

A STUDY OF THE 1971-72 BIG 8 CONFERENCE VARSITY BASKETBALL
PLAYER'S OPINIONS CONCERNING THEIR WORK LOAD
WHILE PURSUING A COLLEGE DEGREE

by

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The growth and development of education in the past century has been phenomenal. One index of this growth is the increase every year in college enrollment. Despite the fact that colleges and universities have strengthened their standards and make it tougher to enter; the trend continues.

The struggle to earn a college degree has become a challenging and time-consuming adventure. Tests, grades, competition, and other necessary activities present the student with ranging degrees of pressure and problems. It is estimated that since the turn of the century, man's knowledge has doubled and redoubled.¹ This means that college students must spend more time than ever before in library research and studying outside of class. It then becomes a necessity that the student also learn to budget his time.

The college student has precisely four ways to spend his time: in class, in study, at work, and for recreation and relaxation. If increased knowledge means that he has to increase his study time, from which of the four avenues will the time come? He shouldn't take time from his regular class time or his present studying time. If he's working, he probably needs money and he can't afford to stop working. Where then will this time come for recreation and relaxation. He

¹John Merriman, Class notes, Kansas State University, 1969.

cancels his fishing trip, calls off his evening golf, or stays up late at night. The fact that the student is getting less recreation and relaxation is almost certain to put a greater mental and emotional stress on him.

This study is concerned with one group of college students--the basketball players from the Big 8 Conference. Since these subjects are also students, they have time divided in the same four ways previously mentioned, however, basketball could be construed as their form of work.

NEED FOR STUDY

The purpose of this study was to gather and compile the opinions of basketball players concerning their participation in the sport while also pursuing a college degree. Opinions, facts and ideas were sought to show the work load and problems of these student athletes.

The author also attempted to draw attention to the issue of freshmen being allowed to participate in intercollegiate basketball at the varsity level.

It was hoped that through this study the results would be helpful in determining whether or not athletics and education should be separated. From it, college administrators, coaches, and the general public might realize that it is very difficult to excel in both education and athletics in college.

Since the author is a former basketball player of the Big 8 Conference (Kansas State), he felt the study would be quite interesting as well as meaningful. Looking back over his years as a student and basketball player, the author felt that he has gained some invaluable

insight that has made this type of study possible.

The basketball players' work load like that of the student, has also increased over the past quarter century. This is evident by the increase in the tempo of the game, fast breaks, high scores and pressure defenses. New philosophies, strategies, and constantly changing offenses and defenses all add to the work load of these players. This, no doubt puts additional physical and mental strain on these players also.

For the Big 8 Conference, players must carry at least 12 hours per semester. "In order to be eligible for intercollegiate competition, a student will be enrolled in an academic program leading to a recognized degree, and shall be making satisfactory progress, both quantitatively and qualitatively, toward the degree. Satisfactory progress is based upon compliance with credit-hour requirement of 2.202."²

The recent policy which has been adopted by the Big 8 Conference will now allow freshmen students to participate in intercollegiate competition. This was apparently done in an attempt to curb the amount of money spent on athletics without regard to the welfare of the student athletes involved. Generally, freshmen will find it much more difficult than varsity athletes adjusting to scholastic work and athletic competition. These players are just out of high school and the pressure is great. This writer believes that they need at least

²Conference Office, Rules and Regulations Governing Athletics and all Participation of the Big Eight Conference (Mezzanine, Hotel Muehlebach, Kansas City, Missouri), 1971-72.

one year to adjust and find themselves. The author has taken a definite stand against this rule which allows freshman basketball players to participate on varsity squads involving interscholastic competition.

A well-known athletic director at one of the Big 8 Conference schools had this to say about the new ruling: "Personally I'm against it. I think that it is an injustice to the kid. How can you expect a high school kid to play with our guards. I do however think that the rule will limit the number of games that a freshman can participate in at twenty-six. It's just too much of a burden on freshman kids."³

Today more than ever before athletics in college is demanding more and more attention. Most colleges and universities are highly competitive now and winning is the name of the game. "Athletics in high schools and colleges has become big business. Tournaments and post-season games proliferate until it is almost impossible for a student to participate in more than one sport because of overlapping seasons. Coaching staffs have doubled and tripled, and related expenses have multiplied many times over. Star athletes are pursued by recruiters until even their own parents are disgusted, and illegal practices are becoming more prolific every year. The proportion of college athletes who complete their degrees indicate that many of them have been exploited until their eligibility was exhausted and then abandoned by the schools which idealized them."⁴

³Ernie Barrett, Director of Athletics, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas.

