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**The influence of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic  
Association on the development of girls' basketball in Tennessee,  
1925–1993**

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The Influence of the  
Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association  
On the Development of  
Girls' Basketball in Tennessee  
1925-1993

by  
Prater Lee Powell

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study was to examine the important events, decisions, trends, influences, and problems that were factors in the deliberations of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) as girls' basketball became prominent in Tennessee.

This study was designed to include a review of available records and data of the TSSAA. Major emphasis was placed upon the historical development of rules, regulations, and changes that have affected girls' basketball in Tennessee. The study presents information and evidence from individuals, agencies, publications, and related material that in any way had an effect upon the development of the TSSAA and girls' basketball. It was the intent of this study to present information from the time of the organization of girls' basketball and the TSSAA through 1993. The study also

attempted to trace the records and available data from the time which actually preceded the inception of the TSSAA until 1993.

When Dr. James Naismith invented the game of basketball in 1891, the thirteen rules he developed were intended for play by men. By 1899, the first rules which were designed to eliminate various rough and inappropriate features of the men's game were written for women to accommodate their athletic abilities.

Prior to 1925, there were no standards or regulations for interscholastic athletics in Tennessee. A group of high school principals, meeting at the state teachers meeting, formed an organization to stimulate and regulate athletic relations. This organization is now known as the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association.

Through the guidance of the TSSAA, rules and regulations governing such items as eligibility standards, academic standards, modification of rules for girls' play, tournament formats, and classification systems have been developed and enforced.

The influence and guidance of the TSSAA has certainly created one of the stronger girls' basketball programs in the United States through national rankings of not only high school teams and coaches, but also at the college level. Through sound leadership of school administrators, coaches,

Prater Lee Powell

and state officials, Tennessee had gained national prominence in the area of interscholastic athletics.

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To Mom, Dad, and Odie--I love you, too.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The origins of most sports are lost in time. Either they evolved from some everyday activity like running or jumping and needed only to have the rules formalized, or they traced their beginnings to some earlier, less organized game. Unlike those sports, the birth of basketball can be pinpointed with total accuracy.

The time was autumn, 1891, the place was Springfield, Massachusetts, and the inventor was Dr. James Naismith. Dr. Naismith was asked to develop an activity for men at the International Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Training School, which today is Springfield College. The "new game" had thirteen rules and was called Basket Ball.

Although women were not a part of Dr. Naismith's plan, they quickly saw the value of the "new game." The development of women's basketball rapidly led to misinterpretations and misunderstandings of the rules creating confusion across the nation due to rule modifications needed for the feminine players.

Different sections of the country, as well as different sanctioning groups, made rule modifications to comply with their philosophy of the value of the game of basketball. In Tennessee, a group of men and women, primarily educators,

developed an organization known as the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, commonly known as the TSSAA. This organization was to oversee and govern interscholastic athletes at the secondary level, grades seven through twelve. The progress and growth of this organization have influenced interscholastic athletic activities, particularly girls' basketball.

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the important events, decisions, trends, influences, and problems that were factors in the deliberations of the TSSAA as girls' basketball became prominent in Tennessee.

#### Significance of the Study

The records and data of the TSSAA, as they are generally written, encompass information from all sports under the direction of the organization. The author was interested in examining records and data pertaining to basketball and, in particular, girls' basketball in Tennessee.

The author sought to compile records of the TSSAA into a document so that historical data and the development of girls' basketball in Tennessee could be better perceived and understood.

The study provides a compilation and analysis of important events, decisions, influences, and problems that the TSSAA has undergone in developing girls' basketball in Tennessee since its inception. The study includes the historical facts for the period of time the TSSAA was organized through 1993.

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms and acronyms are defined as they are used in this study:

Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA).

An organization that was begun in April, 1925, to stimulate and regulate athletic relations among Tennessee secondary (senior and junior) schools. This, also, was the title of a publication by the TSSAA from 1932 until 1939.

Board of Control. The Board of Control has general control over state athletics, delegates authority to the Executive Secretary, authorizes expenditure of money, and acts as the final court of appeals. The board is composed of nine members.

Legislative Council. The Legislative Council takes suggestions from annual open regional meetings and makes necessary amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws. The council is composed of nine members.

TSSAA News. This is the present official news bulletin of the TSSAA.

The National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations. A national organization established to protect the interest of high school athletics on an interstate basis and to coordinate various activities of state high school athletic associations.

Interscholastic Sports. A program of activities involving organized competitive play between two or more secondary schools.

The Tennessee High School Athlete. The publication of the TSSAA from 1939 to 1945.

Executive Secretary. Ex-officio member who serves as secretary at Council and Board meetings, handles money, maintains records, conducts investigations, and renders decisions of the TSSAA. This title was later changed to Executive Director.

#### Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to the relationship of the TSSAA and the influence the organization has had on girls' basketball in Tennessee.

This study was conducted primarily from available documents obtained through the office of the TSSAA and newspaper media coverage.

Related areas were presented with respect to individuals, teams, and data which had developed on the state level.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Selected Literature

The review of related literature found no research which specifically dealt with the history of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association or an historical study which specifically dealt with girls' basketball in Tennessee, despite the fact that both have been in existence for over a half century. This study documented the research on the history of both the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association and girls' basketball in Tennessee with respect to the relationship each had upon the other.

A review of available literature revealed that the present study does not duplicate any previous investigation. However, literature and studies were found that relate to historical data about the game of basketball and athletic organizations related to girls. A search of the literature also revealed early accounts of physical education professionals and organizations which dealt with problems created by competitive interscholastic athletics among girls and women.

Basketball is truly the "all-American game." When Dr. James Naismith invented the game of basketball in 1891 to fulfill an assignment at the International YMCA Training School at Springfield, Massachusetts, he originally designed

the game for boys with thirteen simple rules. (See Appendix A)

Scott points out that "although the game of basketball was developed primarily for men, it at once became apparent that the sport had possibilities for participation by women."<sup>1</sup> As early as 1901, a committee of prominent women physical education teachers met and formulated a set of rules for women based on the official men's rules but with modifications that were desirable to insure the health and safety of girls and women. Scott also stated, "The modifications were designed to eliminate various rough and inappropriate features."<sup>2</sup>

Downing, in an historical review of athletic organizations which influenced women's basketball in the United States wrote, "Basketball for women was lauded by physical education directors as a team sport which met most of the needs of the young women and girls at the turn of the century."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Harry A. Scott, Competitive Sports in Schools and Colleges (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), 443.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Ruth Downing, "Women's Basketball: An Historical Review of Selected Athletic Organizations Which Influenced Its Ascension Toward Advanced Competition In The United States" (Ph. D. Dissertation, Texas Woman's University, 1973), 35.

In the opinion of some leaders involved at the time, the rules as originally written by Naismith for his men's teams soon proved to possess undesirable characteristics for women. During those early days of basketball, the women attempted to use the same number of players and court divisions as the men. After a short period of time, they realized that their conditioning programs were not adequate to allow women to participate in the full court nine-player game. According to Ms. Downing, "The first major modification for women was a division of the playing court into three equal parts with three players from each team restricted to their particular court area."<sup>4</sup>

Downing's study described the establishment of the game of basketball and the problems associated with trying to modify the original rules, which were designed for men, to meet the physiological and psychological limitations of the female. Downing also cited other problems such as playing attire, male coaches and their "win-at-all-cost," and the apparent disregard for the health and safety of the women.

The presumed physiological and emotional disposition of women during the early days of basketball were instrumental factors in the creation of numerous sets of modified rules which rapidly appeared and thereby presented problems for

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 47.

those who conducted the new activity. An article in Harper's Bazaar in 1900 maintained, "College directors of physical education began to establish modified rules for their own particular institution and thereby created an impossible situation from the standpoint of interschool competition."<sup>5</sup>

In March, 1921, the National Athletic Conference for American College Women met at Indiana University in Bloomington. Even though the purpose of the conference was to upgrade and promote an acceptable and unified athletic program on college campuses, a debate took place between delegates from Ohio State University and Oberlin College regarding the question of whether the National Athletic Conference for American College Women would abide by Spaulding's Official Rules for Women or by modified boys' rules. A vote taken at the termination of the debate revealed that forty-two colleges out of the fifty-four represented played by the Spaulding's Women's Rules. Consequently, Spaulding's Rules became the official rules governing women's basketball.

The question of good and bad influences on girls' interscholastic athletics has been studied by several persons and organizations. A study by Montgomery completed at New York University reiterated the fact that many organizations

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<sup>5</sup> J. Parmly Paret, "Basket-Ball for Young Women," Harper's Bazaar, 20 Oct. 1900, 1563.

have been established to influence the conduct and playing conditions of girls' interscholastic athletics. Montgomery selected ten national organizations which were concerned with interscholastic athletics for girls in order to decide on principals and procedures for conducting activities associated with girls' athletics.. A thirty-three member committee from these ten organizations made the following recommendations:

1. Medical examinations for participants.
2. Emphasis on participation rather than winning.
3. Physical training rather than straining.
4. Provision for awards and finance.
5. Abolishment of state and national tournaments.
6. More sports days, play days, and intramurals.
7. Establishment of a public relations program.
8. Provision of transportation for participants.
9. Emphasis on character development rather than championship.
10. Adequately trained officials.<sup>6</sup>

One group in Montgomery's study that was very instrumental in influencing the conduct of athletics for girls was the Women's Division of the National Amateur

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<sup>6</sup> Katherine Montgomery, "Principles and Procedures in the conduct of Interscholastic Athletics for Adolescent Girls" (Ed. D. Dissertation, New York University, 1941), 125.

Athletic Federation. This organization was founded in 1923 "as a private agency to establish standards and policies for the purpose of providing wide opportunities for wholesome play under trained women leaders."<sup>7</sup> The Woman's Division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation merged with the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation in 1940.

Another group, now known as the National Association for Girls' and Women's Sports, has greatly influenced beliefs and practices of today. Their aim was to promote a wholesome athletic program for all girls and women. Even though this group was organized in 1907 as a women's rules committee, it was officially designated in 1916 as the Women's Athletic Committee of The American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. This group was composed of professional women in physical education. The value of meeting the physical, sociological, psychological, and other needs of those who desire to participate was stressed by this group.

The social and educational upheaval which followed World War I created many problems for physical education, not the least of which was how best to direct and control the rapidly expanding and unsound program of competitive basketball for

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<sup>7</sup> Laurentine B. Collins, "Standards for Athletics in Women," Research Quarterly 8 (May 1937): 51.

girls and women. In 1925, the Committee on Athletics of the National Association of Secondary School Principals recommended that the National Association of Secondary School Principals "throw the weight of its influence against interscholastic athletics among girls and that wherever possible state athletic associations be induced to legislate against them."<sup>8</sup>

Lee contended, "since basketball was the sport used most frequently in girls' interscholastic competition, it also violated basic educational principles."<sup>9</sup> Among the most important were:

1. It produces both physical and emotional strain which is harmful to the girl.
2. It causes girls to neglect their studies and other important extracurricular activities.
3. It is frequently accompanied by rowdyism rather than by cultural influences.
4. It brings undesirable publicity to girls.
5. It leads to a distorted conception of the values of athletics.
6. Intense competition seriously curtails the girls' freedom to pursue a normal life.

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<sup>8</sup> Scott, op. cit., 445.

<sup>9</sup> Mabel Lee, The Conduct of Physical Education (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1937), 435-436.

Lee also presents opinions of medical people concerning the anatomical and physiological differences between boys and girls which should influence competitive play. She quotes Dr. J. Anna Norris of the University of Minnesota as maintaining that "physical activities which make heavy demands upon organic vitality are not suitable for the rank and file of girls and that the dangers from collision, violent contact, and falling are more serious for the girl than for the boy."<sup>10</sup>

In 1916, the Illinois High School Athletic Association established a rule that stated "no school belonging to this association shall permit girls to participate in interscholastic athletic contests."<sup>11</sup> However, the rule was later amended which permitted contests in golf, archery, and tennis provided they were conducted under rules of the Illinois League of High School Girls' Athletic Association.

In 1917, a committee was appointed to investigate the physical education needs of high school girls in Illinois. It was not until 1919 that the constitution of the Illinois League of High School Girls' Athletic Association was adopted and the new organization was initiated. The purpose of the

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 437.

