

Colorado Springs, Aug. 3rd, 1901

To the Athletic Maidens of a Century Hence:

It gives me great pleasure to thus acquaint you with our way of playing the game of Basket Ball, and I thrust you will consider it as a duty devolving upon you to revive an interest in it even as we have done toward the old Olympic games, for we can guarantee to you, from our own experience, a lot of happy hours in its pursuit.

[little drawing]

The above is a diagram of the field; the teams are composed of six players each, two centers, two guards and two goal-throwers. One team I have represented by X and the other by O, showing the respective position of each team at the beginning of a game. The ball used is a pig-skin one, inflated with air, about 10 inches in diameter.

The field is generally from fifty to seventy-five feet long, and at the ends of each, or rather, at the middle of each end, baskets are suspended from ten-foot poles. The ball is thrown in at the center from the side by the referee and the object is by successful passes from one player to another to get the ball in a convenient place for a try for goal. The field is marked off into sections as indicated and no player can overstep her boundaries. The violation of this rule is a foul, and as a penalty to the guilty team, the opposing gets a free throw for goal from a ten-foot line – that is with no one opposing. Every successful throw for basket counts two, except in case of a free throw allowed as a penalty for making a foul, which counts one. In case a throw from a foul does not go into the basket, the ball is immediately in play again. After every basket or successful throw, the ball must be thrown into the center again by the referee. The following are also held as fouls; rough playing, knocking ball out of another's hands, talking to officials, running or stepping with ball, or holding longer than five seconds. The game is usually played in halves of twenty minutes each, with five minutes intermission. The officials are the referee, who puts the ball into play, an empire for each side to call fouls against the opposite side, time-keeper and score-keeper. The players are not allowed to talk. Each team has its captain and these are the only ones to whom this privilege is given. They also have the power of calling fouls. Players can be ruled from the field by the umpire for rough playing or unseemly conduct of any sort, but I am sure in your enlightened day and age, such a rule is superfluous.

Trusting I have been explicit enough and yet have not wearied you, I am
Your humble servant,
Lillian May Johnson
Member Colorado College Basket-Ball
Team 1896- 1900