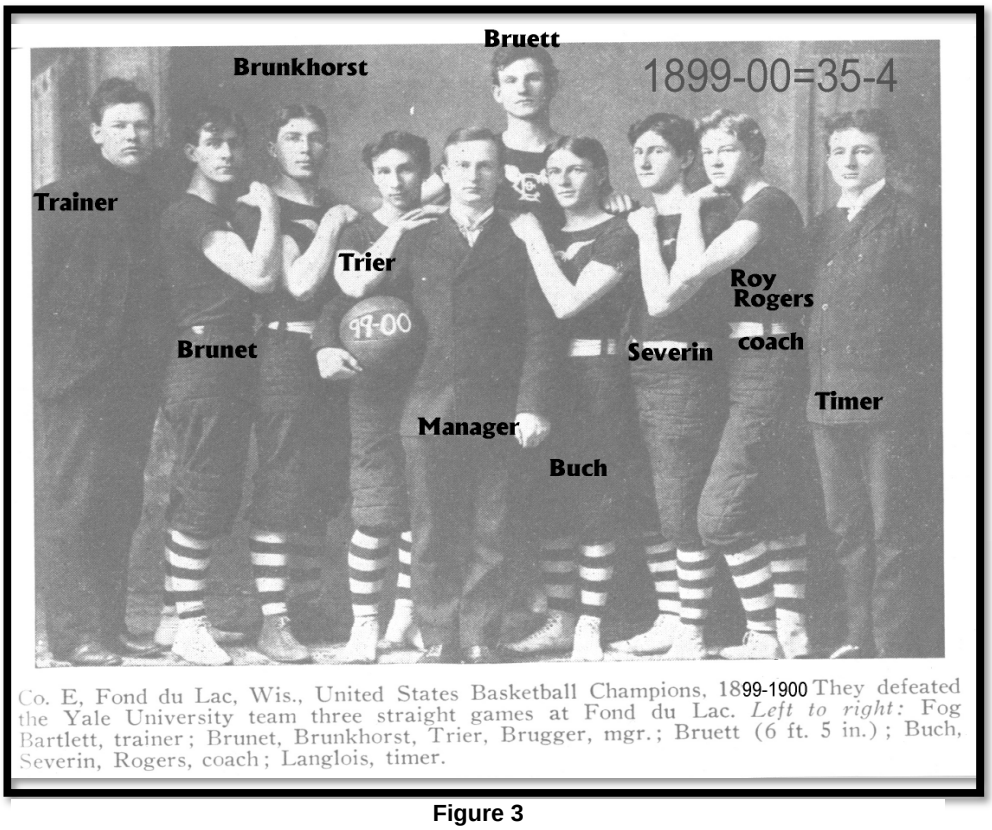
TABLE C Won-loss Records of Indiana [11] Colleges Playing 1897-1901.

College	*1897*	*1898*	*1899*	*1900*	*1901*
Wabash	1-0	0-2	2-2	1-1	2-10
Butler	1-1	2-3	0-2	2-3	2-4
Notre Dame	2-1	1-2	2-0	2-2	0
Purdue	1-1	0	0	0	12-0
Indiana	0	0	0	0	1-4

traveled by private Pullman car with an eight man squad, trainers, managers, and their own drinking water! On the way to Wisconsin, they defeated the National Guard in Washington D.C., 14-10, and then Pittsburgh 26-10. They missed train connections in Chicago, but the Wisconsin governor sent a special train to pick them up. The Fondys defeated Yale all three games, 27-18, 27-6, and 21-13. The Fondys would finish 33-4 for the year. See Fig. 3.

On the way home, Yale stopped in Indy to play the YMCA and won 33-13. Yale finished 8-6 but was 4-0 against colleges to again claim #1 in the Premo/Porretta college rankings. Having Yale come to Indy probably did more than anything else to kick start basketball interest in Indiana. The relatively unknown sport drew 500 fans in a city where the dominant winter sport was roller polo/hockey played on Henley roller skates made in Richmond. Despite the twenty point loss, the YMCA was enthralled by the way Yale played. Indy promptly scheduled a home and away series with the Fondys and lost all four of the roughly-played games. In one of the away games it was reported that three YMCA players were knocked cold. In Indianapolis, a record 800 fans attended to watch the two games played there [18].