<sup>11</sup> Charles W. Whitten, Interscholastics-A Discussion of Interscholastic Contests (Chicago: Illinois High School Association, 1950), 119.

new organization was to develop a program of health and recreation for high school girls with no ambitions of entering into interscholastic athletic contests.

In January, 1953, a meeting was held in Kansas City, Kansas, in an attempt to set up one basketball code (rules) for girls and women. The two primary groups meeting were the National Association for Girls' and Women's Sports and the Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee. Also present were representatives from the National Federation of Secondary Schools Athletic Association, Women's National Officials Rating Committee, and the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. This meeting "climaxed numerous attempts by the National Association for Girls' and Women's Sports and executive secretaries of state high school athletic associations to submit some workable, feasible play acceptable to both groups. No satisfactory understanding or agreement was reached on rules and policies for girls."<sup>12</sup>

Jacobs analyzed Tennessee's interscholastic basketball program for girls. In her study, Jacobs cited six major objectives:

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<sup>12</sup> Jean Gillis Jacobs, "A Study of High School Girls' Interscholastic Basketball in Tennessee" (Ed. D. Dissertation, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1956), 33.

1. To present an overview of the national situation in regard to interscholastic basketball for girls.
2. To present the conditions under which girls' interscholastic basketball is conducted in Tennessee.
3. To ascertain the legal aspects and allocation of authority pertaining to basketball on state and local levels.
4. To determine the position of teacher-training institutions of Tennessee in regard to (a) rules used in training officials, and (b) sources of qualified women coaches available for high school coaching positions.
5. To present a comparison of the two sets of rules used within the state by secondary schools and colleges.
6. To recommend a course of action for the improvement of interscholastic basketball for girls.

Jacobs cited several factors which led to undesirable situations that existed in girls' basketball in Tennessee. Among those factors were: "(a) overemphasis on basketball, (b) insufficient number of qualified officials, (c) limited availability of women officials, (d) problems of providing transportation, (e) cost of employing officials for girls' games played as counterpart to boys' contests, and (e) the difficulty arising from having to referee by two different sets of rules."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 3.

Jacobs also discussed a meeting in 1952 that drew the attention of the National Consultant of Physical Education and Girls and Women's Sports. Through correspondence with Tennessee's Commissioner of Education, several attempts were made to schedule a conference to discuss problems related to interscholastic athletics in the state. The purpose of the meeting and invitations were issued to the following key figures in the state: the Commissioner of Education; the Executive Secretary, Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association; the State Representative, National Association for Girls' and Women's Sports; the President, Tennessee Association for Health and Physical Education; the Tennessee Director of Health and Physical Education; and the National Consultant from the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation.

All conference plans were brought to a complete standstill when the Director of Health and Physical Education responded that he was unaware of any problems in girls' interscholastic basketball in Tennessee. He expressed a willingness to cooperate if informed of the magnitude of the problem with the understanding that he would notify the consultant if her services were needed.

According to Jacobs, "only by a definite, concentrated effort to bring about changes in present practices will the

best interests of the girls who participate in interscholastic basketball be assured."<sup>14</sup>

As Downing put it, "throughout the early years of its development, basketball for women caused volcanic reactions among physical educators who were concerned with the problems of participation for the few or for the masses, men's rules versus women's rules, physical and emotional overexertions, and acceptable costuming for the activity."<sup>15</sup>

American women have gained greater latitude in social freedoms within the last few decades; with this new freedom, their involvement in competitive sports, in general, and basketball, in particular, has increased far beyond the expectations of early leaders in women's sports.

As the game of basketball for girls became more popular, misinterpretations and misunderstanding of the rules led to confusion across the nation. Neal wrote, "Naturally, modifications had to be made for the feminine players. At this point, the rule-makers' headaches started and have continued to the present day."<sup>16</sup>

In summary it would appear that a statement by Lambert describing the development of girls' basketball not only in

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>15</sup> Downing, op. cit., 2.

<sup>16</sup> Patsy Neal, Basketball Techniques for Women (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1966), 7.

Tennessee, but throughout the United States is appropriate. Lambert states, "Basketball for women began in a state of controversy and its status has remained unchanged throughout its history."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Charlotte Lambert, "Pros and Cons of Intercollegiate Athletic Competition for Women: A Middle of the Road Position Paper," Journal of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation 15 (May 1969): 75.

### Chapter 3

#### Methods and Procedures

This study was designed to include a review of available records and data of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. Attempts were made to identify significant events and proceedings that influenced girls' basketball in Tennessee.

Major emphasis was placed upon the historical development of rules, regulations, and changes that have affected girls' basketball in Tennessee. The study presents information and evidence from individuals, agencies, publications, and related material that in any way had an effect upon the development of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association and girls' basketball.

An ERIC computer search was conducted for related information. A search of related works was conducted in Educational Index; Dissertation Abstracts; Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature; Encyclopedia of Educational Research; Completed Research in Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

Since the study traced the development of girls' basketball and linked the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association to this development, one source of primary information was the office of the Tennessee Secondary School

Athletic Association (TSSAA). Interviews with representatives from the early years and with current leaders of the TSSAA were conducted and recorded. A collection of newsletters, journals, books, pamphlets, and correspondence was reviewed and documented.

The printed media of selected daily state newspapers and weekly local publications was systematically researched and documented. A search of regional college and university card catalogs was made in an attempt to locate as many primary and secondary sources as possible.

A compilation of important events, decisions, trends, influences, and problems that the TSSAA had in its influence and development of girls' basketball in Tennessee and the accumulation of data pertaining to the role of the TSSAA through its history and development of girls' basketball in Tennessee was presented.

One of the major tasks of the historian is to ascertain truth. Homer Hockett asserted: "The work of the historian no less than that of the scientist must rest upon reliable information."<sup>1</sup> Since there were several persons and publications very closely connected with the TSSAA and girls' basketball in Tennessee since the early 1930's, it is believed that truthful and reliable data was obtained. The

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<sup>1</sup> Homer C. Hockett, An Introduction to Research in History (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 9.

recollections of those involved in the TSSAA and girls' basketball were used as needed.

It was the intent of this study to present information for the period of time of the organization of girls' basketball and the TSSAA through 1993. The study also traced the records and available data from a time which actually preceded the inception of the TSSAA until 1993.

## Chapter 4

### The Early Years

Girls' basketball in Tennessee received very little recognition during the early years and was played mainly in small rural schools throughout Tennessee. Early accounts of girls' basketball appeared to be based upon the philosophy that the playing of the game was to be a social activity relating to physical education principles. However, as the game of basketball grew, so did the desire of women to increase participation and develop a more competitive game for the female population of schools. The thirteen original rules set up by Dr. Naismith were no longer able to govern the many different situations and problems that became associated with the game of basketball.

In a personal interview with Mr. A. F. Bridges, former Executive Secretary of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, he affirmed this by saying, "The ladies who came up through the colleges who were interested in physical education had been taught that girls' basketball was to be played in the afternoon, without a crowd, and maybe tea would be served to the visiting team after the game."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bridges went on to say, "girls' basketball in Tennessee was

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<sup>1</sup> A. F. Bridges, interview with author, 2 Apr. 1987.

to be played as a social event or as an intramural contest. The philosophy was that an activity of this type was for the development of physical education and not a contest for girls to engage in on a competitive level."<sup>2</sup>

Competitive high school basketball for girls existed as far back as the early 1900's, but girls' basketball on the state level was not played until 1922. The headline in the March 10, 1922, edition of The Nashville Tennessean read: "NINE GIRLS' FIVE ENTERED IN CAGE TOURNEY HERE." The article began by stating that nine of the fastest and strongest girls' high school basketball teams had entered the Tennessean-Peabody High School Tournament and that success of the new venture seems assured. The article listed the following teams: Memphis Central High School, Union City Central High School, Clarksville High School, Columbia High School, Gallatin High School, Springfield High School, Hume-Fogg (Nashville), Central High (Nashville), and Peabody of Nashville. The above teams had sent in their entrance fees and signified their intention of competing for the championship and trophy, the trophy being offered by Howe and Emerson of Nashville.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Bridges, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> "Nine Girls' Five Entered In Cage Tourney Here," The Nashville Tennessean, 10 Mar. 1922, C3.

There was indication that girls' basketball was being played by the larger secondary schools at least some three years earlier. The article stated that, "Central High of Nashville has lost only one game in three years, and that by only one point."<sup>4</sup> The team from Union City was also cited for having a very impressive team, having lost only one game to Union University at Jackson. Reference was also made concerning the team from Memphis Central High School having a victory over the celebrated YWCA team of Memphis, which had been claiming the Southern Basketball Championship for Girls. These references appear to suggest there was no governing body to regulate girls' play.

This competition was the first organized effort to recognize a girls' basketball state champion. A follow-up article in The Nashville Tennessean stated, "The presence of Memphis Central and Union City teams lends a state-wide aspect to the tourney, and the winner will be recognized as state champs."<sup>5</sup> The tourney was to be directed by Miss Ethel Norton of Peabody College. A letter was sent to the nine teams giving the drawings and general rules and regulations governing the Peabody state title tournament.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> "Drawings Are Made In Girls' Cage Tourney," The Nashville Tennessean, 14 Mar. 1922, C3.

Excerpts from the general rules and regulations follow:

1. The expenses of visiting teams while in Nashville will be borne by Peabody College. The railroad fares will be pro-rated provided the gate receipts exceed local expenses.

2. Each team is allowed eight players and a coach or chaperone.

3. The price of admission to each game is twenty-five cents, except the finals which will be fifty cents.

4. There will be no free admissions in games except contestants and coaches.

In the circular letter sent by Miss Norton, she listed the rules of play:

1. The Spaulding 1922 girls' rules will be strictly adhered to with the following exceptions: (a) the court will be divided into two parts, (b) five players will be used, and (c) centers will be allowed to shoot for goals.

2. Coaches are warned particularly that the refereeing will be strict, particularly in reference to walking, shoving, overguarding, dribbling, holding, and backing.

3. The personal foul rule will be enforced regarding disqualification.

4. Teams not on the floor within five minutes after the game is called will be forced to forfeit the game.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

Other media coverage of the game's development continued. According to research by Wallace and Smotherman of Manchester and Murfreesboro respectively, "The tournament continued to be held at Peabody in Nashville during the 1923, 1924, and 1925 seasons."<sup>7</sup>

The next media account of girls' basketball in Tennessee appeared in 1925. A brief article in The Nashville Tennessean indicated that teams from Murfreesboro Central High School, White County High School, Hume-Fogg (Nashville), and Burritt Preps would participate in the Peabody Tournament. In addition to general accounts of the games, the article also noted that Murfreesboro Central High was state champion in 1924. Also mentioned was the fact that Hume-Fogg defeated Burritt Preps 89-0, the first shut-out victory in the history of the annual Peabody State Tournament. For this tournament, the teams used the five player format (two forwards, two guards, one center) and there was only one referee, Miss Collins.<sup>8</sup>

Many changes occurred in the game in the following years. The tournament moved to Murfreesboro for the 1926 and 1927 season and was played at Jackson at the end of the 1928

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<sup>7</sup> Winston Wallace and Nelson Smotherman, "TSSAA Girls' Basketball State Tournament, 1922-1929, 1958-1993," personal manuscripts, Route 8 Box 8646, Manchester, Tennessee.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

season. The 1929 tournament was to be played at Middle Tennessee State Teachers College in Murfreesboro. However, the March 7, 1929, edition of The Nashville Tennessean carried an article with headlines reading: "STATE HIGH GIRLS' TOURNEY IS OFF ELLIOTT STATES."<sup>9</sup> Lack of uniform rules was cited as a possible reason for discontinuing the state tournament. However, Fred Elliott of Kerrville, Tennessee, president of the association under whose rules and regulations the event was to be held, gave no specific reason in the announcement as to why the meet would not be staged. Also, references were made in the newspaper article with respect to finances and the varied playing conditions that existed throughout the state. The article stated that, "In West Tennessee six players and three court divisions govern play. East Tennessee teams play five girls and Middle Tennessee teams employ both styles."<sup>10</sup>

The fact that there were no fixed rules and regulations governing the Tennessee girls' basketball made a state tournament difficult to stage. The article stated "...any way it could be held would work a hardship on some of the teams and until some mutual playing agreement is reached it

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<sup>9</sup> "State High Girls' Tourney Is Off Elliott States," The Nashville Tennessean, 7 Mar. 1929, 11.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

is not likely that there will be a state high school championship...for some seasons."<sup>11</sup>

However, another tournament was being organized in Sparta, Tennessee. On March 22, 1929, The Nashville Tennessean mentioned a tournament was being held in Sparta, on March 22 and 23, 1929. There were only three teams participating: White County from Middle Tennessee, Union City from West Tennessee, and Jacksboro from East Tennessee. The article briefly commented that "The state championship girls' basketball tournament will open here tomorrow night..."<sup>12</sup> In the first round of the 1929 tournament, Sparta beat Union City by a score of 32 to 27; Jacksboro drew a bye. The finals showed Sparta a winner over Jacksboro with the score of 27 to 22.