⁴G. Patience Thomas, "The Person of Sport," The Physical Educator, December 1971, p. 171.

The game of basketball has experienced this growth probably as much as any sport. There are very few colleges or universities in America that don't feature competitive basketball on the intercollegiate level. During this wave of increased emphasis on college athletics, basketball has undergone tremendous growth. New facilities have sprung up all over the country. A recently built complex on the campus of Brigham Young University seats over twenty-two thousand spectators for basketball. In the Big 8 Conference alone, over fifty boys are given full scholarships each year to participate in this sport. A full scholarship consists of room, board, books, tuition, and fifteen dollars a month for incidental fees.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The limitations of this study are: even though more than one hundred players responded to the questionnaire, not all of the questions were directly related to work load or problems of the individual player. The author attempted to keep the questionnaire brief and relevant enough for maximum cooperation and responses.

This study is also limited in that not much research has been done on the athletes of the Big 8 Conference, especially basketball players. This study only investigated the players at one particular time of the year. Opinions and ideas do change. A more detailed and meaningful study would have questioned the players several times under different conditions. For example, the subjects would have perhaps responded differently before the basketball season started compared to a time during the peak of the season or after the season was over.

Being a former Big 8 Conference basketball player, the author felt that his experiences were meaningful and added to the study but at times he felt that his feelings perhaps narrowed his thinking about how other players felt. The author felt that his experiences and overall familiarity with the Big 8 Conference was very helpful throughout the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In an attempt to better understand the basketball players of the 1971-72 Big 8 Conference and their responses to the questionnaire, the following literature served as a review.

In a survey by Raymond,⁵ he attempted to identify those characteristics coaches deemed most important in recruiting potential college athletes. Four classes of institutions were surveyed including state universities, private universities, state colleges, and private colleges. Thirty-seven characteristics were organized under five leading categories: attitude and personality, playing ability, physical qualities, mental ability, and financial need. Mean ratings were determined for each characteristic and each category. No significant difference was found between the types of institutions and the qualities looked for in the recruiting practices.

A well-known high school and college coach, Mike Harkins,⁶ feels that few high school athletes know how to evaluate college scholarship offers. The athlete's frustration is often compounded by the pressure of over-zealous alumni, a high school coach seeking to use him as a

⁵Lloyd E. Raymond, "Identification of the Most Important Characteristics of Potential College Basketball Players" (unpublished Master's thesis, Mankato, Minnesota: Mankato State College, 1969), 69 pp.

⁶Mike Harkins, "Twenty Questions for the Recruited Athlete," Scholastic Coach, 38:24, 1969.

stepping-stone, a father who pictures him as a sure pro, or simply the necessity of making a decision that will effect the course of his life. Harkins designed a list of twenty questions to help the athlete appraise the offers and choose a college where he can succeed both academically and athletically. Among those questions are: (1) How many hours a day will athletics and the other responsibilities involved in maintaining my scholarship take me away from my studies, (2) Will the athletic department pay for any tutoring I may require, (3) Are they offering a four-year scholarship, or can they terminate it anytime they choose, and (4) Can I afford to travel home during vacation periods, and can my parents afford to travel to the school to see me play as often as they wish?

Even though Raymond's study showed that financial need was important in recruiting the athlete, a study by Pawlak⁷ said that need was not a determining factor when awarding grants-in-aid. Pawlak surveyed six major conferences. It was concluded that football players were awarded a greater number of grants-in-aid than any other sport participants. There was an insignificant correlation between the number of grants-in-aid awarded and a school won-lost record. Again, need was not a determining factor when awarding grants-in-aid.

Nat Holeman⁸ feels that basketball has changed immensely over

⁷Paul Pawlak, Jr., "Financial Aid Award to Scholar-Athletes by Member Institutions to Six Conferences During the 1963-64 School Year" (unpublished Master's thesis, Springfield, Massachusetts: Springfield College, 1969), 119 pp.

⁸Nat Holeman, "Basketball 50 Years Ago," Converse Basketball Yearbook (50th ed., 1971), pp. 5, 48.

the past fifty years and there have been problems associated with the changes. One change Holeman notes is that of scholarships and recruiting practices. He contends that "the game is making millionaires of fellows before even attaining their 22nd birthday." The longest trip the average college made in 1921 seldom exceeded 225 miles, but today it is common for a college team to average over 20,000 miles of travel per season.

Unlike today, there wasn't intense pressure on winning. Coaches were fixtures, someone their players looked up to, respected, and could depend on. "It was a pleasure to coach, to see some kid barely make his freshman team, but through intense dedication and enthusiasm, improve himself to the point where, by the time he became a senior, he was either the team captain or the best player on his club."