As a preliminary game to the Fondys' first contest in Indy on March 2, 1900, the Indianapolis (Shortridge) High School beat the Butler collegians 17-16, and then did it again on March 13, by a score of 23-9. The Shortridge boys and girls had started intramural games the previous year, inspiring sophomore student Ralph Jones to buy a rule book and schedule seven games for the following season. The 5'5" Jones served as coach and star player. See Table D. As far as is known, this seems to have been the first competitive high school team within the state, and Jones the first high school coach in Indiana.



Co. E, Fond du Lac, Wis., United States Basketball Champions, 1899-1900 They defeated the Yale University team three straight games at Fond du Lac. *Left to right:* Fog Bartlett, trainer; Brunet, Brunkhorst, Trier, Brugger, mgr.; Bruett (6 ft. 5 in.); Buch, Severin, Rogers, coach; Langlois, timer.

Figure 3

TABLE D 1899-1900 Shortridge High School's Basketball Season (5-2)

Date	*Opponent & Score*
12-14-99	YMCA intermediates,16-2
1-5-00	YMCA seconds, 6-4
1-23-00	YMCA seconds, 34=10
2-27-00	YMCA first team, 13-32
2-28-00	YMCA first team, 12-33
3-2-00	Butler College, 17-16
3-13-00	Butler College, 23-9

1900-01 (Year 10)

Indiana became further enthusiastic about basketball when both Purdue and Indiana began their yearly schedules of intercollegiate play. Butler and Wabash joined city leagues that were formed in Indianapolis and Crawfordsville—see Table E. Both colleges finished last, while both YMCAs topped the league in games won. Interscholastic play also began this year, at the Indianapolis and Crawfordsville high schools.

TABLE E. THE TWO CITY LEAGUES

Indianapolis	*Crawfordsville*
Butler	Wabash
Shortridge	High School
Manual	Business College
YMCA	YMCA

Ralph Jones (1880-1951) attended the Indianapolis YMCA school for P.E. directors from 1901-03. He also continued to coach Shortridge part-time from 1900 to 1904. He was part-time at I.U. in January '03 (3-1 record). In 1904 he was full time at

the Indy YMCA (state champs) and part-time at Butler (2-2 record) and Crawfordsville High. From 1905-09 he was full time at Wabash College and part time at the Crawfordsville High School (CHS) and the Crawfordsville Y. He won state championships at both Wabash and the Crawfordsville Y, and "mythical" titles at the high school in '04 (13-2), '07 (12-0) and '09 (17-1). His Wabash teams went 75-6 and were ranked by Premo/Porretta as #1 nationally, in '06 and '08. In 1908-09 he was head coach of football, basketball and baseball. He was lured to Purdue when it opened its new gym in '09. He won the Boilers' first two conference titles in 1911 and 1912. Illinois recruited him in '13 as head basketball coach, assistant coach in football to Robert Zuppke, and assistant in baseball to George Huff. During 1915-17, Jones placed 1st, 2nd and 1st consecutively in conference basketball, while his team in 1915 was ranked #1 nationally by both Premo/Porretta and the Helms Foundation.

At age 40, in 1920, he relocated to affluent Lake Forest, Illinois, where he coached basketball, football and baseball champions at the prep school and then at the college until his retirement. At the very beginning of the Great Depression, 1930-32, his former student George Halas hired him to help rescue the Chicago Bears from the doldrums of the NFL standings. During that brief tenure there, he not only brought home the 1932 NFL title but he revitalized football by creating the modern "T" formation. See Fig.4. After the Bears 73-0 win over the Redskins for the 1940 NFL title, his role was again publicly acclaimed by Halas and Red Grange. The recognition that Jones received in professional football has inadvertently overshadowed the major role he played in the beginnings of basketball in Indiana. See Fig. 5.