#### Organization and Growth of the TSSAA

As the game of basketball became more popular, so did interscholastic activities grow in Tennessee. Because basketball could be played with very little equipment cost and since most high schools had an area, either indoors or outdoors, that could be used to play the game of basketball, most secondary schools could have a basketball team.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Wallace and Smotherman, 12.

Basketball became the primary interscholastic activity that was played in the smaller schools and in rural towns. According to Bridges, "the larger cities in Tennessee, such as Nashville, Knoxville, and Memphis, had relatively few girls' basketball teams."<sup>13</sup>

Prior to 1925, there were no eligibility standards or regulations for interscholastic athletics in Tennessee which was the only state in the South that did not have a state-wide athletic association. In the spring of 1925, at the State Teachers' Meeting held in Nashville, a group of principals and other school administrators met at Hume-Fogg High School to form a state-wide secondary school athletic association. The groups initial purpose was "to stimulate and regulate athletic relations of the secondary schools of Tennessee."<sup>14</sup>

These principals and other school administrators concluded that such an organization was needed in Tennessee "because the interest in athletic programs was growing with no control except in a few areas of the state where conferences had been formed by some schools. Applications for membership had to be approved by a Board of Control, which also had power to drop any school from the association

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<sup>13</sup> Bridges, 1987.

<sup>14</sup> "Twenty-Four Schools Apply for Membership in States S.S.A.A.," The Nashville Tennessean, 12 Apr. 1925, 43.

for nonpayment of dues or for just reasons."<sup>15</sup> This organization became known as the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association or TSSAA.

The Constitution and By-Laws of this organization was adopted at this meeting by about thirty heads of high schools and secondary schools in Tennessee. Twenty-four schools filed application for admission to the newly formed association. All secondary schools of the state, both public and private, were eligible for membership. The annual dues were five dollars.

G. C. Carney of Davidson County Central High was chosen president. The by-laws called for one vice-president from each section of the state. These elected officers included James Lovell of Bradley County High, Cleveland; F. A. Falkenburg of Franklin County High, Decherd; and B. L. Hassell of Trenton. A. J. Smith, Superintendent of the Clarksville schools, was named secretary-treasurer. S. E. Nelson and W. A. Bass were elected to membership on the Board of Control.

The organization was slow in developing, but grew as time passed. The rules were fairly general and developed mainly by "common sense and known problems and experiences."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Bridges, 1987.

<sup>16</sup> Bridges, 1987.

Bob Baldrige, Assistant Executive Director of the TSSAA, added, "In the early stages, there was very little enforcement due to the fact that there was no official delegation of power. However, in 1972, enforcement power was officially delegated in the State Minimum Rules and Regulations of the State Department of Education."<sup>17</sup>

The early years of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association were governed by a Board of Control composed of nine members, three from each grand division of the state. Board members were required to be principals or superintendents. The board members of each grand division constituted a Divisional Committee with the power to organize within its division and have jurisdiction over any question that might arise in its grand division. Any decision could be appealed to the TSSAA Board of Control.

The annual meeting of the Association was held during the meeting of the State Teachers' Association in Nashville, Tennessee. A quorum consisted of twenty member schools and five members of the Board of Control. The duties of the Board of Control were "to conduct state meets and state tournaments, to be the final court of appeals in all cases involving rules and regulations of the Association and

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<sup>17</sup> Bob Baldrige, interview with author, 29 Dec. 1986.

perform such other duties as may be delegated by the Association."<sup>18</sup>

### Changes in Rules Begin

As the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association became more organized, rules began to change that would affect girls' basketball in Tennessee. The Board of Control, through the Constitution and By-Laws, would regulate rules pertaining to playing conditions in Tennessee secondary schools. A different set of rules would exist for boys and girls' competitions.

One of the first major differences in Tennessee was that there was not a state tournament for girls sanctioned by the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association after 1929. Girls' basketball was sanctioned only at the district and regional levels. The 1930 Constitution and By-Laws had three sections involving the differences between boys' and girls' play. Article III, Section 3 stated that no boys' team which had played more than twelve games in basketball from January 1st until the district tournament would be eligible to enter the district tournament. No girls' team could enter the district tournament if more than ten games had been played. Games played in county tournaments counted on the

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<sup>18</sup> Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, TSSAA Handbook (Nashville, 1930), 2.

twelve and ten game rule. Section 6 of the same Article stated that boys' basketball games shall be played under inter-collegiate rules. Girls' basketball games shall be played under Spaulding's girls' rules, and Section 11 allowed not more than sixteen girls' teams be permitted to participate in a district or a regional basketball tournament.<sup>19</sup>

Only one change was made in rules in 1931. Section 3 of the Constitution and By-Laws was altered to allow the number of games to increase to sixteen games for boys and twelve games for girls.

Prior to 1932, the Secretary of the TSSAA sent out an occasional newsletter to the membership. This newsletter and the yearly TSSAA Handbook were the written methods of communication to the entire membership. However, in January, 1932, a monthly bulletin was started by Mr. F. S. Elliott, Secretary of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. This monthly bulletin was titled Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. Two copies were mailed to each member school, one for the athletic director and one for the principal of the high school. In the first bulletin, Mr. Elliott stated, "It is hoped, that by this means, the membership may be better posted on matters of

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 5-8.

importance to the Association and that closer co-operation in undertakings for the benefit of the Association may be obtained, so that high school athletics may be more fully devoted to the aims and purposes of education."<sup>20</sup> This monthly bulletin became the major communication link between the membership and the TSSAA.

The association had voted on two proposed amendment changes according to the January, 1932, edition of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. The first proposed amendment to the by-laws would allow TSSAA schools to play Tennessee Independent Athletic Association (TIAA) schools. The vote on this proposed amendment was 108 for and seventy-six against. Because a two-thirds majority was necessary to amend the by-laws, this amendment failed.

A second proposed amendment dealt with regulating the seventh and eighth grades of junior high schools. The association passed this amendment by a vote of 133 for and forty-six against. The language of this amendment read as follows:

The seventh and eighth grades in junior high schools and the seventh and eighth grades in a school which has a junior and a senior department shall be subject to the same regulations as grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve, except that if a seventh or eighth grade student is carrying more than four major subjects, a failing grade in two or

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<sup>20</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Forward," Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association 1, no. 1 (1932): 1.

more subjects will render him ineligible for athletic competition until he has been in school a term and passed the required number of subjects. Art, music, drawing, and writing are not to be counted as major subjects. In a school which has both a junior and a senior department, a junior high school student shall be barred from athletic competition for one year if he transfers after completing his junior high school work, unless his transfer is due to a bona fide change of residence to the territory served by the senior department to which he transfers.<sup>21</sup>

Because the Association membership grew rapidly, some restrictions had to be placed upon the number of teams involved in tournaments. In this first major organizational plan, the state was divided into four regions for basketball tournament purposes. In each region, there was to be an unspecified number of district tournaments. The Board of Control suggested that an ideal district tournament should consist of no more than sixteen teams, however, it was noted that regional tournaments were restricted to sixteen teams. Finalists in the regional tournaments would be eligible to enter the state tournament, which was for boys only. Girls' play would end at the regional level. The secretary wrote "some new relationships are to be established under the new plan, but the Board feels that the membership will adapt itself to these new relationships without any difficulty and that the same fine spirit of co-operation that has characterized the TSSAA during the six years of its existence

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 3.

will be manifested to a marked degree in giving the new plan a fair trial."<sup>22</sup>

The minutes of the Board of Control which met November 11-12, 1932, reflected two major rule changes for girls. F. S. Elliott made a motion "that the toss-up at the center be the method used to put the ball in play in girls' basketball games."<sup>23</sup> Mr. J. C. Mitchell moved that "all conference basketball games for girls be played on a three division court."<sup>24</sup> Also, it was approved that the basketball season be opened with the first interscholastic game, no matter what time of year the game is played. In another matter, there was again a difference made between girls and boys. Mr. Charles K. Koffman moved that "District tournament for boys be held on March 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, or 2nd, 3rd, and 4th; the regional meets for boys be held on March 8th, 9th, 10th, and 11th, or on 9th, 10th, and 11th. If both boys' and girls' tournaments were held concurrently, the above date would be used for these tournaments."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Tennessee Divided Into Four Regions for Tournament Purposes," Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association 1, no. 2 (1932): 1.

<sup>23</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Minutes of the Board of Control of the TSSAA," Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association 2, no. 3 (1932): 2.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 3.

However, in West Tennessee the tournaments were held separately and on different dates. The Board of Control suggested that where the tournaments for girls were held separately and on different dates that the district tournaments for girls be held on February 22nd, 23rd, 24th, and 25th, or on 23rd, 24th, and 25th. The regional tournament for girls should be held on March 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th, or on 16th, 17th, and 18th. The Board felt this arrangement will give girls plenty of rest between tournaments.

With the reorganization in basketball into regions, also came action from the Board of Control to discontinue the state tournament for boys. There had not been a state tournament for girls since 1929, and this move may have been made to bring both groups in line for tournament play.

In the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, March, 1933, the secretary reported "the TSSAA has just closed the most successful basketball season in its history...and for the first time in several years the Association did not hold a state basketball tournament."<sup>26</sup> All the directors of regional tournaments reported successful tournaments, although some did not succeed financially.

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<sup>26</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Basket Ball Season A Success," Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association 2, no. 7 (1933): 1.

A change in Section 3 of the Constitution and By-Laws in 1934 established the maximum number of games that teams could play to be eligible for district tournament play. Boys' teams could play not more than sixteen games and girls could play no more than twelve games in basketball between January 1 and the date of the district tournament. Violation of this rule would render a team ineligible to participate in the district tournament. Some areas were also holding county tournaments which did not count as a part of the number of games to be played between January 1 and the date of the district tournament.

Regulations governing district and regional tournaments were also adopted by the Board of Control. Some of the regulations that were specific to girls were as follows:

1. The toss-up at center shall be the method of putting the ball in play in girls' games.
2. Girls' games shall be played on a three-division court.
3. Maximum housing shall be fifty cents per night per person.
4. Housing may be charged for nine girls and the coach.
5. Meals may be charged not to exceed twenty-five cents per person. Meals may be charged for nine girls and the coach. Each team may be allowed the meal immediately preceding and immediately following the game. The winning team may be allowed meals as long as it is in the tournament.
6. There will be no state tournament for boys or girls.

7. There will be three regional tournaments instead of four as has been the case for the past few years. Since the state tournament has been abandoned, the need for the fourth region is not apparent.<sup>27</sup>

As the membership of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association grew, the Board of Control saw a need to establish another body that could deal with the ever-growing changes that would be facing the Association. In May, 1935, the Board of Control established a Legislative Council.

The 1935 Constitution and By-Laws, Article II, Section 10, set the composition of the Legislative Council and the role they would play in the Association. The Legislative Council would be made up of nine members, one from each congressional district, who would serve a term of three years. The Legislative Council would be responsible for making amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws as it saw fit or act upon suggestions submitted by twenty-five members of the Association. The action of the Council would be final except that any amendment it made could be appealed to the entire membership upon request of twenty-five members of the Association submitted to the state secretary-treasurer in writing. A two-thirds majority of those voting would be necessary to reject a regulation adopted by the Council.

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<sup>27</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Tournament Regulations Adopted," Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association 3, no. 5 (1934): 4.

Those voting must be at least fifty-one percent of the total membership of the Association. Members of the Board of Control, the executive body of the association, would not be eligible for membership on the Legislative Council. The Board of Control would serve in an advisory capacity to the Legislative Council. Both groups, the Board of Control and the Legislative Council, would meet annually at the time of the State Teachers' Association in Nashville.