There were no scholarships. Classes terminated at 4:00 P.M. and practices were held until 6:00 P.M. Many fellows had to rearrange their schedules so that they could work in the afternoon--or they could never get a college education. Today a college athlete on a full scholarship is not permitted to work at anything other than the sport in which he is participating.

Ogilvie and Tutko,⁹ who have had years of direct experience with problem athletes, believe that approximately three levels of problems emerge. Situational anxiety reaction is one type of problem. This is much more evident in a college setting where young men who have not quite achieved maturity suddenly sense the loss of emotional

⁹ Bruce C. Ogilvie and Thomas A. Tutko, Problem Athletes and How to Handle Them (London: Pelham Books, Ltd., 1971).

support that they have once received from their families. Usually this disappears as the season progresses. The second level deals with those problem athletes who have defensive personality features that keep interfering with their effectiveness in human relationships. These young men are problems for the team and coach. Their effectiveness is limited. The most severe of these three levels of problems are those with pathological origins. Although these athletes are the most seriously disturbed, they seem to be able to complete their athletic career. The paranoid type would be the one exception to this generalization.

In a study relative to student athletes, Upham¹⁰ feels that there are certain factors inherent in the receipt of athletic grants that might result in poor academic performance by these recipients. Among these are less time for study due to long practice sessions, class sessions and study time lost due to out of town games, mental preoccupation with personal and team performance, and physical fatigue which might make study difficult. The effect of these factors are of course more pronounced during the semester in which competition occurs.

A study by Cooper¹¹ concerning the relationship between athletics and various personality factors showed that while no intellectual differences were noted a greater motivation to achieve was

¹⁰Robert Upham, "A Study Comparing Academic Achievement, Persistence Toward Graduation, and Rate of Progress of Recipients of Athletic Grants with Like Students who did not Receive Such Grants" (Manhattan, Kansas: Kansas State University, 1972). (Mimeographed.)

¹¹Lowell Cooper, "Activity and Personality," The Research Quarterly, 40:17-22, 1969.

noted among athletes. Generally, the personality features of athletes pointed to greater social adjustment and ascendancy, and higher emotional stability.

Cooper also points out that one general problem prevailing work in the area of athletics and personality is the lack of attempts to differentiate athletic participation from physical activity; that is the kind of personality factors compelling an individual to join and work with a team, with its regular practices, leadership and peer involvements, and continuity over time, might well be separate from the individual's physical abilities and his psychological needs for such activity.

Lakie¹² designed a competitive attitude scale to determine what degree various sports groups subscribed to the "win-at-any-cost" philosophy of athletics. After administering the 22 item scale to 228 athletes participating in six varsity sports at three types of schools, his data revealed no differences in the expressed attitudes among athletes categorized by sports or among athletes categorized by the type of school attended. Lakie found that outcomes in sportsmanlike behavior may vary under different leadership and environment and suggest that future studies in this area be designed to study these variables.

The development of certain personality characteristics has long been considered an important objective of athletic participation. The view that participation in competitive sports contributes to the

¹²William L. Lakie, "Expressed Attitudes of Various Groups of Athletes Toward Athletic Competition," The Research Quarterly, 35:497-503, 1964.

development of desirable personality characteristics is widespread, however a study by Edward Gottheil and Alfred C. Werner¹³ tested 456 cadets at the United States Military Academy and found no evidence to support the assumption that college athletics significantly influence personality structure.

A study by Ray¹⁴ concerning the effects of athletic participation on high school seniors revealed that the average athlete is one month younger than the average class member. He is two pounds heavier and nearly an inch taller. His I.Q. is two points higher. In physical ability and achievement the athlete is above the average. In leadership and citizenship the athlete is also well above average. Reasons for scholastic superiority of the athlete were not apparent in this study. Probably the fact that he must keep up his grades in order to compete is a contributing factor, borne out by the fact that 67 percent of the athletes failures occurred during a season when their particular sport was not being played.

The literature reviewed has presented information about recruiting the athlete, various aspects about his personality and attitudes, his academic achievement and some of his problems. The literature has also helped to increase the author's knowledge of certain aspects about the athlete and athletics in general. The author

¹³Edward Gottheil and Alfred C. Werner, "Personality Development and Participation in College Athletics," The Research Quarterly, 37:121-131, 1966.

¹⁴Howard C. Ray, "Studies Based on Athletic and Physical Education," The Research Quarterly, 11:136-138, 1940.

acknowledges the fact that there has been an abundance of scientific research done about the athlete but he did not find any literature pertinent to basketball players' opinions concerning their work load while pursuing a college degree; particularly those of the Big 8 Conference.