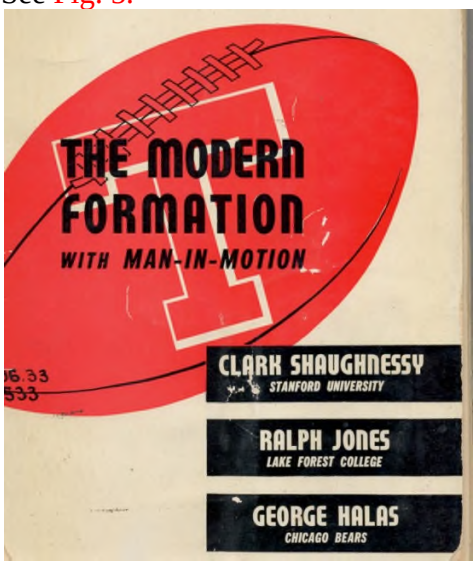


Figure 4

Figure 5

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MIGHTY MITES OF 1953-54
(Montezuma Aztecs)
by
Mike Lopresti

You've heard this fairy tale before. A tiny school from the pencil-dot town on an Indiana map, clawing its way through the high school basketball tournament. No, not Milan. The OTHER tiny school from the same season.

What a movie the Montezuma Aztecs would have made back in 1954. Senior class of 14--seven boys and seven girls. No place to play home games. The Gymless Wonders, people called them. They shared their practice area 60 feet by 27 feet in the school basement with the band and a home economics class, and couldn't put much air under their shots because of the low ceiling. The coach's wife had to wash the uniforms, hanging them on her clothesline to dry.

But were they good! They took a 23-5 record and marched to the semistate in Butler Fieldhouse, which to them looked like the Emerald City from "The Wizard of Oz." Yes, on this 30th anniversary of the release of "Hoosiers," we have come to say the movie could have been about them. If only they had not run into the bully big school that knocked them out. If only they had not run into Milan.

"They always talk about Milan being the smallest school. They really weren't the smallest school," said Ron Baumann, one of the Montezuma players. We'll meet him in a minute. On March 13, 1954, a school with 162 kids played against a school with 78. There has never been a semistate game quite like it, before or since. And while the victors became folk heroes, and the stuff of Hollywood, the losers went back home to their railroad town on the banks of the Wabash in western Indiana. Just a footnote to the Milan miracle.

The 1954 Montezuma Indians, champions of the Greencastle Regional. Defeated by state champion Milan 44-34 in the final 16 at the Indianapolis semi-state. Back row: coach William Richeson, Glen Doan, Larry Levrenz, Roy McMasters, Bill Knoblett, Lloyd Sherrell, student manager James Border, principal John Bland. Front row: Bob Knoblett, Tom Waldridge, Vic Edwards, Ron Baumann, Dick Pitman. Photo from the IHSAA archives.

You've heard of Bobby Plump? Well, he's heard of Montezuma. "It was a tough game, I can tell you that," said the main man from Milan. "It was one of the few times we were the big school on the court. As I look back, Montezuma gave us our closest game before Muncie Central."

The record will show that, while Milan was able to dispatch such bigger fish as Terre Haute Gerstmeyer and Crispus Attucks with Oscar Robertson, it was Montezuma that gave the glory-bound Indians their biggest scare, before the famous state championship game. It ended 44-34, but was only 32-30 going into the fourth quarter, and Montezuma was right there on the brink. The ultimate underdog being chased by an even more ultimate underdog.

"They were the only team we didn't have a great scouting report on," said Gene White, Milan's center. "I understood from another source that in the regional they weren't expected to win, but they did, so our scout may not have scouted the correct team. "The most famous quote in Milan that week was, 'We took the roar out of Aurora [in the regional] and we'll take the zoom out of Montezuma.'" Oh, yes, the Milan guys remember Montezuma--so why shouldn't we?