Thus, the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association was formed. The Legislative Council became the rule-making body, and the Board of Control was the body that was to enforce the rules and regulations, both of which were made up of representatives from the schools which were members of the Association.

Another very important organization emerged in 1936 and was known as the "Tennessee Approved Officials Conference of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association." One of the objectives of this organization was to create a state-wide uniform interpretation and application of the rules. Another significant objective was to provide an agency to promote a thorough study of the rules of the game and duties of the officials. The need for this organization was apparent, as cited in studies by Montgomery and Downing, in that rules were modified for girls, and adequately trained officials were necessary. The use of officials who were

members of the Approved Officials Conference would now be required for all tournament play in basketball.

In April, 1937, the Board of Control chose to reorganize the state tournament for boys but failed to reorganize the state tournament for girls. Mr. A. F. Bridges, former Executive Secretary of TSSAA, stated three reasons why a girls' state tournament was not reorganized. According to Mr. Bridges, "(1) there were not as many girls' teams as boys and many schools did not have girls' teams; (2) girls should not be subjected to as strenuous play as boys, the district and regional tournaments were sufficient; and (3) school people thought this was best."<sup>28</sup>

During the 1938-1939 season, a few county tournaments were announced with both girls and boys playing during the same time period. However, during district tournaments, some districts held girls' and boys' tournaments at the same time and at the same location; whereas, other districts separated the girls' and boys' tournaments as to both times and locations. It was also interesting to note that all three girls' regional tournaments were held at the same time, but these times were also the same dates as the boys' state tournament.

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<sup>28</sup> Bridges, 1987.

In April, 1939, the Board of Control set in motion a plan to publish an official publication of the TSSAA. The new publication would be called The Tennessee High School Athlete. Mr. F. S. Elliott, secretary-treasurer of the TSSAA, would also be in charge of the publication. This publication would become the newsletter of the TSSAA and serve as a better means of making schools more aware of happenings throughout the state and nation.

In the December, 1939, issue of The Tennessee High School Athlete, several rule changes for TSSAA girls' basketball appeared. A major rule change dealt with the number of points awarded a player depending upon where she began her shot. If a player began her shot lower than her shoulder and continued through, she would be awarded two points. If the player began her shot at shoulder height or above, she would be awarded only one point if successful. The rules committee felt the one point rule "will restore to the game some of the dash, speed, and interest which once belonged to it."<sup>29</sup>

The Rules Committee of the TSSAA for girls' basketball also decided that the playing court would be divided into three equal parts by division lines parallel to the end line.

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<sup>29</sup> F. S. Elliott, "TSSAA Girls' Basketball Rule Changes, 1939-1940," The Tennessee High School Athlete 1, no. 4 (1939): 6.

Under the previous rules, the girls played with the two division court. Each team would consist of six players: two forwards, two guards, and two centers. Another rule limited a player who left the game from re-entering only twice. A final rule change established the procedure for overtime play. If the game was tied at the expiration of playing time, the teams would remain on the floor for a three-minute rest period and play would then continue for three minutes. This procedure would be repeated until one team had a larger score at the end of any over-time period. The 1939-1940 rules used were those published by A. S. Barnes and Company. with TSSAA exceptions.

As the 1940-1941 season began to unfold, several changes began. In March, 1940, the Legislative Council was commended for "restoring, in no uncertain terms, the ten semester rule which had been obtained by inference only for the past two years."<sup>30</sup> The rule made students ineligible to participate in athletics if they attended a secondary school for ten semesters of four and one-half months each. Attendance of twenty school days during any semester constituted a "semester" under the rule for eligibility purposes.

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<sup>30</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Forward Looking Legislation Adopted by Council," The Tennessee High School Athlete, 1, no. 9 (1940): 1.

The rule governing transfers was also given serious consideration in an effort to exert tighter control. A student would be ineligible until individual cases had been reviewed by the regional Board of Control. This review of individual cases would allow the Board "an opportunity to investigate (these) spurious moves for athletic purposes, a move that involves only a part of the family and a few chairs, a bed, and a quilt, or two, while the rest of the family resides in some other community."<sup>31</sup> This investigation would also serve to see that in cases where the whole family moved, a job with compensation for some family member(s) had not been made for the athletic prowess of other members of the family.

Another influential decision was made by the Legislative Council in March, 1940, when the Council adopted the National Section on Woman's Athletics of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation by A. S. Barnes and Company with the two division court as the official rules. The Council added that the rules may be revised by the TSSAA from year to year. However, the secretary interpreted the rule to mean that the Board of Control would make revisions when they were considered necessary. It was the opinion of the Board that playing rules adopted for

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 3.

Tennessee should not be revised by any local group because local groups were not experts in making playing rules.

An article in the news and announcements section of the The Tennessee High School Athlete in March, 1940, reported that "A. F. Bridges, Superintendent of Schools at Trenton, has been appointed a member of the Board of Control to succeed the late M. E. Whitson of Obion."<sup>32</sup> This announcement was the first official position for Mr. Bridges who would later become a very significant figure and influence in the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association.

The controversy continued in the early 1940's with regard to the concern many had about the competitive nature of girls' interscholastic basketball. Most of the northern states had discontinued competitive girls' basketball, while many southern states still sponsored such activity. An article in The Tennessee High School Athlete focused upon the objections of health and development of character which were associated with cultured womanhood. The states which had eliminated interscholastic activities for girls had, in most cases, established a program of social and play day activities designed to promote the development of the social graces and health practices which would have a lasting influence on the lives of the participants.

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<sup>32</sup> F. S. Elliott, "News and Announcements," The Tennessee High School Athlete, 1, no. 8 (1940): 7.

An announcement was made in the October, 1940, issue of The Tennessee High School Athlete concerning this subject. The Shelby County Board of Education had announced the abolishment of girls' basketball as a competitive sport and had inaugurated a "system of physical training for all the students in the county system."<sup>33</sup>

The Shelby County Board of Education believed that girls' basketball was injurious to both the mental and physical health of those girls who participated. It was also believed that too much emotionalism was exhibited by both coaches and players during interscholastic competition. The board also contended that the physical well-being of the girls did not receive first consideration since in numerous instances girls were allowed to practice and play at times that were not advisable.<sup>34</sup>

In announcing this decision, the Shelby County Board was following a trend that had been happening throughout the United States. In Tennessee, many of the larger high schools in Kingsport, Bristol, Johnson City, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and a few in Nashville and Memphis had already put an end to girls' basketball on a competitive basis. In making this

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<sup>33</sup> F. S. Elliott, "The Shelby Board of Education Abolishes Girls' Basketball As A Competitive Sport," The Tennessee High School Athlete, 2, no. 2 (1940): 25.

<sup>34</sup> Jacobs, op. cit., 42.

decision, the opponents of girls' basketball on a competitive basis claimed that the game was too strenuous for girls.

There had been very few regulations governing tournament play prior to 1940. The Board of Control, after conferring with principals and coaches throughout the state, agreed to recommend a plan for reorganization of the state for basketball play. The plan called for the three sections of the state (East, Middle, and West) to be divided into sixteen districts. The district would be as nearly in close proximity as possible in the community, and both boys' and girls' tournaments would be played together. After expenses were paid, the net would be divided on some equitable basis, decided on by the district committees, among the schools competing. Part of the expenses would include 15% of the gross being paid to the state association. The regional tournament would follow the same basic format except that the host school would be paid an honorarium for the use of the gymnasium, lights, and janitorial service. The Board believed the plan would save long distance travel and the burden of housing a large number of visitors. The plan would also distribute more money among the teams and put the games closer to the public.

Tennessee, Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, and South Carolina were among the states which continued to hold girls' tournaments where inter-school contests were very common. In

1941, twelve states prohibited interscholastic basketball for girls, and twenty-five states prohibited tournaments in girls' basketball. The National Federation had been instructed by the executive committee to "refuse to sanction any inter-state basketball tournaments in which girls' teams competed."<sup>35</sup>

As one group was trying to downplay certain elements of the game of basketball, another group was trying to promote the game which was celebrating its fiftieth birthday. One particular opportunity began to develop, that of "National Preparedness." Some 20,000 high schools across the country would compete weekly, bringing communities closer together, thus showing a greater interest and reverence for the democratic form of government which had been built in the United States.

It was doubtful whether girls' basketball was emphasized as much in any state as it was in Tennessee. Receipts from basketball tournaments showed that girls' tournaments "drew" better than boys' tournaments. This could be determined because boys' and girls' tournaments were held separately.

Tennessee continued to conduct girls' basketball on a competitive basis during the early 1940's and through World War II. The tournament for girls still ended at the regional

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<sup>35</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Interscholastic Athletics for Girls," The Tennessee High School Athlete, 3, no. 5 (1941): 9.

level. Both boys and girls played the district and regional games on the same nights and at the same locations in West and Middle Tennessee. In East Tennessee, the games were played during the same time frame but at different locations.

The only major change in girls' rules during this time period involved the procedure used for overtimes. The new rule stated:

If the score is tied at the end of the regular playing time a period of three minutes after a rest of two minutes will be used to playoff the tie. If the score is still tied, as many three minutes as will be necessary to break the tie will be played and between the three-minute periods a rest period of two minutes will be used.<sup>36</sup>

Even though many schools continued to play basketball, problems were developing during tournament time for the 1941-1942 season. As the district tournaments ended, the regional tournaments had to be reshuffled in order to have enough teams to participate. Girls' teams who were runners-up at the district level were certified by the TSSAA to compete in regional tournaments where necessary.

The 1942-1943 season continued to feel the effects of the war. Only five of sixteen Middle Tennessee districts were staging tournaments with about the same proportion in East and West Tennessee. A decision was also made which modified the tournament plan. Instead of the district

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<sup>36</sup> F. S. Elliott, "Girls' Playoff Rules Changed," The Tennessee High School Athlete, 3, no. 6 (1941): 2.

champions meeting in a unit or sectional tournament, the teams would proceed directly to regional play. Since transportation appeared to be the major problem, Secretary Ferguson announced that the government had advised him that "Uncle Sam would issue 'B' gas-ration books to coaches."<sup>37</sup>

In The Nashville Tennessean, "Red" O'Donnell alluded to the wartime situation around the Nashville area which was also widespread throughout Tennessee. He named several coaches being called into active military service. Mentioned were coaches from Cohn High, Litton High, Hillsboro High, and Central High. The supervisor of the Davidson County School System, Carl Brackett, indicated that "Athletics at some schools may have to be dropped and the situation was critical, with no replacements at some schools."<sup>38</sup>

During the war-time era, basketball continued on a limited basis as has been pointed out in earlier accounts. In Rutherford County, for example, the County Education Commission had apparently banned sports for the 1941-1942 and 1942-1943 school years. An article appeared in the Nashville Banner which read "Basketball-hungry sports fans here have

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<sup>37</sup> "Only Five of 16 Mid-Tennessee Districts Set," The Nashville Tennessean, 14 Dec. 1942, D3.

<sup>38</sup> Red O'Donnell, "County School System Faces Serious Shortage of Coaches," The Nashville Tennessean, 17 Dec. 1942, 22.

been given some relief for the approaching holidays by the County Education Commission which lifted the war-time ban on sports for ten days, beginning December 17."<sup>39</sup> Each high school would be permitted to play two games between December 17 and 27. The games could be played at home, at other schools, or whatever arrangements could be made to play. This action corresponded to the same action the previous year.

During the 1944 season, no rules or procedures were changed. Problems still existed with travel and most teams continued to cut back on the number of games. As tournament-time approached, winners and runners-up had to again be shuffled to put together a regional tournament for girls.

In his column, "One Man's Opinion," Raymond Johnson reminisced about how the TSSAA tournament format had changed. Johnson recalled that in the mid-state for example, both boys' and girls' teams would assemble at Middle Tennessee Teachers' College for a three-day carnival that generally got underway around seven o'clock in the morning and continued until almost midnight. The teams would check in Thursday morning and remain at the college until the final game on Saturday night. They would be housed in the dormitories and fed in the school cafeteria.

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<sup>39</sup> "Murfreesboro to Have Teams," Nashville Banner, 18 Dec. 1943, 33.

The tournament drew sixteen girls' teams and between twenty-eight and thirty-two boys' teams. On one occasion, Frank Faulkinberry, who served as tournament director, cut the quarters from eight to six minutes, tabooed time-outs, allowed one minute between quarters, and five minutes between halves. There would be no time for warming up. As soon as one game ended, another got underway.