The review of literature indicates that:

1. Attitude and personality rank high on the list in identifying the most important characteristics of potential college basketball players.
2. Few high school athletes know how to evaluate college scholarship offers.
3. Financial need may or may not be a factor when awarding grants-in-aid.
4. Basketball has experienced vast changes accompanied by problems--scholarships, recruiting practices, pressures, lack of dedication, and rule violations.
5. Problem athletes have additional levels of problems.
6. Participation in athletics tend to produce a greater motivation to achieve, a greater social adjustment and higher emotional stability.
7. Sportsmanlike behavior varies under different leadership and environment.
8. Athletes do better academically during a season during which their particular sport is not being played.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD OF STUDY

A short answer questionnaire was constructed to collect information concerning various aspects of their sport's program from each player in the conference.

The objective of the questionnaire was merely to gather the opinions to several questions and answers to others. This inabled the author to determine how this select group of college students perceived their work load.

The author did at times during the analysis of the questionnaire compare the players responses to what he considered ideal, right, or simply the best answer to him. At times comparisons were also made between sophomores, juniors, and seniors based upon the responses received. Throughout the study the author used percentages and tables to present his data.

Questions A, B, and U in the questionnaire were not seeking information related directly to the work load of the players.

The questionnaire was two pages in length and included mainly "yes" and "no" questions with a few short answer questions. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A. The questionnaire was constructed so that it would not require a great deal of time to complete and therefore, would result in utmost cooperation. Most of the questionnaires were answered at the Big 8 Tournament in Kansas City, Missouri during December 27-30, 1971. The remaining questionnaires

were answered during the months of January and February when the conference team played at Kansas State.

There are eight schools that make up the Big 8 Conference: Iowa State University, University of Kansas, Oklahoma State University, University of Missouri, University of Nebraska, University of Colorado, University of Oklahoma, and Kansas State University. All cooperated and every questionnaire was answered.

TABLE I
NUMBER OF RESPONSES FROM EACH SCHOOL

	ISU	KU	MU	OSU	OU	CU	NU	KSU
Sophomores	3	3	7	7	3	4	5	4
Juniors	7	5	5	2	2	4	5	5
Seniors	4	5	3	3	8	4	4	3
Total	14	13	15	12	13	12	14	12

On November 12, 1971, a letter was mailed to each one of the basketball coaches in the Big 8 Conference seeking permission to question their players. A copy of this letter can be found in Appendix B. I was granted permission from all but one of the conference coaches. Four coaches responded with letters (that I have included in the Appendix), two responded with a phone call and another coach gave his permission with a personal visit. The coach who didn't respond to my letter allowed me to question his players when Kansas State played his team.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following are a list of all questions included in the questionnaire and their results.

QUESTION A. Do you enjoy playing basketball? Yes____ No____

There were nine players in the conference who said that they did not enjoy playing basketball. It was interesting to note that seven of these nine were senior players, two were juniors. This was one of the questions put in the questionnaire to arouse or establish interest. Even though this question did not relate directly to the player's work load, it seems almost imperative that if you are playing college basketball, you enjoy doing it. To play and not enjoy it would certainly be a burden even if playing for a scholarship.

QUESTION B. What is your height and weight? ____ft. ____inches
____lbs.

The height of players in the conference ranged from 5 feet 9 inches to 7 feet tall. The average height was 6 feet 4 1/2 inches. This was another one of the questions not directly related to the work load of the players. The heaviest player in the conference played at 6 feet 10 inches and 245 pounds while the lightest player was 6 feet 2 inches and weighed only 160 pounds.

QUESTION C. What is your classification? Soph.____ Junior____
Senior____

The conference had thirty-four seniors, thirty-five juniors, and

thirty-six sophomores. Basketball has been called a game of maturity and it is assumed that a senior should be more adjusted and mature than a junior or a sophomore.

QUESTION D. Do you have a scholarship? Yes___ No___. If you have a scholarship, is it Full___ Half___ Less___?

TABLE II
TYPE OF FINANCIAL AID

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
None	0	0
Full	95	90.5
Half	7	6.7
Less	3	2.8

All of the one hundred and five players had some type of scholarship. Ninety-five had full scholarships, while seven had half scholarships or better. Only three players had less than half scholarship.

QUESTION E. What is your academic major?

There was a great diversity in academic majors of these players. Seven were pre-law majors, thirteen indicated pre-medicine as their majors, and thirty-six were physical education majors. Fifteen were presently in a general curriculum or undecided as to their majors. There were twelve business majors and the remaining twenty-two chose various other fields as their academic major.