Our story takes us to Parke County, seven miles west of

Rockville, and the town with one blinking light. The old theater, hotels, and cafe are all closed now, and the main drag, Washington Street, is mostly with vacant windows. The purple paint on the water tower—a school color for the old Aztecs—is faded. The town that was 1,300 in 1954 has settled back to just over a thousand. The high school is long gone, consolidated into Riverton Parke, which at last count had won six games in three seasons.

North on Washington Street is a house with a sign on the driveway: "Entering Baumannville. Pop: 2. Ron Baumann, mayor." They knew him as Ronnie Baumann in 1954, one of the leading scorers of the Aztecs. The basketball hero who left for the Navy not two months after that day in Butler Fieldhouse would eventually come back home to work at the Newport Chemical Depot, the only place in America that produced the VX nerve agent. Ron lives there still, with Linda, his wife of 60 years, not more than a mile from where he once played. "Though it's been 61 years, it's kind of a family joke that, around March, somebody calls about the 1954 season. You're early," he said, sitting at his kitchen table in late January. "For our 15 minutes of fame, it went on for quite a while." Baumann can show you artifacts of '54. Newspaper clippings, programs, the tattered net he cut down after the regional so long ago, etc. The Montezuma letter jacket he can still get into, the one he got to wear barely a month before heading for the Navy.

He can tell you what it was like practicing in that basement. "You didn't take any arched shots because they had steam pipes up there. Out of bounds was the brick wall, no padding, so when you went out of bounds, you knew it." He can tell you the awe that struck the Aztecs when they first walked into Butler Fieldhouse. "If they took the whole town, we couldn't have filled up the section for Montezuma," chipped in Linda. "The whole town did go. The only one left here, they always said, was the town cop." He can tell you about that Saturday morning, riding to Indianapolis with a caravan of 80 cars behind them, going through Rockville and finding people out on the streets clapping as they rode past.

And he can tell you about the game. Montezuma wore purple, Milan wore white. Milan built a big early lead, but when Montezuma cut it to two going into the fourth quarter, the Aztecs had all the momentum. Then the Indians went to their ball control they made so famous, and that was that. "I remember I couldn't shoot the basketball very well (2-for-13, in fact). They could hold it as long as they wanted to. I think we probably messed up by not pressing them more, going out and making them dribble or something. We really thought we could beat them. But it's like any game. Some nights they go in, some nights they don't."

And when it was over? "We went out to some fancy restaurant and had a meal, and then we came home." He can tell you what time has done, showing you a photo of the team, filled with boys of six decades ago. "He's passed away ... and he's passed away ... and he's passed away ..." Five of the 10 are still living, including four of the starters. One is center Vic Edwards, who Baumann said prayed before every free throw. "The prayers weren't answered all the time." Another is guard Dick Pitman, who had the team's best jump shot. Pitman splits his time between Florida and Indianapolis now, a man married for 45 years who has endured a stroke, quadruple bypass surgery, and a valve replacement that kept him in the hospital more than three months.

Back then, everyone in Montezuma knew everyone else, of course. "And you knew how many dogs everybody had, too," Pitman said. And everyone knew how the boys felt about basketball. "My dad put up a plywood [backboard] and he made a ring and welded it together," Pitman said. "He went to (the) Montgomery Ward (store) for a net, and I taped it up on a thorn tree. We never dreamed of going to the Semi-State at that point. But we loved it so much. In the winter time, we'd shovel off the snow and play. That's dedication. I don't think boys would do that today." Pitman returned to Butler the next weekend after the Semi-State to see Milan complete the dream, and was sitting under the basket with his mother when Plump's shot went through.

Laundry Day in Montezuma. Sharon Richeson, wife of coach Bill Richeson. Photo provided by Ronnie Baumann.

