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Evolution of Basketball as a game

In the start of December 1891, Dr. James Naismith who was a physical education professor and a coach at the Young Men’s Christian association training school, he was experimenting as to how he can keep the class of Gymnasium active on a rainy day. The long winters compelled him to introduce an indoor game for his students. There were many ideas presented to him to be implemented but he rejected most of them because they were not suited to the walled gymnasium. He then put a basket that was 10 feet high and was placed on an elevated track. This basket had no opened bottom and balls had to be manually taken out of these baskets once some scores had been made. In the beginning, a soccer ball was used by Basketball players to play. The initial color of the ball was brown but in the late 1950’s, Tony Hinkle introduced an orange ball so that it will be better sighted by the players as well as by the spectators. There was no dribbling allowed in the start and the bounced pass to team mates was the only exception to this. When dribbling was initially introduced, the irregular ball shape created certain problems for the players. When the ball shape was improved by the manufacturers, dribbling became an important part of the game.

Until 1906, peach baskets were continued to be used and they were replaced with metal hoops having backboards attached to them. These hoops were not closed from the bottom and there was just enough room for the ball to pass through. A point was allotted to the team who put the ball in the basket and team scoring the maximum points will win the match. The baskets were originally placed in the spectator’s balcony but problems arose as spectators started to interfere with the shots and game. The back boards were introduced to avoid any interference from the spectators. This addition also allowed the players to have rebound shots from the board. Initial rules for this game were taken from a kid’s game named Duck on Rock. The first official game was played on January 20, 1892 having nine players. By the year 1897, there was a standard of having five members in a team.

The game travelled to all branches of the college throughout the country. By 1895, there were many colleges where the game was played. The college that invented the game started to discourage it because there were many instances where rough play and rowdy crowds created problems. Two associations namely the Amateur Athletic Union and Intercollegiate Athletic Association took the control of game rules and in 1898, the National Basketball League was formed as the first professional league but it only lasted for five years.

The first team to represent a college was fielded in the year 1899 at Pittsburgh Geneva College by C.O.Beamis. Gradually the game started entering the universities with University of Kentucky and University of Kansas were the first ones to have their own teams. The first intercollegiate match was played on February 9, 1895 with both teams having five players each. In the year 1901, there were a large number of universities which started supporting men’s game of basketball. The first basketball game in Canada was played on February 6, 1904 when McGill’s university visited queen’s University. There was a considerable turnout of the spectators who watched the game. The first national tournament was held in the year 1937 while the first tournament for the college teams was held in the year 1938.

The high schools were far smaller in the past as compared to their sizes now a days. In the beginning of the 20th century, basketball became the most liked and followed game in schools because of its minimum equipment and personnel requirements. During the 1920’s, Indiana Franklin’s wonder five was the team that was very popular across the country. Today, there is a basketball team for every high school in the United States and they also participate in the national competition. The states of Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky were the most devoted when it comes to playing basketball. The national championship for schools lasted from the year 1917 to 1930. Another tournament named The National Catholic Interscholastic Basketball Tournament was underway from 1924 to 1941 at Loyola University.

There was no proper professional organization to represent the professional basketball players. The Basketball Association of America was formed in the year 1946. The first professional game was played on November 1, 1946. In 1949, the BAA joined hands with the National Basketball League to form the National Basketball Association (NBA). In 1997, the NBA backed women’s association started working as WNBA. Several national level popular players have taken part in the tournaments organized by the WNBA. By the 1950’s basketball had emerged as a major sport for colleges. In 1959, there was a hall of fame formed for the game that included the names of famous coaches and players.

The federation for international basketball was formed in the year 1932 by eight initial members. In 1936, men’s Basketball was included to the summer Olympics for the first time. Women’s game was added to the Olympics in the year 1936. There are a large number of nationalities represented in the NB every year. The trend of International players taking part in the NBA started in the 1990’s.

# **Work Cited**

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