QUESTION F. During season how long do you practice? (each day)
1 hour___ 2 hours___ more than 2 hours___

TABLE III
LENGTH OF PRACTICE EACH DAY

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
One hour	0	0
Two hours	33	31.4
More than two hours	72	68.6

It is a conference rule that organized practices should be limited to not more than two hours each day, however over two-thirds of the players indicated that they practiced more than two hours a day.

QUESTION G. Do you feel too tired to study? Never____
Sometimes____ Most of the time____ All of the time____

TABLE IV
ABILITY TO STUDY DURING SEASON

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
Never	0	0
Sometimes	14	13.4
Most of the time	68	64.7
All of the time	23	21.9

The results of this question showed that nearly two-thirds of the players felt too tired to study during season most of the time. This is indicative of the hard work and effort that is put forth in order

to compete in interscholastic basketball today. A number of players also felt that they were always too tired to study.

QUESTION H. Are you provided with tutors if you need them?

Yes ____ No ____.

Those players who replied in the affirmative to the above question were mostly sophomores and juniors. Of the seventy-one sophomores and juniors, sixty-four were provided with tutors when they needed them, however only nine out of thirty-four seniors felt that they could get tutors when necessary. The inability of the younger player to cope with the problems of both academic work and their basketball is apparent, consequently they seem to be provided with tutors more readily than the seniors.

The author might also point out that there's usually less interest shown toward players when they become seniors, especially if they aren't playing a good deal. All coaches should be concerned about whether or not his players graduate. The author feels that every player who misses his classes to participate in intercollegiate competition should be given access to a tutor in the classes he missed.

QUESTION I. Do you feel that you would make better grades if you were not playing basketball? Yes ____ No ____

TABLE V
GRADES VS PLAYING BASKETBALL

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
Yes	98	93
No	7	7

The result of this question was overwhelming although not surprising. Ninety-three percent of the players felt that playing basketball did interfere with their ability to make good grades. Only seven did not feel that they would make better grades had they not been playing basketball.

Since basketball (preparing and participating), does demand many hours a week from a student's schedule, it then becomes easier to understand why many athletes have problems in the classroom.

QUESTION J. Do you have enough time to make up work missed while on trips? Yes _____ No _____

TABLE VI
MAKE-UP WORK

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
Yes	16	15.2
No	89	84.8

Make-up work has to be done usually when these student athletes have the least amount of time. Unless the coach recognizes this and gives the players time off from work (practice), their class work will almost inevitably suffer. The author strongly believes that these student athletes should have a definite time set aside to make up class work that they are to be held responsible for.

QUESTION K. If you are a senior, will you graduate at the end of the semester? Yes _____ No _____ Uncertain _____

TABLE VII
GRADUATING SENIORS

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
Yes	18	54
No	6	17
Uncertain	10	29

Just slightly over half of the seniors in the conference felt that they would graduate at the end of the 1971-72 semester. Over seventeen percent of the seniors indicated that they would not graduate and twenty-nine percent were uncertain.

The author strongly believes that a student's main concern should be to earn his college degree. "The proportion of college athletes who complete their degrees indicate that many of them have been exploited until their eligibility was exhausted and then abandoned by the school which idealized them."¹⁵ Athletics is secondary; coaches and administrators should realize this and act accordingly. Athletics should be a part of the students educational program but many coaches seem to be making education a part of their athletic program. From the Coaches Code, an unknown author once wrote: "My first consideration shall be the welfare of the boys. . . . My objective shall be to make competitive athletics truly a part of the educational program."¹⁶

¹⁵G. Patience Thomas, "The Person of Sport," The Physical Educator, December 1971, p. 171.

¹⁶The Coaches Code, refer to Appendix C.

QUESTION L. Will you be given a fifth year scholarship if you do not finish in four years? Yes_____ No_____

TABLE VIII
FIFTH YEAR SCHOLARSHIPS

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
Yes	33	31.4
No	48	45.7
Uncertain	24	22.9

The book of rules and regulations governing athletics in the Big 8 Conference states that "Athletics grants shall not be awarded for more than one academic year and may be awarded for a lesser period. . . . After completion of the period for which an athletic grant has been awarded, another grant for one year or less may be awarded by the scholarship committee in the usual manner. . . ." ¹⁷ The conference does not specify the number of times that a grant may be renewed, however it is usually customary for scholarship to terminate after four years.

A student athlete after completion of high school generally has five years to complete his college athletic eligibility. There are some exceptions to this rule however. Service in the Armed Forces is

¹⁷ Conference Office, Rules and Regulations Governing Athletics and all Participation of the Big Eight Conference (Mezzanine, Hotel Muehlebach, Kansas City, Missouri), 1971-72.

an exception. Many athletes are "redshirted"* for a year, and thus received financial aid for more than four years.

