

READING



The Invention of Basketball

Millions of people love the sport of basketball in the United States and around the world, but few people stop to think about who invented it, why, where and when. James Naismith invented the game. He was born in 1861 in Ontario, Canada and he loved to play sports in school. After he grew up, he became a sports education teacher before he moved to the state of Massachusetts in the U.S. He invented basketball for two reasons. First, he wanted his students to have an indoor activity they could play during the winter months when it was too cold to play outside. Second, he believed that basketball was safer than football.

The very first game of basketball was played on December 21, 1891 when James asked his college class to play a new kind of game that he invented. Some of his students weren't very excited about this strange new sport, but they played anyway. After the game, someone suggested that the new game should be called the "Naismith Game", but James Naismith decided to call it "Basket Ball" (which later became "basketball"). There were some differences between the first games and the games we watch today. For example, there are now fewer players on a team (five instead of nine). Also, the first games were played with soccer balls – the first real "basketball" was only invented several years later.

Basketball later became an international sport as it became popular in Europe after the First World War, and then in China, India, Japan and many other countries.

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Tick the statements that are true.

1. The article is about the life of the inventor of basketball, James Naismith.
2. James Naismith was born in Massachusetts, in the United States.
3. The very first game of basketball was played in the winter.
4. James Naismith's students asked to play the first basketball game.
5. Some people wanted to call basketball the "Naismith Game".
6. The first basketball teams each had nine players.