The girls' contests were shifted to the State Training School gym and usually played in the afternoon. Often a team would have to play as many as five games in three days. A fan could buy a "season" ticket for the entire tournament for \$1.50. Johnson pointed out that from 1928-1930, he and one other official, E. Olney "Bouser" Chest, were the only referees for the three-day tournament. Johnson noted, "Chest and I worked twenty-six games in one day in the 1929 tournament, which is believed to be a record."<sup>40</sup> They called eight games individually and worked double on five the first day of the tournament.

Ticket prices for the regional tournaments were 75¢ for reserve seats and 50¢ for bleachers. Teams were paid mileage from schools to tournament sites. After expenses for conducting the tournaments were deducted and five percent

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<sup>40</sup> Raymond Johnson, "Winning Regionals Back in 30's Marathon; Play Started at 6:30," The Nashville Tennessean, 11 Mar. 1945, C1.

taken out for the TSSAA, each of the competing teams would share equally in any receipts.

#### A Full-time Executive Secretary Is Named

In July, 1946, A. F. Bridges from Trenton, Tennessee, was named the first full-time Executive Secretary of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. Arrangement had been made with Lyle Putman, Superintendent of Trenton School District, and the Trenton City Board of Education for office space in the new physical education building at Peabody High School in Trenton. The announcement stated that the space would be completed by August 1, 1946.

One of Mr. Bridges' duties was to renew a publication to all association schools. The publication was renamed The TSSAA News and was to become the official news publication of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. Publication of the TSSAA Constitution and By-Laws also continued to carry the regulations for the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association.

The only major change appearing in the TSSAA Constitution and By-Laws of 1946 was the announcement that the basketball season for any school teams should end when that school is eliminated from tournament play. However, plans had been made to conduct a three-section tournament for girls and a four-section tournament for boys. In West and

Middle Tennessee, the girls would compete at the district level, unit level, and end with a regional tournament. The district tournament would be followed by four unit tournaments and two regional meets. Girls' and boys' tournaments would be played at the same time and same sites. The format in East Tennessee was somewhat different. There would be no unit tournament; therefore, the regional tournaments followed the district tournaments. Also, in East Tennessee, the girls' tournaments would be held at a time and location different from the boys' tournaments. There would be no state tournament for girls following the regional games.

The National Federation handed down a significant rule change that was to go into effect in 1947 dealing with stopping the clock. In the past, the only time the clock would stop was for a substitution or a called time-out.

Previously, a team would often try to gain the advantage during a jump ball or throw-in by "dragging their feet" while getting set for the jumpball or getting to where the ball was to be put into play. The official was always in a quandary as to how much a player could abuse the timing rule before being penalized by a technical foul. Under the new rule, "during the last period, and each extra period, the clock

would be stopped each time the ball becomes dead and start when it was officially touched in bounds or put in play."<sup>41</sup>

The Board of Control also established a rule which would be followed in any TSSAA tournament when girls' games ended in a tie score. The new rule read: "If the score is a tie at the end of the fourth quarter, a two-minute intermission shall be declared during which the teams may not leave the court. Play shall then be resumed without change of baskets for an extra period of two minutes. If the score is still tied at the end of this period, the teams shall rest two minutes and play two minutes until a winner has been declared. At the beginning of each overtime or extra period, the ball shall be put in play by a jump at the center circle between two of the opposing forwards."<sup>42</sup>

Because of a growing interest developing in girls' basketball, the TSSAA had to make another adjustment for tournament play during the 1947 season. As a number of schools were beginning to recognize this growing interest, a need arose to have a county tournament in order to qualify for the district tournament. This need led to the four section tournament for girls: county, district, unit, and

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<sup>41</sup> "Basketball in 1947--Stopping the Clock," The TSSAA News, no. 3 (1946): 5.

<sup>42</sup> "Play-Off of Tie Games in Girls' Tournaments," The TSSAA News, no. 5 (1948): 2.

regional. However, this tournament format lasted only two years.

When the Board of Control met on March 12, 1948, a committee composed of V. F. Goddard, C. O. Jett, William Osteen, and Executive Secretary Bridges, was formed to study the advisability of redistricting Tennessee and dividing schools into classes according to enrollment for basketball tournaments.

During April, 1948, Executive Secretary Bridges met with other Executive Secretaries from Arkansas, Oklahoma, Iowa, Missouri, Maryland, Michigan, California, and the Executive Committee of the National Section on Women's Athletics (NSWA). This meeting took place in Kansas City during the annual convention of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. As a result of this meeting, the NSWA committee agreed to request that the National Federation allow a number of high school representatives to attend the 1949 rules meeting. The representatives would act in an advisory capacity and be in a position to present to the rule-makers some of the troublesome problems affecting girls' basketball in states where it is played on an interscholastic level. It was felt that closer cooperation between the NSWA committee and the high school athletic associations would result in the development of higher standards for girls' basketball and in

the adoption of rules that would bring the rules between boys and girls closer together.

In September, 1948, the Board of Control voted to refer to the Legislative Council suggestions for modifying girls' basketball rules in an attempt to eliminate intentional fouling and slow play of tall forwards under the basket.

The proposed suggestions included the following: (1) Following a free throw, the ball is awarded at center circle to the team shooting the free throw whether the throw is made or missed. (2) From the midpoint of the boundary line passing under the basket, an arc is drawn with a twenty-one-foot radius until it intersects the end or side boundary line. Players are allowed to tie-up the ball inside this arc. For unknown reasons, the two suggestions were never placed before the membership for a vote.<sup>43</sup>

Almost a year after the redistricting committee was formed, a rough plan was presented to the Board of Control at their meeting on March 18, 1949. Additional study was needed and some refining was necessary before the plan would be presented to the entire membership for a vote. Another committee composed of V. F. Goddard, Jimmy Edwards, and Alton Copeland was to work with the Executive Secretary in preparing a plan for consideration by the membership.

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<sup>43</sup> "Attempt to Eliminate Intentional Fouling Proposed," The TSSAA News, no. 2 (1948): 5.

On October 1, 1949, the Board of Control met and approved the new redistricting plan that had been presented earlier. The Executive Secretary was directed to send copies of the plan to all member schools prior to the regional meetings scheduled to be held in December. The plan, if voted in, would be put in operation for basketball tournaments beginning in the spring of 1950.

A brief summary of the plan follows:

1. Tennessee shall be divided into eight regions.
2. Each of these eight regions shall be divided into four districts--each district to have not less than eight nor more than sixteen schools.
3. It is recommended that the larger districts hold separate tournaments for boys and girls.
4. First and second place district winners shall compete in an eight-team regional tournament for boys and in an eight-team regional tournament for girls. It is recommended that the regional tournament for girls be held during the week of the boys' state tournament, but regions that desire to do so may hold the boys' and girls' competitions as one tournament, or as separate tournaments, during the week preceding the boys' state tournament.
5. Winners of the regional tournaments for boys shall advance to an eight-team state tournament. Play for girls shall end with the regional tournament.<sup>44</sup>

The new plan appeared to have four advantages. The first advantage was that the unit tournament would be

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<sup>44</sup> "Basketball Redistricting Plan Endorsed by Board of Control," The TSSAA News, no. 2 (1949): 9.

eliminated, thereby reducing the amount of time now needed for tournament play. A second advantage would be a uniform tournament plan for the entire state. Heretofore, each section of the state--West, Middle, and East--had a different basketball tournament plan. The third advantage would be a consistent method for selecting teams to enter the state tournament. A fourth advantage, as seen by the Board of Control, would be the reduction in travel to the regional tournament. The present system had three regional tournaments, and teams had to travel much further to the three locations. With the proposed eight regions, teams would not have to travel as far when they advanced to the regional tournament. During the three regional meetings which were held during November, 1949, the plan was approved by a three-to-one vote, thus beginning a new era in Tennessee basketball.

The 1949-1950 girls' rules provided for a controlled experimentation on the "held ball" or "tying the ball" in girls' basketball. A number of coaches had expressed a desire for Tennessee to participate in the experiment of allowing a tie-ball in the offensive end of the court.

Mr. Bridges suggested that "If coaches will write the state office giving their views on the subject, this information can be passed on to the TSSAA Board of Control at

the fall meeting, October 1."<sup>45</sup> Member schools voting at the three regional meetings approved the tie-ball experiment for girls' basketball by a three-to-one margin.

The tie-ball rule made it legal for a girl to tie the ball at any time except when a player has fallen to the floor, or when the ball is being put in play at the center circle. The rule change also meant that a player may snatch, bat, or gain possession of the ball held by an opponent as in boys' rules.

Other rule changes for girls' during the 1949-1950 season followed. They included:

1. The limited dribble was adopted.
2. Time-out will be taken for foul shots.
3. Whether the free throw is made or missed, the team shooting the free throw shall be awarded the ball out of bounds opposite the free throw line.
4. Players may re-enter the game any number of times.
5. Elimination of the rule which stated that when there is one minute or less to play in a quarter and a time out is called, the remaining time shall be added to the next quarter.
6. Technical team fouls will be charged against the team and not against the captain.

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<sup>45</sup> "The Tie Ball Experiment in Girls' Game," The TSSAA News, no. 2 (1949): 2.

The TSSAA News stated that "Most of these changes have been advocated by our coaches and officials for several years. It is hoped that a better game of basketball for girls will be played as a result of these changes."<sup>46</sup>

Changes in girls' basketball continued during the early 1950's. During the January, 1950; Board of Control meeting, several coaches and principals made a request to set up a plan for determining a girls' champion in each grand division of the state. After some discussion, the board agreed that since the entire membership had voted on the redistricting plan at the regional meetings and had adopted it by an overwhelming vote, no changes should be made with the plan.

During the March meeting of the Legislative Council, a two game per week limit was placed on all teams. The two game limit did not include tournaments, time when schools were not in session during Christmas holidays, games which had to be rescheduled due to inclement weather or other unavoidable causes. However, not more than three games could be played in any one week, exclusive of tournament play.

The reaction to the "tie-ball" plan that was experimental in the 1949-1950 season was mixed. Executive Secretary Bridges reported that the great majority of TSSAA schools were pleased with the changes, even though some

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<sup>46</sup> "Girls' Basketball Rulings," The TSSAA News, no. 8 (1949): 4.

coaches and principals had gone on record as being very much opposed to the new rule. Mr. Bridges planned to recommend to the Board of Control that the "tie-ball" rule become official for the 1950-1951 season. He was also recommending that the rules of the NSWA be adopted and approved with the exception of the "tie-ball" rule. In the August meeting of the Board of Control, a recommendation was made that the "tie-ball" rule be approved "unless enough objection is raised to indicate that a majority of the coaches and principals are opposed to such a regulation."<sup>47</sup> The rule was approved.

The idea of a state tournament for girls surfaced in October, 1950. The Legislative Council had two proposals to be discussed at regional meetings. One proposal was to conduct a state tournament for girls, and the second proposal was to arrange for a playoff or tournament to determine a champion of each of the three grand divisions of the state.

Representatives of member schools attending the regional meetings at Jackson, Nashville, and Knoxville voted down any proposal which, "extended the tournament series for girls to include a state tournament to determine a champion for each of the three grade divisions of the state."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> "Tie Ball Rule Approved," The TSSAA News, no. 1 (1950):3.

<sup>48</sup> "Tournament Proposals for Girls' Voted Down," The TSSAA News, no. 4 (1950): 2.

The rules for girls and boys in basketball had continued to be somewhat different. Even though some of the basic rules were alike, modifications were continually being made to accommodate and adapt the game for girls' play. A number of officials continued to remark that they did not intend to learn the rules and cared nothing about girls' basketball. They were very emphatic in expressing their beliefs. Mr. Webb Porter, Assistant Secretary of the TSSAA, who worked closely with the officials, responded to this concern in The TSSAA News in December, 1950. Mr. Webb's comments reflected the opinions of the TSSAA. He stated:

Every man has a right to his opinion, and we have no intention of engaging in an argument over the merits of girls' basketball. However, we do not hesitate to say that an official who feels this way should not work a girls' game. A coach should not hire an official with this attitude to work a girls' game, and the official should not accept the game if offered to him. Certainly an official of this type should not be employed to work in a tournament where girls' teams are playing.<sup>49</sup>

In 1951, the TSSAA made a change in rule books. Heretofore, the rules in girls' basketball were those published by A. S. Barnes and Company. Since A. S. Barnes and Company no longer published girls' rules, the TSSAA adopted the rules published by the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation.