Pitman gets back to Montezuma for reunions. But Baumann is the one who has stayed, the most visible link to one incredible spring. He can tell you that the memory of 1954 is fading in his town, like the paint on the water tower. "The people who really remember, they're nearly all gone now. We had one friend in church, who'd say, 'I always remember that basket you made over at Greencastle [to win the regional].' She's passed away, but a couple of

months ago, her son was in town and I was talking to him and mentioned to him that every time I'd see his mother, she'd mention the basket I made. He said, 'I've heard that story about 60 times.'" One other thing Ronnie Baumann can tell you. He has the tape of "Hoosiers" and has watched it many times. Surely, there had to be gnawing moments of wondering ... what if? Hickory could have been Montezuma. "It's a very small part, really it is. When you only have 33 boys in school, we were lucky to get where we were. But being envious, that's not part of it. Milan played the game and they won and that's the way it should be. They deserved everything they got."

Basketball court at Montezuma. It was shared with other program activities, such as Band practice, above. This photo provided by Ronnie Baumann.

Here's the ironic part: If 21st century Montezuma has forgotten what its native sons once did, the state champions of 1954 have not. They understand what a unique stage they shared, and how close it had been. "One time, we were going west, my wife and I," Milan's White said, "and we took the road that went through Montezuma, just so I could see it." And Ron Baumann? He has never been back to the Butler Fieldhouse since 1954.

Editor's Note: Mike Lopresti is a lifelong resident of Richmond and a graduate of Ball State University. He was a columnist for USA Today and Gannett newspapers for 31 years; he covered 34 Final Fours, 30 Super Bowls, 32 World Series and 16 Olympics. His column appears weekly. He can be reached at mlopresti@ibj.com. *Mike asked that his current employer, the Indiana Business Journal, be mentioned within this Note.*

EARLY BASKETBALL IN RUSH COUNTY.

by

William Hougland

Editor's Note: This is an edited and combined re-write of multiple articles that appeared in the Rushville Republican newspaper on October 22, 1940, the date of Rushville's One Hundredth anniversary. Various writers, now deceased, contributed to the printed material presented here, among them William G. Hougland, a noted sports writer and news editor at the time.

Basketball, (still) considered to be one of the youngest of major sports, has advanced with seven-league boots (meaning "great strides"—editor) since Rush County athletes first stumbled around on outside courts at the turn of the twentieth century. Its increasing popularity has transformed the game into a spectacle that couldn't have been imagined back around the turn of the 20th century, when the game was first introduced to the county. Richland School was the first, locally, to explore the sport at the high school level.

Now, the players have modern gymnasiums, fine uniforms and other equipment, well-trained coaches, cheering crowds of followers, and all the facilities necessary for their comfort and efficiency. When Rush County basketball was in its infancy, the teams performed largely on rough outdoor courts or in equally rough, poorly-lighted halls. In most cases the boys purchased the equipment, bought or made their own suits, arranged for a suitable playing court area, frequently erected the baskets, drummed up their own crowds, and coached themselves.

Rules were usually agreed upon before each game by the referee and the opposing players. The principal regulation regarded as a foul in Rush County (believe it or not) was the practice of a player using a closed fist against an opponent. In the game's early stages, a stern forerunner of the present-day center-line rule was also in effect: Only the two centers could rove over the court at will, and the forwards were cooped up at their respective ends of the floor (on offense). The guards likewise were forbidden to cross over the center line (on offense). Here's another regulation used by some teams: Whenever a ball rolled out of bounds it became the possession of the team whose player first touched it afterward. Although many of the men who pioneered local basketball disagree as to when and by whom the first games in Rush County were played, all are in unison on one point: "These kids who play today certainly have it soft!"

Since newspapers practically ignored basketball when that sport made its bow here, exact information on the local game's history is a bit difficult to obtain. Many of the early players have found it hard to agree on dates and names. It is probable though that during the winter of 1903-04 basketball got its start in Rushville. Dr. Charles Green, a local dentist, can be credited (or blamed) for its introduction. Dr. Green, then a dental college freshman in Indianapolis, had seen some boys playing the new game in the big city and he told the local lads about it when he came home. Hugh Mauzy, whose brother Louis was one of the first R.H.S. net players, also

returned from Earlham College with information on the sport. It rapidly became popular shortly after that.