QUESTION M. Do you feel that you have enough free time for social and family activities? Yes____ No____

QUESTION N. How far do you live from home? Less than 100 miles____ 100-300 miles____ 300-500 miles____ More than 500 miles____

Questions M and N were interrelated and are discussed together. Of the one hundred and five total players, fifty-six or 53 percent, indicated that they did not have enough free time for social and family activities. Fifteen of these players who said that they did not have enough free time for social and family activities lived from three hundred to five hundred miles from the school that they were attending. Thirty-four of these players lived more than five hundred miles away. Of the remaining, five lived from one hundred to three hundred miles from the school and only two lived closer than one hundred miles.

Forty-nine players or 47 percent, felt that they had enough free time for social and family activities. Most of these players (74 percent) lived less than one hundred miles from the school.

The results of this question showed that the distance that these players lived from home was a key factor in determining whether or not they had enough free time for social and family activities.

* A "redshirt" is a student athlete who is enrolled in school but does not compete in interscholastic competition. He gains a year of practice experience and maturity but does not lose any eligibility. Thus he has five years to complete his four years of eligibility.

TABLE IX
DISTANCE FROM HOME (IN MILES)

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
Less than 100	15	14.3
100-300	28	26.6
300-500	23	22.0
More than 500	39	37.1

Over one-third of the conference players lived more than five hundred miles from the school that they attended. The eight schools combined had a total of sixty-eight players from out of state. The conference averaged just over four "in state" players per team.

QUESTION O. Do you have a curfew during season? Yes____ No____
Seventy-six of the players indicated that they did have a curfew during the season. Of the remaining twenty-nine who didn't have a curfew, twenty-three were seniors.

QUESTION P. How many hours of class work do you normally take each semester? _____

The number of hours taken per semester ranged from twelve to nineteen. The average was just over fourteen hours per semester. Seniors tended to carry more hours than did the juniors and sophomores.

QUESTION Q. What is your grade point average? 2.0 or under____
More than 2.0 but less than 3.0____ 3.0 or above____

TABLE X
GRADE POINT AVERAGE

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
2.0 or under	9	8.6
More than 2.0 but less than 3.0	78	74.3
3.0 or above	18	17.1

The results of this question showed that more than two-thirds of the players' average range is between a "B" and "C".

During the two semesters immediately previous to the semester in which participation is to occur, a student must pass at least 24 semester credit hours, or 36 quarter credit hours with a grade-point average (based on all work in which a grade is received) of not less than 1.80, except that a student who, at the time of certification, has 60 hours or less total semester credits or 90 hours or less total quarter credits, including accepted transfer credits, may become eligible by completing at least 24 semester hours, or 36 quarter hours with a grade-point average of not less than 1.60, and provided, further, that a student with a cumulative grade-point average 2. or better for work completed at the certifying institution shall be eligible in any event providing that he has passed 24 hours the two preceding semesters or 36 quarter hours the three preceding quarters. Credit given as the result of advanced standing examinations may not be used to meet the required 24 or 36 hours.¹⁸

QUESTION R. Are you married? Yes___ No___

The conference had nine married players. Five married players were seniors, three were juniors and one married player was a sophomore.

A second portion was added to question "R" which stated: If married, do you have any children? Yes___ No___. Four of the

¹⁸Conference Office, loc. cit.

married players answered yes to this question. Two indicated that they were expecting a child.

QUESTION S. What is the biggest problem that you are confronted with due to the fact that you are playing major college basketball? The results of this question showed a number of answers. The author has presented the three most common answers in the table below. The rules and restriction replies included several answers that were not listed. Dress code, hair, curfew, and even girls, were mentioned by some of the players in describing their problems.

TABLE XI
BIGGEST PROBLEM BECAUSE OF PLAYING BASKETBALL

REPLY	NUMBER OF PLAYERS	PERCENT
Rules, Restrictions, etcetera	42	40.0
School Work and Studying	34	32.4
Practicing	18	17.1
Other	11	10.5

QUESTION T. Approximately how many hours a week do you average participating, practicing, and preparing for basketball? The results of this question were interesting. The number of hours ranged from fourteen to twenty-three hours per week.

The reader should keep in mind that practicing, preparing and participating in basketball included such things as traveling, film watching, pre-game meals, pep talks, etcetera, as well as scheduled practices and games.