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<sup>49</sup> Webb Porter, "Basketball For Girls--Learn the Rules or Don't Call Them," The TSSAA News, no. 4 (1950): 6.

There still appeared to be either inconsistencies or misinterpretations of girls' rules, even with the new rules. In The TSSAA News, February, 1951, Webb Porter in his section "Whistle Notes," made reference to the fact that some officials were still letting a girl who had fallen to the floor pass the ball before getting up. Mr. Porter noted "that was a clear violation and the ball should go out of bounds to the opposing team."<sup>50</sup> Attention was also called to the fact that officials were allowing the ball to be tied by an opponent while a player is on the floor with the ball in [her] possession; such an act was a technical foul, not a tossed ball.

A new rule allowed a girl to hand or roll the ball to another player. Even though this sounded very simple, confusion persisted. Since the girls' rules made no definite statement as to what constituted a "pass," it could not be determined from the rules if handing or rolling the ball to another player was to be considered a pass. The TSSAA ruled that handing or rolling the ball to another player would be considered a pass. However, the handing or rolling could not be used to put the ball in play from the center circle or putting the ball in play from out-of-bounds. The rules stated that the forward in the center circle or the player

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<sup>50</sup> Webb Porter, "Whistle Notes," The TSSAA News, no. 6 (1951): 7.

putting the ball in play from out-of-bounds must start play by any sort of throw or bounce pass.

The significance of this somewhat simple rule was that once the ball had been put in play properly, a player could hand or roll the ball to another player. Such handing or rolling of the ball could then be considered the second of the two passes from center or out-of-bounds required before a player could shoot for a goal. Another part of this rule prohibited two or more players from standing close together in order to hand or roll the ball to each other for more than three seconds. Violation of this rule resulted in the ball being awarded to the other team out-of-bounds.

In January, 1952, a letter from Miss Mary Fitzpatrick of Johnson City, the Tennessee representative of NSWA was mailed to all coaches of girls' basketball in the state and rescinded the rule dealing with handing the ball to another player. The rule change made it a violation to hand the ball to another player. The revised rule permitted the ball to be thrown, butted, or bounced to another player, or thrown for the basket. However, the TSSAA also mailed letters to all schools, girls' coaches, and to Miss Fitzpatrick stating, "the action on the part of the NSWA would not be followed in TSSAA play for girls."<sup>51</sup> The letter pointed out that matters

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<sup>51</sup> "Handing Ball in Girls' Game Still Legal," The TSSAA News, no. 5 (1952):9.

of this kind should be cleared through the state office and that girls' basketball is played under NSW rules with such TSSAA exceptions as are required to fit the rules of the game as played in Tennessee. The NSW deemed the rescinding of the "handing rule" necessary because players were misusing the rule to stall or freeze the ball. However, the TSSAA had made provision for this tactic by incorporating the three-second rule discussed earlier.

#### Uniform Rules for Girls Considered

In the spring of 1952, the TSSAA By-Laws were changed to restrict which schools a TSSAA member school would be allowed to play. Article III, Section 1 (c) restricted games with: "(1) other TSSAA member schools, (2) members of other state associations, and (3) members of the Mid-South Association of Private Schools."<sup>52</sup>

Another very important rules decision was in the making for the 1952-1953 basketball season for girls. The Executive Secretary, Mr. A. F. Bridges, was to meet in St. Louis with representatives from eight other states in hopes of producing a joint code of rules to govern girls' basketball play. Mr. Bridges explained:

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<sup>52</sup> "Schools Which Member Schools May Play," The TSSAA News, no. 8 (1952): 8.

Many states had found that the NSWA rules were unsatisfactory. While Tennessee was using the NSWA rules with certain exceptions; other states were using boys' rules with certain exceptions, while still other states were writing their own girls' basketball rule books. The many variations in rules had caused considerable confusion particularly in communities located near state lines because the rules were different when the team played a school across a state line."<sup>53</sup>

Representatives from the states of Oklahoma, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, and Tennessee met in St. Louis on April 19, 1952, to draft a new code of rules for girls' basketball play. Several states that were not represented had indicated they would consider adopting the new codes if approved by this committee.

In drafting the new code of rules, the committee followed the outline of the boys' rule book. Each section of the rules in the new girls' rules would cover the same items that were covered in the corresponding section in the boys' rules book, keeping in mind the health and safety of the girls for the basis of rules different from the boys. The committee believed that the players, coaches, and spectators would be pleased with the new rules. In case there were sections which were not popular, each state would have representation on the committee and could propose changes in the code. The major differences in the new code and the game as played in Tennessee were:

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<sup>53</sup> Bridges, 1987.

1. Unlimited dribble.
2. A foul shot missed will be in play; and after a foul shot is made, the ball will be awarded to the opposing team out of bounds.
3. Tie games will be played off under the same rules as boys, except the play-off period will be two minutes instead of three.
4. The clock will be stopped on jump balls, and quarters will be seven minutes in length.
5. The ten-second rule and the three-second rule will be the same as the boys' rules.
6. All jump balls will be put in play at the nearest circle.
7. Five personal fouls will be allowed as in boys.<sup>54</sup>

The TSSAA had determined in the late 1940s that the state would be divided into eight regions for basketball purposes. In this plan, the regional tournament would end the season for girls, with the boys advancing to a state tournament play-off. Member schools in Regions Seven and Eight had requested the Board of Control to allow girls in these two regions to conduct a play-off. During the Board of Control meeting in Nashville on January 9, 1953, the request was approved. The principals of the two schools would request the game to be played and the TSSAA would furnish suitable trophies and would receive fifteen percent of the gate receipts. Schools in Regions One, Two, and Three and in

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<sup>54</sup> "New Girls' Basketball Rules Drafted," The TSSAA News, no. 9 (1952): 7.

Regions Four, Five, and Six would also be permitted to hold such play-offs under the same plan if they made such requests to the TSSAA. The regions from East and West Tennessee had such play-offs; Middle Tennessee did not.

The 1953 season soon came to an end, but not without another rule change during the season. It seemed that the "three-second rule" applied to each end of the playing court if the ball was in control of their team. Since each player was restricted to only half the playing floor, it would be impossible for the officials to watch both ends of the floor at the same time. When the ball was on the end of the court with six players (three offensive and three defensive), the official must watch the ball being played and would have his back to the six players on the other end of the court. Since little or no advantage would be gained by the players who did not have the ball on their end of the floor and this would create an almost impossible officiating situation, the TSSAA ruled that the "three-second rule" would not be enforced until a team had advanced the ball into their front court.

The 1954 and 1955 seasons produced very few, if any, major rule changes. For girls' basketball, the official rules used were those adopted by "The Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee." Regions One and Two (East Tennessee) and Regions Seven and Eight (West Tennessee)

continued to have play-offs, while Regions Four, Five, and Six (Middle Tennessee) terminated girls' play at the regional level during the 1954 season. However, the 1955 season brought back the eight regional tournaments at the end of the season for girls' play.

#### Classification Proposals Begin to Surface

The first of several proposals to come dealing with classifications emerged during the December, 1955, regional meetings. Some schools wanted to begin classifying schools according to their size. Heretofore, the winners of each district would advance to the regional tournament regardless of the size of the school. Apparently the principals and coaches still liked the idea of having a state or regional champion for all the schools, not one for small schools and another for large schools. This proposal was rejected.

Even though the issue was very low key, "a proposal had also been made to abolish girls' basketball in Tennessee."<sup>55</sup> The ongoing controversy dealing with the effects of health and safety for girls resurfaced. Many people still believed that basketball was too strenuous and too emotional for girls to play. In an article titled "Interscholastic Sports and Health for Girls," Dr. C. H. McCloy, Professor of Research

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<sup>55</sup> "Regional Meetings See Proposals Fail," TSSAA News 10, no. 5 (1956): 6.

in Health and Physical Education at the State University of Iowa, discussed his research project on the effects of girls participating in strenuous girls' athletic programs. In his study of over 2,500 girls who had participated in girls' inter-school basketball and softball programs, Dr. McCloy concluded "that girls' athletics, played under girls' rules and under the proper supervision and coaching, was not in any way injurious to the girl."<sup>56</sup> Dr. McCloy went on to say, "if every girl had a thorough medical examination and was qualified physically before she was allowed to participate, there would be no bad effects on the reproductive organs, the heart, the circulatory system, or any other physical aspect of the girl. Furthermore, girls are as stable as boys from the emotional viewpoint."<sup>57</sup> Dr. McCloy suggested that it was largely a matter of training and guidance on the part of the coach as to whether the emotions are controlled or run rampant. He further concluded that the charge that girls' basketball produced sterility was not valid. The proposal to abolish girls' basketball was defeated statewide by a large vote.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> C. H. McCloy, "Interscholastic Sports and Health for Girls," TSSAA News 10, no. 9 (1956): 15.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

### Girls' State Tournament Renewed

As previously noted, a play-off to determine a girls' state champion had been discontinued at the conclusion of the 1929 season. The season ended either at the regional level or, during a few years, at the section level for East and West Tennessee. Middle Tennessee had continued to end the season for girls at the regional level.

A major item on the December, 1956, regional meetings was a proposal that the TSSAA sponsor a state basketball tournament for girls. Member schools from West and East Tennessee endorsed the proposal while member schools from Middle Tennessee rejected the proposal.

At the Board of Control meeting, held in Nashville on January 11, 1957, the board authorized Chairman C. O. Jett, from Central High School in Shelbyville, to appoint a committee to draw up plans for holding a state basketball tournament for girls beginning in 1958. Appointed to the committee were Executive Secretary Bridges; James Williams, Chester County High School, Henderson; A. B. Sisco, Lewis County High School, Hohenwald; and Arnold Burton, Rogersville High School, Rogersville, who were to submit a plan at the 1957 regional meetings.

During the August, 1957, Board of Control meeting, the Board voted that the report of the committee appointed to draw plans for a state basketball tournament for girls be

submitted to the membership for action at the regional meetings in December. The committee presented two plans. One plan called for a first round playoff to qualify four teams which would play for the state championship on Friday and Saturday afternoons at the same site and at the same time the boys' state tournament was being held; the other plan provided that an eight-team tournament for the eight regional winners would be held on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of the week following the state tournament for boys. The principal difference in the two tournament plans was that "one called for the first round to be played between neighboring regional champions in their own sections, leaving only four teams to be brought to the state playoff."<sup>59</sup>

Representatives of member schools voted at the December, 1957, regional meetings to adopt the eight-team format for the first state basketball tournament for girls since 1929. The tournament was to be held the week following the boys' state tournament.

The Board of Control approved eight motions with regard to the girls' state tournament at the January, 1958, meeting.

1. The 1958 state tournament for girls would be held at David Lipscomb College in Nashville.
2. Three officials would be used for the tournament. The officials fee would be \$18.75 per

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<sup>59</sup> "8-Team Girls' Tourney Set," The Nashville Tennessean, 15 Dec. 1957, C4.

game plus the cost of lodging, mileage at seven cents per mile round trip, and a \$25.00 meal allowance.

3. The tournament director would receive \$100.00 for his services.

4. The host school would get \$500.00 or five percent of gate receipts after operation costs if the percentage was greater than \$500.00.

5. Ticket prices were set at \$1.00 for general admission and \$1.50 for reserved seats.

6. The same style of program as used for the boys' state tournament would be used for the girls' state tournament.

7. The state tournament committee would conduct the drawing for the tournament and, if possible, follow a plan of drawing that would make it impossible for adjoining regions to meet in the opening round.

8. Officials who worked the tournament would have to meet certain requirements as recommended by the State Basketball Committee.<sup>60</sup>

The eight teams to compete in the 1958 girls' state tournament were: Chester County, Coker County, Hornbeak, Issac Litton, Loretto, Maryville Everett, Soddy-Daisy, and Woodbury. The closeness of the scores and the even competition added much excitement to the first girls' state tournament held in more than a quarter of a century. Loretto defeated Isaac Litton of Nashville by a score of 57-45 in the final game to claim the 1958 state championship for girls. Of the eight games played, one was decided by one point, one

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<sup>60</sup> "Summary of Board of Control Meeting," TSSAA News 12, no. 6 (1958): 8.

by two points, one by three points, one by four points, and two were decided by five points. The attendance was exceptionally good during the opening round on Thursday. During the semi-finals on Friday, the David Lipscomb College gymnasium was comfortably filled and an overflow, standing-room-only crowd attended the finals on Saturday. Mack Craig of David Lipscomb College served as the tournament director for the revived girls' state tournament. The financial statement showed the TSSAA made a net profit from the girls' state tournament of \$4,699.28 compared to the net profit from the boys' state tournament of \$10,418.54.