Stirred by reports given by the local collegians, members of the Nonpareil Athletic Club in Rushville took prompt action. This young men's organization, with headquarters on the third floor of the Bowen Building on Main Street, fitted up Rushville's first indoor basketball court. Since the room was a bit small, the goals were hung on the end walls and the entire place was used as a playing floor. The first games were played by teams composed of various club members, and several of those hardy basketball pioneers have opined that the game was anything but "a pink tea affair." It was, they all agreed, "rougher than either football or boxing." The Nonpareil Club was composed of youths both in and out of high school. Boxing was one of its favorite sports and, after having been rammed around on the splintered basketball floor, some of the boys returned to the gentler pastimes of fisticuffs and wrestling.

Only a few games were played in the Nonpareil club room and the attendance was sparse. Since the playing floor took over an entire room, the few spectators were forced to stand in two open doorways at one end of the room. A little later, an independent team, known as the "Foxy Five," was organized by what the newspaper called "a number of husky lads, lovers of athletics." This squad played its games in the old Kramer Rink, where the Hoosier Dairy facility later stood. The team's games became a local attraction for about two years.

The grade school and high school boys quickly took up the game and erected goals in various schoolyards and on vacant lots. One popular court was installed on a vacant lot on North Jackson Street and was used by perhaps the first basketball team organized by a local school. Symbolically known as "the Pioneers," this club was formed in 1905. It was comprised mainly of boys still in elementary school. Since the new sport was springing up in other nearby towns, the local youngsters actually played a few games with quintets from neighboring schools. Results of these long-ago contests are forgotten but Howard Ewbank, a member of the Pioneers, recalled playing one game at Arlington and another at Morristown. He recollected that the local boys changed their clothes in a wood shed near the Arlington school building, and that after the game was over the lads learned that the janitor had locked the place up and had gone home.

Changing clothes, however, was not necessary for many of the basketball boys. At first, they performed in their street attire. Later, some of them began to fix up semblances of a uniform. A few appeared in body-length tights, before the era of knee-length pants and short-sleeved shirts arrived. Many discovered that tennis "slippers" were fine for the game, while others stuck to their street shoes. A few daredevils even performed in their socked feet. One local chap reportedly cut to size a pair of well-worn rubber boots rather than ruin a good pair of street shoes or risk getting sores from thin socks or bare feet. Baseball socks were also favored in the early 1900's, while kneepads also became a requisite part of the standard attire.

It was not until the fall of 1907, if old-timers can be believed, that Rushville High School had its first organized team. However, it is known that some pickup games were played between scholastic quintets in Rush County prior to that date. It is not recorded who opposed Rushville High for the first official inter-school net game in the county, but local newspapers of December 1907 carried notices that Gwynneville was scheduled to meet the Rushville boys that month. No further media mention of this match was ever produced. Perhaps the game was not played at all, or perhaps Gwynneville trounced the locals so soundly that public embarrassment became a factor. The first Rushville High game result that appears to have been printed in a local newspaper was in January 1908 against Shelbyville. Rushville won that game, 22-7, so it made the news!

Perhaps the first out-of-town game played by Rushville's initial high school team was at Richmond in early 1908. This tilt was played among the vertical support posts on the third floor of the old Richmond school building. Arrangements didn't permit a basket at either end of the floor so the goals were situated on opposite sides of a stage at one end of the floor (sounds somewhat like a half-court game, doesn't it?). Later on, when the local boys were playing ball on an old skating rink at Connersville, lamp black was tossed onto the court (it helped to prevent skidding, apparently). In one of the early games played at Columbus, the gym consisted of three adjoining rooms! The opening center jump was in the middle room and then the battle for points was waged in the other two rooms that contained regulation goals. Posts also adorned the playing floor at the Carthage school. As late as 1920 the players were still dodging around those support pillars. One of Rushville's first squads performed on an outdoor graveled court at Morristown. No record has been found that would indicate how the players were able to dribble the ball on the stones or whether they could even dribble at all.