QUESTION U. Do you have a desire to play professional basketball? Yes____ No____

Eighty-two of the one hundred and five players (over 75 percent) indicated that they had a desire to play professional basketball.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

It was the purpose of this study (1) to present the opinions of athletes (basketball players) concerning their participation in the sport while also pursuing a college degree; (2) to draw attention to the issue of freshmen being allowed to participate in intercollegiate basketball at the varsity level; and (3) to show some of the problems that the student-athlete is confronted with.

One hundred and five varsity basketball players from the 1971-72 Big 8 Conference served as subjects for this investigation.

A questionnaire was given to some of the players during December at the Big 8 Tournament, and others were administered during the months of January and February when the teams played at Kansas State. The questionnaire was two pages in length with mostly "yes" and "no" responses. There were a few short answer questions.

Certain objectives were investigated, including, (1) type of financial aid; (2) length of practice each day; (3) ability to study during season; (4) grades; (5) make-up work; (6) graduating seniors; (7) fifth year scholarships; (8) distance from home; (9) grade point average; and (10) problems because of playing basketball.

Students who participate in major college basketball have a two-fold problem--that of "making the grade" as a student and athlete.

There has been increased emphasis on education and "big time basketball." This demands a lot of the student's time and energy. "The justification for including athletics in schools and colleges is its educational value to the total school program and if negative aspects of the athletic system obstruct progress toward educational goals, reform is necessary."¹⁹

Bill Bradley, a basketball star of the New York Knickerbockers summed up many feelings when he said:

We were kind of taken in . . . it was like playing cards with a rigged deck . . . I'm very much against this whole thing now, recruitment, scholarships, letters of intent. It's organized for adult men to manipulate 18-year-olds to come to a university and provide it with a winning team, some money, and fame. Now that doesn't often lead to a situation where an athlete can develop his talent against good competition and still be a serious student. There has to be another way, because the extremes are to either break down all sports to intramurals or admit there is a professional class of athletes in college whose role includes providing vicarious excitement for the rest of the student body.²⁰

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the responses obtained within the limitations of this study, the following conclusions appear to be warranted:

1. Over 91% of college basketball players do enjoy playing.
2. All major college varsity basketball players do receive some type of scholarship. Over 90% of the players receive a full scholarship.

¹⁹ Bernard Pollock, "The Athletic Scene," Journal of Physical Education, 2:34, November-December, 1970.

²⁰ New York Times, January 17, 1970, p. 36.

3. Two-thirds of the players practice more than two hours a day.

4. Basketball players generally feel too tired to study during season.

5. Seniors find it more difficult than sophomores and juniors to be provided tutors when they need them.

6. Most basketball players (93%) feel that they would make better grades if they were not playing basketball.

7. Basketball players do not have enough free time for social and family activities.

8. Seniors generally do not have a curfew.

9. The average basketball player carries approximately 15 hours per semester. The average grade of basketball players is a "C".

10. The biggest problem of basketball players involves rules and restrictions.

11. The average basketball player spends almost one day per week (23 hours) practicing, participating and preparing for basketball.

12. Most basketball players do have a desire to play professional basketball.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the information gathered from this study and his familiarity with Big 8 Conference athletics, the author would advocate the following recommendations for consideration.

1. A limit on the number of scholarships a university may offer to "out of state" students.

2. A re-evaluation of the coaches' policies toward practices-- that organized practices be limited to not more than two hours a day as the rule states.

3. Fifth year scholarships be given to below average student-athletes who don't finish in four years.

4. All students who miss class work because of preparing and participating in basketball should be provided with tutors if they need them.

5. Prohibit freshman students from participation in intercollegiate athletics until they have proven themselves in the "college" classroom.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Please answer all questions to the best of your knowledge.)

Do you enjoy playing basketball? Yes _____ No _____

What is your height and weight? _____ ft. _____ inches _____ lbs.

What is your classification? Soph. _____ Junior _____ Senior _____

Do you have a scholarship? Yes _____ No _____

If you have a scholarship, it is Full _____ Half _____ Less _____

What is your academic major? _____

During the season how long do you practice each day?

1 hour _____ 2 hours _____ More than 2 hours _____

Do you feel too tired to study? Never _____ Sometimes _____

Most of the time _____ All of the time _____

Are you provided with tutors if you need them? Yes _____ No _____

Do you feel that you would make better grades if you were not playing basketball? Yes _____ No _____

Do you have enough time to make up work missed while on trips?

Yes _____ No _____

If you are a senior, will you graduate at the end of next semester?