The selection process for the next year's state tournament site had traditionally been made during the state tournament week. However, it was decided that the 1959 site for the girls' state tournament be deferred until August. One reason for the delay could have centered around the decision to increase the number of girls' teams to sixteen. The sixteen-team format was approved by the TSSAA Board of Control in January, 1959, in response to recommendations from member schools. Regional runners-up as well as regional winners would qualify for state tournament play. In the regional meetings, 213 member schools voted for the sixteen-team tournament, while only thirty votes were cast against the change. The basic regulations used in operating the boys' state tournament would be followed by the girls. David

Lipscomb College would again host the tournament which would begin on Tuesday afternoon, March 17, 1959.

The number of people attending the 1959 tournament was not as great as it was during the first year. The session on Saturday night was the only session to draw a full house in Lipscomb's McQuiddy Gymnasium which saw Maryville Porter defeat Dekalb County 47-46. Since the number of teams went from eight to sixteen, the number of sessions also doubled, which increased expenses. The amount of expenditures exceeded the revenue, thus causing a deficit for the tournament of \$1,621.77. However, this financial loss did not seem to greatly concern the Board of Control because they voted to accept the invitation from David Lipscomb College to again host the 1960 state tournament for girls.

Since the state was redivided into nine regions, there would have to be some adjustments made as to how only sixteen teams would qualify for state tournament play. Under the plan approved by the Board of Control, Regions One and Nine would qualify only the regional winner because in Region One, Districts One and Two did not play girls' basketball, the same situation as Districts Thirty-five and Thirty-six in Region Nine.

This plan would also make it possible to begin the state tournament on Tuesday rather than Monday and would remove the possibility of a girls' team having to play five games in six

days in order to win the state championship. The Board of Control also ruled that all regional tournaments for girls must be completed prior to the opening date of the boys' state tournament which was held the week preceding the girls' state tournament. The purpose of this ruling was to give the girls' teams who qualified for the state tournament a week's rest before entering the competition for the state title. A number of girls' regional tournaments had been held the same week as the boys' state tournament; it was the view of the Board that the girls needed a week free from competition prior to the girls' state tournament.

Milan High School, which was undefeated and picked as the pre-tournament favorite, defeated Chester County for the 1960 Girls' State Champion. While attendance was still far from capacity at most sessions, it had increased from 1959. Even though the finals were played before a capacity crowd, the tournament again showed a deficit of \$911.20.

The 1960 tournament turned out to be the last girls' tournament to be played at Lipscomb. Prior to the girls' state tournament, invitations had been received from Morristown High School, Austin Peay State College, Middle Tennessee State College, and David Lipscomb College to serve as hosts for the 1961 state tournament for girls. The Board of Control voted to accept the invitation of Middle Tennessee State College in Murfreesboro to host the 1961 tournament.

Rule changes and decisions had been made on several occasions with respect to girls' play. The rules published by the Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee for Secondary Schools were being used by the TSSAA. These rules followed closely the rules governing boys' play. According to Mr. A. F. Bridges, former Executive Secretary of the TSSAA and former secretary of the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations, a meeting was held during the summer of 1960 to consider any rule changes that needed to be made with respect to girls' play. Mr. Bridges solicited any suggestions from coaches, principals, and officials which would "make changes only where necessary to safeguard the health of the girls who participate."<sup>61</sup>

The first three years of the girls' tournament found that the tournament expenses and general procedures were the same as the boys' tournament. Each team was allowed ten players. The schools who participated in the state tournament received fifteen passes: ten for players, one for a manager, and four for coaches, principals, and other school officials. With the 1961 tournament for girls, each team could have twelve players. A total of seventeen passes were issued, to be used as needed by each team. A meal allowance had increased from \$4.00 per day per player to \$5.00 per day

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<sup>61</sup> Bridges, 1987.

per player. Motel expenses were allowed for a maximum of fifteen people per team at the actual rate charged by the motel if the teams stayed in specific motels or hotels. An incidental expense payment per team per day was increased from \$10.00 per day to \$20.00 per day. Expense allowances ended with the noon meal on the day following the team's loss. Teams that played in the final games on Saturday night would be limited to a maximum of six nights lodging and seven days food allowance. The mileage allowance of forty cents per mile, per team, round trip remained the same as was begun in 1958.

Attendance at the state tournament increased. The attendance at Middle Tennessee State College surpassed that of any previous year. Both the semi-final and finals were played before a "sell-out" crowd. Financial figures show a net profit to the TSSAA of \$2,837.29. Smyrna defeated Loretto to take the championship by a one-point victory on the last shot of the game. Coach Charles "Bubba" Murphy served as the tournament director for a salary of \$200.00.

The National Basketball Committee had made several changes in playing rules for the 1961-1962 season. The major rule changes affected both boys' and girls' play with minor variations to conform to girls' rules. The major changes included a revised court diagram which called for a neutral zone of twelve inches wide and eight inches deep between the

first and second lane spaces on each side of the free throw lane; also it was no longer necessary for the scorer to keep a record of the player's position, except in girls' game since it was necessary for the scorer to know whether the player was a guard or forward. The "sudden-death" method for deciding tie games was eliminated; as was the free throw for an offensive foul.

During the December meeting, the TSSAA Board of Control approved two proposals that had been presented by member schools. The first proposal would allow TSSAA member schools to schedule and participate in athletic contests with schools that were members of the Mid-South Association of Private Schools and schools operated by the State Department of Education, provided all players allowed to represent these schools met all TSSAA eligibility requirements. Middle and West Tennessee voted in favor of the proposal while East Tennessee rejected the proposal. The second proposal dealt with the same basic schools as the first proposal except that the rules and regulations of the TSSAA must be followed in all contests. Voting on this proposal was like the first, East Tennessee voting against with West and Middle Tennessee voting in favor of the proposal. As the state tournament returned to Middle Tennessee State College, the only change from previous years was that no team would be permitted to

practice in the gymnasium where the tournament was being played.

The 1962 girls' finals saw Bradley Central of Cleveland a winner over Walland by a score of 46-30. Attendance figures were down and TSSAA had a net profit of only \$364.32.

The Porter High Pantherettes' became the first repeat champion in girls' basketball since the restoration of a girls' state tournament in 1958. Porter defeated Walland 36-25 in the finals of the 1963 state tournament. This was also the second consecutive year that Walland had been defeated in the finals in their bid for a girls' state championship. Ironically, both teams were from Blount County, and both teams had made previous appearances in the state playoffs. The week prior to the girls' state tournament, the Board of Control met to deal with a request from member schools in Region One to reconsider the possibility of allowing two teams from that region to qualify for the state tournament for girls. Those making the request maintained that even though only two districts in Region One played girls' basketball, the two districts have almost as many girls' teams as some of the regions that qualify two teams. After much discussion, the Board of Control voted to make no change in the number and manner of qualifying teams for the state basketball tournament for girls.

As had been discussed previously, one of the concerns about girls' basketball had centered around the emotional aspect of the game. Many had been concerned about the high emotional state that girls often found themselves in during the course of a basketball game. Several girls' basketball coaches had asked for an official rules interpretation dealing with a situation in which "an individual of the defensive team screams directly into the face of the opponent or constantly screams at the opponent throughout the game for the purpose of unnerving their opponents, thereby securing an advantage."<sup>62</sup>

Since there had been some difference of opinion with respect to this aspect of play, an official interpretation had been obtained from the Executive Secretary of the National Federation, Mr. Cliff Fagan. Mr. Fagan's ruling stated that "Excessive screaming for the purpose of upsetting an opponent is considered unsportsmanlike and unethical. It is classified as baiting, which is a foul."<sup>63</sup> Mr. Fagan further expressed that merely talking to an opponent without baiting and occasionally yelling while shooting, passing, or dribbling would be within the spirit of the rule. The spirit of the rule did not include excessive screaming or the

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<sup>62</sup> Don Sauder, "Whistle Notes," TSSAA News 18, no. 3 (1963): 4-5.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

constant use of the voice at a higher pitch for the purpose of wearing down the opponent's tolerance for such tactics.

The 1964 girls' state tournament produced many exciting moments as well as setting eleven new state records for girls. Shelbyville Central's Eaglettes defeated Bradley Central by a score of 48-46. Capacity crowds were on hand for the semi-final and final sessions. Total paid attendance reached 16,668 and netted the TSSAA a profit of \$4,028.86, the largest net to date. However, this figure was still far below that of the boys' state which showed attendance figures of 42,934 and a profit to the TSSAA of \$37,462.69.

#### Integration Issues Face TSSAA

During the March, 1964, Board of Control meeting, a date was set for a special meeting between the Board of Control of the TSSAA and a committee representing the Tennessee High School Athletic Association. This meeting was historical in nature because the Tennessee High School Athletic Association was an association made up of Negro schools throughout the state. Heretofore, there had been little, if any, association with Negro schools since the TSSAA prohibited its member schools from playing non-member schools.

The meeting held on April 18, 1964, brought together the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, the

Tennessee High School Athletic Association, and the Middle Tennessee Athletic Association. At this meeting, the athletic problems growing out of the integration of the schools of Tennessee were discussed at considerable length with a tentative agreement being reached on a plan which would provide an affiliate membership in the TSSAA for the Negro schools.

As affiliate members of the TSSAA, the Negro schools could schedule individual contests with any TSSAA school in any sport if both schools agreed to such schedules. Affiliate members would also be eligible to compete in TSSAA meets and tournaments in spring sports. However, the TSSAA would set up a separate tournament series in basketball and wrestling for schools with affiliate memberships. In a decision to lessen the possibility of recruiting by both white and Negro schools, a transfer rule was established to help protect the affiliate members against the loss of athletics to schools that were becoming integrated. The organizations also agreed that Negro officials would be required to register with the TSSAA since affiliate member schools would have to use registered officials in all contests. Local Negro organizations of officials would continue to function under their own officers and would continue to assign officials to the schools that they had been serving. The TSSAA Board of Control voted to accept

Negro schools that had formerly belonged to the Tennessee High School Athletic Association and the Middle Tennessee Athletic Association on June 11, 1964, as affiliate members of the TSSAA.

In a November, 1964, Board of Control meeting, a committee of the TSSAA met with a committee representing the Affiliate TSSAA schools to make plans for the basketball tournament series for 1965. The Affiliate TSSAA tournament for both girls and boys would be played at Tennessee State University in Nashville. The field would consist of eight girls' and eight boys' teams from across the state.

During this same meeting, the Board of Control authorized the Executive Secretary to "declare eligible, Negro athletes who transfer from Affiliate member schools to a school that is desegregating for the first time if it could be shown that there is a definite hardship involved in requiring the athlete to continue attending the Affiliate member school."<sup>64</sup>

Keeping in mind the theory that girls need more rest than boys in strenuous athletic contests, the TSSAA continued to hold to the policy which would give girls more rest between tournaments. A request had been made by some member schools to conduct the girls' regional tournaments during the

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<sup>64</sup> "Summary of Board of Control Meeting," TSSAA News 19, no. 4 (1964): 9.

same week as the boys' state tournament. This request was denied by the Board of Control referring to the rule which established the fact that regional tournaments for boys and girls should be completed no later than the weekend preceding the boys' state tournament. Since the girls' state tournament was played after the boys' state tournament, a week's rest would still be the rule.

For the fourth straight year, Somerville from Fayette County had advanced to the state tournament. The year 1965 proved to be their year by defeating Sevier County High of Sevierville 46-42. In the Affiliate State Tournament for Girls, Harris High of Shelbyville outscored tourney favorite Fayette County Training of Somerville 47-33 to win its first state crown. The Affiliate TSSAA Tournament saw eight teams from four regions competing for the state championship. Both girls and boys played the same week at Tennessee State University. Financial statements showed a paid attendance of 2,679 and a deficit of \$4,551.10 to the TSSAA for the entire tournament. This would be the only year for an Affiliate tournament.

