

A STUDY OF THE EFFECT OF THE 30-SECOND CLOCK
ON TOTAL NUMBER OF SHOTS TAKEN AND THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN SHOTS TAKEN AND POINT DIFFERENCE

by

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the invention of basketball by Dr. James Naismith in 1891 new ideas for the betterment of the game have come and gone. Rules have increased in number and are constantly changing to keep up with the game's fast moving pace. Fundamental principles are essentially the same now as when Naismith proposed them. Many of the rules governing the application of those principles have undergone extensive amplification and modification during the process of evolution from the crude beginning to the present polished, spectacular, and most popular of all team games.¹

Several people had a great influence on Naismith during the formative years. One man in particular, Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick, confronted Naismith to discuss the construction of a set of rules and changes. With his help the first rule changes were reviewed in 1893. Not until January 1, 1894, did the first official rule book, a Spalding Official Guide, become published and made available to the public.

The thirteen original rules, as drawn up by Naismith together with certain advice from interested parties, were published by the Triangle, the school newspaper of Springfield College, on January 15, 1892. These rules dealt with advancing the ball and fouls.

Many rules were put into effect several years later. The dribble rule, for example, underwent several changes. In 1898 the

dribbler could use only one hand, but in 1899 the dribbler could alternate hands. From 1901 to 1908 the dribbler couldn't shoot. Over 100 rule changes have made appearances in rule books since the game became popular in the early 1890's.

Understandably the rule changes are too vast to list. One means of evaluating these rules is by the success of the game. Obviously the rules are a positive factor and a definite benefit to the entire game. Even today college basketball has concerned itself with improving and enhancing the game. One isolated example of a rule change is the 30-second clock. The 30-second clock is a relatively new experiment and has been tried on a limited basis.

Only a small percentage of schools have actually tried the 30-second clock, thus the data is limited. Accurately assessing complete advantages or disadvantages is difficult for that reason.

The Atlantic Coast Conference has talked of the 30-second clock. This conference, rich in basketball tradition, is pondering the adoption of a 30-second clock. One reason for the possible change is the boredom associated with watching and playing against the "four corners" delay game.

"The more I see of the four corner, the more I see a rule change. I'd definitely like to see a 30-second clock," commented North Carolina State basketball coach Norm Sloan. "The four corner reminds me of a bean bag game on the playground."

Reasons for implementing the 30-second clock may vary. Some feel that the 30-second clock will keep the game more exciting, both for

the player and the spectator, by forcing both teams to shoot the ball more often. Others feel it can be used as an equalizer as the team with a considerable height advantage will be forced to cater more to the smaller man's game. The team with a sizeable height advantage will exploit a smaller team's weakness which is rebounding. On the other hand a smaller team will try to wear down or tire the taller foe by fast-breaking. Whatever the reason or reasons for employing the 30-second clock the fact remains it is one topic of consideration.

In 1972 the Big Eight Conference initiated the use of the 30-second clock on all conference basketball games. A five-year study was conducted from 1971-1976 to see if the 30-second clock affected team scoring averages.

Many coaches feel the need for improving the game of basketball. The enactment of the 30-second clock is just one possible method of upgrading the sport.

No published material on the 30-second clock is available. All information pertaining to this study was taken directly from the Big Eight home varsity basketball games involving Kansas State University.

The data provided by the Big Eight Conference along with the data acquired from other sources will show the significance of the 30-second clock.