Yes _____ No _____ Uncertain _____

Will you be given a fifth year scholarship if you do not finish in four years? Yes _____ No _____

Do you feel that you have enough free time for social and family activities? Yes _____ No _____

How far do you live from home? Less than 100 miles _____

100-300 miles _____ 300-500 miles _____ More than 500 miles _____

Do you have a curfew during season? Yes _____ No _____

How many hours of class work do you normally take each semester? _____

What is your average grade point average? 2.0 or under _____

More than 2.0 but less than 3.0 _____ 3.0 or above _____

Are you married? Yes _____ No _____

If married, do you have any children? Yes _____ No _____

What is the biggest problem that you are confronted with due to the fact that you are playing major college basketball?

Approximately how many hours a week do you average participating, practicing, and preparing for basketball?

Do you have a desire to play professional basketball?

Yes _____ No _____

APPENDIX B

letter also to:

November 12, 1971

Norm Stewart
Sox Walseth
Sam Aubrey
John MacLeod
Ted Owen
Maury John
Joe Cipriano

Mr. Norm Stewart
Basketball Coach
University of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri 65201

Dear Coach Stewart:

I am presently finishing my work towards a Master's Degree here at Kansas State. Sometime during the Big Eight Tournament in Kansas City this year, I would like to have your players fill out a short questionnaire to obtain some data for my Master's Report. I realize that your schedule will be tight but the questionnaire is relatively simple and short.

Your cooperation concerning this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dave Lawrence
Graduate Assistant Basketball Coach

DL/rb

APPENDIX C

THE COACHES CODE

My first consideration shall be the welfare of the boys. My leadership shall be wholesome and contribute to cleaner living, better health habits and a true respect for the rules of play, authority of officials and consideration of not only the opponent but also all with whom contact is had.

My objective shall be to make competitive athletics truly a part of the educational program.

My personal conduct on the field, in the school and out, shall be such as to be truly worthy of imitation by the boys whose welfare is my job.

My relationship with the players, fellow coaches, teachers and school authorities shall be such as to develop mutual respect and confidence.

My objective shall be to win, if possible, to lose, if necessary, but at all times to have the conduct of all contribute to a fuller understanding and a keener appreciation of fair play.

I shall teach that Good Sportsmanship is Good Citizenship and as such is essential to individuals, communities, state and nation.

--Unknown

KSHSAA
6-3-69

A STUDY OF THE 1971-72 BIG 8 CONFERENCE VARSITY BASKETBALL
PLAYER'S OPINIONS CONCERNING THEIR WORK LOAD
WHILE PURSUING A COLLEGE DEGREE

by

DAVID LAWRENCE

B.S., Kansas State University, 1970

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Physical Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1972

This study was an attempt to investigate and present the opinion of student-athletes who participated in Big 8 Conference Basketball during the year 1970-71. A two page questionnaire concerning their work load and various aspects of their program was given to a total of one hundred and five basketball players from the eight universities in the conference.

In an effort to gather the opinions of these basketball players concerning their work load while pursuing a college degree, certain objectives were investigated.

The classification of the players--the conference had thirty-four seniors, thirty-five juniors and thirty-six sophomores.

The type of financial aid received--all players received some type of scholarship. Only 2.8% received less than half a scholarship, while 6.7% received half a scholarship and 90.5% of players had a full scholarship.

In regard to the length of practice each day 34.4% indicated that they had two hour practice while 68.6% said that they practiced more than two hours.

When asked about their ability to study during season, 64.7% said that most of the time they felt too tired to study.

Seniors seemed to find it more difficult than sophomores and juniors to be provided with tutors when they needed them.

An overwhelming 93% of the players felt that they would make better grades if they were not playing basketball. More than 84% indicated that they did not have time to make up work missed while on trips.

In regard to the seniors in the conference, 29% did not know if they would graduate at the end of the semester. More than 17% said "no," they would not graduate at the end of the semester.

Over 45% of the players said that they would not be given a fifth year scholarship if they did not finish in four years. Nearly 23% were uncertain as to whether they would be given a fifth year scholarship.

Over 37% of the players in the conference lived more than five hundred miles away from home. Only 14.3% of the players lived less than one hundred miles away. More than 87% of these players who lived over five hundred miles from home, indicated that they did not have enough free time for social and family activities.

Most of the seniors indicated that they did not have a curfew.

The average number of hours taken per semester was approximately fifteen. More than 74% had a grade point average of more than 2.0 but less than 3.0.

The conference had nine married players. Four of the players had children and two indicated that they were expecting a child.

When asked "What is the biggest problem that you are confronted with due to the fact that you are playing major college basketball," 40% of the responses fell in the rules and restriction category. Over 32% said that school work and studying was their biggest problem.

In regard to the number of hours spent practicing, participating, and preparing for basketball, responses ranged from fourteen to twenty-nine hours per week. The average was twenty-three.