With such crude facilities being utilized, one might expect a plethora of injuries to occur with tumbles, spills, and crashes taking their toll. And they did. Support pillars, heating boilers, slick or uneven playing floors, and courtside spectator seats all posed special risks to players. In one instance, a 1908 RHS player came to grief during the execution of one of his "human fly" stunts that consisted of running up the wall to the basket and dropping the ball through the goal. On that sad occasion though, he rammed a foot through the plaster wall and got stuck there. He was soon rescued but his leg was seriously injured and the damage to the support wall put a quick end to the game. The many injuries that were sustained during those early years of basketball were so ubiquitous as to prompt new rules to be adopted for safety precaution. Some of the more unusual remedial new rules included (1) the containment of all participating players within a wire cage, (2) the prohibition of wearing buttons or any solid objects on playing apparel, and (3) a requirement to secure eyeglasses to the head with tape.

There was usually no well-stocked medicine kit for the benefit of any injured pioneer players, either. Turpentine was the chief liniment, while many of the cuts & wounds were just patched up with the ever-available bicycle tire wrappings.

As for game officials, each team usually carried its own. Glen Moore, a member of the old Hoosier Dairy team, claimed that he refereed the first high school game in Rushville. Hugh Mauzy, who helped to bring the early information about basketball to Rushville, was one of the first local whistle-tooters and recalled being smacked by an irate fan at Richmond on one occasion. There was also a math teacher at the high school, known as Professor Stockinger, who occasionally doubled as both a referee and quasi-coach at a time when apparently it was not viewed as a conflict of interest.

There have been few to dispute the several assertions that Professor W.O. Headlee was the father of Rush County basketball. As principal of the Richland grade school, Headlee is said to have introduced the game there at the turn of the century. There is little doubt that the Richland school boys were playing at this sport as early as 1902, and possibly a couple of years before that. At any rate, Headlee doubtless was the first person to introduce basketball locally although it didn't get beyond the Richland and Andersonville communities for several years. Richland had only a grade school in those days, with advanced work available to grammar school graduates seeking a little more education. During that time, Professor Headlee marked off a court in the school yard and taught his pupils the early rudiments of the game. Nearby Andersonville, where Elwood Brooks was the principal, soon followed suit, and teams from these two schools competed on almost a weekly basis whenever the weather permitted. All of those contests, of course, were played out-of-doors. These long-ago games between Richland and Andersonville were informal affairs, with the principals usually playing the center positions for the teams.

Although grade school boys at Richland and Andersonville were playing basketball before anyone else in Rush County, other county towns began playing in quick succession. Many had teams prior to Rushville's first official squad. They included Arlington, Manilla, New Palestine, and Morristown. Milroy, Homer, and Moscow formed teams just a year after Rushville broke the ice in 1907 for its students and townsfolk. It's recorded that the Homer boys took up a private collection to get started. They then purchased the frames and wire netting for the backstops, cut and fashioned their own goal posts and goals, and scratched a tiny trench for a boundary around their outdoors court. Since school district funds were not yet used to support such trivial activities as basketball, the early participants in the sport had to use great imagination, be creative, and beg for financial support in order to satisfy their enthusiasm for the game.

The Rushville High girls took up basketball about the same time as the boys did. Local papers of 1907 revealed that the girls had organized a team with Mary Neutenheizer as its captain. Middy blouses and large, baggy bloomers formed the uniforms for the girls. There were no scanty costumes back then that sometimes make the present-day feminine teams so appealing to the opposite sex.

It was only a few years later that the school systems and general public began to take the game more seriously. A formalized structure of organization was ultimately put into place to further the game's development. After an invitational affair of twelve teams was held in 1911 to compete for what was publicized as "the state championship," the IHSAA (formed earlier, in 1903) took charge of the championship tournament the following year and began expanding its list of official playing rules as well as the qualifications for Association membership. Today, the game is very different from what it was in its early infancy, but it still lives on, in Rush County and every other county, as Indiana's favorite sport. FINIS

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