At the close of the 1965 season, the TSSAA Legislative Council and the Board of Control passed two significant pieces of legislation. One rule established an age limit of nineteen as of September 1 in order for a student to be eligible to participate in TSSAA sports. The age limit would

not become effective until the beginning of the 1968-1969 school year, which would give any student presently enrolled in high school the opportunity to complete their present eligibility. A second item established a closer relationship between the TSSAA and the Tennessee Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (TAHPER). The Executive Secretary, or one of the assistant secretaries, would meet with the Executive Committee of the TAHPER and serve as a liason between the two organizations. Since the Director of Health and Physical Education for the State of Tennessee presently served as an advisory member of the TSSAA Board of Control, both organizations could work closer with problems that might arise involving interscholastic athletics.

The 1966 girls' state tournament saw Maury High School from Dandridge defeat Friendsville by a score of 52-47. Even though the finals were played before a capacity crowd at Middle Tennessee State College, attendance figures for the tournament were down from 1965, showing a net profit for the TSSAA of only \$1,083.32 as opposed to the boys' state tournament profit of \$37,651.11.

In August of 1966, the Board of Control announced that Gill Gideon, Jr., formerly of Jackson, had been named Assistant Secretary of the TSSAA. The Board of Control also announced two major rule changes for girls. Both major rule revisions had been made in June at a meeting of the Girls'

National Basketball Rules Committee for Secondary Schools. The first rule change provided that the ball be put in play at the beginning of each quarter and extra period(s) at the center circle by a jump ball between any two opponents. This new rule changed the former process in which each team would alternate the throw-in at the beginning of each quarter or extra period.

The second major rule revision dealt with the manner in which the center throw was to be administered. For a center throw, a forward of the team who was putting the ball into play could now be in any part of the six foot radius center circle of her front court. The forward could pass the ball to her other forwards, or to her guards in back court, provided the pass was made within five seconds from the time she received the ball from the official. The forward who was initiating the throw-in was the only player allowed in the six-foot radius circle on either side of the center line.

Porter High School of Maryville captured the 1967 girls' state basketball crown by defeating the Tigerettes of Waverly Central High School in the final game 62-56. Because Region One had increased to two teams, Porter found itself playing five games in five days to become the first girls' team to become a three-time winner.

Several decisions were made during the March, 1967, Board of Control meeting held in Knoxville. For the first

time in seven years, the girls' state tournament was moved from Middle Tennessee State University to the Jackson Coliseum. Jackson High School would host the 1968 playoff at the new field house being constructed by the city of Jackson. The new facility would seat five thousand and the tournament would be held March 19-23. It was also noted that Region Eight would qualify three teams for the 1968 tournament since none of the schools in Region Nine played girls' basketball. At this same meeting, the Board of Control adopted a basketball redistricting plan for the schools in West Tennessee as a final step in the desegregation program of the TSSAA. The Board also approved the purchase of land in Hermitage, Tennessee, for the new site of the TSSAA offices which had previously been located in Trenton, Tennessee.

In May, 1967, Tennessee hosted the annual meeting of the Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee. The meeting in Memphis was attended by A. F. Bridges and Gill Gideon from Tennessee. Commissioners, Executive Secretaries, and Assistant Secretaries from Louisiana, Oklahoma, Georgia, Missouri, and South Carolina high school associations also attended the meeting. Even though North Dakota, South Dakota, and Mississippi used the girls' rule book published by this committee, there were no representatives at this meeting.

One rule change was passed and one proposal was to be placed on the 1968 agenda after coaches were given time to experiment with the proposed rule change. The changed rule would limit a player to only the front half of the twelve-foot center circle on a throw-in by the offensive team.

The proposed rule to permit any four players of a team to be in either half of the court at one time provoked a lengthy discussion. This type of play was permitted in the rules published by the Division For Girls' and Women's Sports and the A.A.U. rules.

The year 1967 ended with an editorial in the TSSAA News that reaffirmed the position of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. The article titled "TSSAA Not a Separate Entity In Itself" was written to suppress the critics of the TSSAA who believed the organization was exercising too much power. The article reestablished the position of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. (See Appendix B)

As previously mentioned, for the first time since the girls' state tournament was reinstated in 1958, the tournament site moved out of Middle Tennessee. The 1968 girls' state tournament was held in the new Jackson Coliseum in Jackson, Tennessee. The decision to move apparently was a good one because a new attendance record for the tournament was set at 24,685. This new attendance figure broke the 1965

record of 16,668 by 8,017 paid admissions. Considering that rain and snow played havoc with the fans, topped off by a sixteen inch snow storm, which cancelled the Friday night session, the tournament was a success by all standards. This year's tournament grossed over \$33,000 and netted the TSSAA \$15,293.76. In the final game on Monday night, undefeated Waverly carried home the 1968 TSSAA Girls' State Tournament championship trophy by downing Maryville Everett 73-64.

#### Classification Proposed-Legal Status Challenged

Even though the girls' state tournament in 1968 was successful, there were some serious problems and decisions facing the TSSAA. The agenda for the fall regional meetings contained a record-breaking number of proposals. One of the most important proposals called for a classification system of senior high schools according to enrollment for basketball tournament play. The proposal suggested a state tournament for each classification, depending on the number of classifications, and a second tournament of champions in which the finalists of each state-classified tournament would participate. Another important proposal called for a TSSAA-sponsored All-Star basketball game for girls. These, as well as other proposals, would be acted upon during the January, 1969, Board of Control meeting.

During the spring of 1968, the TSSAA was faced with its most difficult challenge to date. The legal status of the TSSAA had been questioned. On March 4, 1968, Senate Joint Resolution No. 80 was introduced by Senators Goodard of Maryville and Ayers of Knoxville. The resolution provided

That the administrative organization, the program, and the activities of the officials of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) be studied, investigated, and evaluated by a joint committee of the 85th General Assembly, composed of three senators appointed by the Speaker of the Senate, and four representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.<sup>65</sup>

A. F. Bridges, Executive Secretary of the TSSAA, had ruled on two situations, both from East Tennessee, that led not only parents but the county school superintendents of Knox and Sevier Counties to attempt to take the management of high school athletics out of the hands of member schools and put it in the hands of the State Legislature.

In the first case, parents in Knox County had sought to set aside the transfer rule as it applied to two boys who transferred from private schools to public schools by obtaining an injunction which set aside the ruling of Mr. Bridges declaring the two boys ineligible. The second case involved Gatlinburg-Pittman High School in Sevier County in which the father of a player on the girls' basketball team

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<sup>65</sup> "No Legislative Investigation of TSSAA," editorial, TSSAA News 22, no. 8 (1968): 4-5.

attacked the visiting coach on the basketball court in full sight of everyone. As a result of the incident, Mr. Bridges ruled that Gatlinburg-Pittman could not compete in basketball tournaments in the 1967-1968 school year. In both cases, Mr. Bridges' rulings were in accordance with existing rules and regulations of the TSSAA. Both decisions were ultimately appealed to the court system and both were upheld in favor of the TSSAA by the courts.

In an editorial by F. M. Williams of The Nashville Tennessean, Mr. Williams suggested, "The direction in which the proposed probe was originally pointed would destroy the state's high schools' right to control their own activities."<sup>66</sup> Mr. Williams also pointed out that "Making rules and regulations for sports was not the duty of the legislature because it (the legislature) was composed of men with limited athletic background and virtually no knowledge of the inner workings of sports programs."<sup>67</sup>

Mr. Williams quoted Mr. A. F. Bridges as saying, "If schools believe our rules and policies were incorrect, the place to fight them was in our association. There were rules I didn't completely agree with, but they were rules that were

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<sup>66</sup> F. M. Williams, "Legislative Probe of TSSAA Wrong," The Nashville Tennessean, 1 Mar. 1968, C1.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

passed by our membership. The TSSAA was not created by law, but by the schools."<sup>68</sup>

During the January 10, 1969, Board of Control meeting, action was taken on several proposals mentioned earlier. Approval was given for a girls' All-Star basketball game for 1969 to be played at Cookeville during the TSSAA coaches clinic in July. A committee was appointed to draw up plans for the game. The board declined a request submitted by basketball coaches of the Knoxville area to appoint a committee to study and make recommendations for classifying TSSAA schools for basketball tournament play. The board had earlier approved a basketball redistricting plan that would go into effect with the 1969-1970 school year. Under the new plan, there would be twelve regions playing girls' basketball. Each region would hold a tournament with each regional winner advancing directly to the state tournament. The Board of Control also awarded the girls' state tournament to Jackson for the second year in hopes that another record crowd would attend the tournament.

There were no major rule changes in girls' rules for the 1968-1969 season. The minor changes were made to adjust the girls' rules to changes that had been made in the boys' rules, simply for game administration by officials. As

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

mentioned earlier, coaches were asked to study an AAU-DGWS style of play which allowed four players to be in either half of the court. The "roving player" style of play could become official during the 1969-1970 season by all states using the rule book published by the Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee.

In the 1969 Girls' State Tournament, Franklin County High School from Winchester captured the championship by pulling four straight upsets defeating Obion County Central 52-45, Walland 38-36, Woodbury 54-46, and Maryville Porter 45-43 in the championship game.

The 1969-1970 basketball season for girls introduced the "roving" type player on an experimental basis. The Board of Control agreed to allow this type of play for regular season games if both schools agreed to play using the rover. This type of play allowed players to cross the mid-court line and would allow four girls from each team to be in either half of the court at any one time. The Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee had voted to make this style of play mandatory beginning with the 1970-1971 school year.

The "roving" style of girls' basketball was short-lived in Tennessee. At the regional meetings around the state, all three sections voted strongly in favor of keeping the present style (six-on-six) and to adopt a new rule book that would reflect this style of girls' play. The TSSAA Legislative

Council authorized the Board of Control to designate the official rule book to be used in girls' basketball in Tennessee. The rule book published by the National Basketball Rules Committee was used for the 1969-1970 year. However, the National Federation had called a meeting to consider writing girls' rules. If this new code reflected the present style of play, Tennessee would adopt the National Federation; if the present style of play was not reflected in the National Federation rules, the TSSAA would probably write its own rule book.

Jackson again hosted the state tournament for girls. Bradley Central from Cleveland defeated Maryville Porter, Sevier County, Lebanon, and Chattanooga Red Bank to capture the 1970 Girls' State Championship. Attendance figures were down somewhat from the two previous years, netting the TSSAA \$10,991.79, as compared to the boys' state tournament of \$56,917.08.

Attempts to abolish the TSSAA by legislative enactment had again arisen at the state level. Senator Avon Williams had introduced a bill in the legislature which, if passed, would take away the TSSAA's power over the state high schools' athletic programs. Senate Bill No. 1105 read:

All public secondary schools or clubs, organizations, or teams operating under the auspices of the public secondary schools are prohibited from joining or becoming a member of any

non-academic or non-scholastic association or organization which is not specifically created by state law as an integral part of the public school system which exercises regulatory authority over the affairs of any public secondary school or club, organization or teams operating under the auspices of any public secondary school which are members and which exclude inter-school participation with public secondary schools who are not members.<sup>69</sup>

The bill would prohibit public schools from belonging to any organization not created by state law as part of the public school system which had authority over the schools. Williams contended that since public money was spent on public schools and athletics, they should not be controlled by private agents.

Martin Karant of radio and television station WKPT in Kingsport responded to the bill by saying,

Senator Williams is a Negro who represents a large number of Negroes in his district, among which are the folks who deeply resented action of TSSAA last year when it suspended Nashville Cameron High from all athletic competition following a very ugly incident involving a Gatlinburg-Pittman student at a basketball tournament. The suspension was entirely justified in view of the overwhelming evidence presented to the TSSAA and which was later upheld in the Supreme Court of Tennessee. Despite all this, Williams charged 'racism' was behind the suspension. The evidence against the charge was clear-cut.<sup>70</sup>

Mr. Williams responded by saying that the bill had no connection with the Cameron case, but that "the Cameron case

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<sup>69</sup> "Sen. Williams Introduces Bill Stripping TSSAA," The Nashville Tennessean, 16 Jan. 1970, 29.

<sup>70</sup> Martin Karant, "Senator Avon Williams and The TSSAA," TSSAA News 24, no. 9 (1970): 5.

and any others of this sort may provide some background."<sup>71</sup> Senator Williams also introduced a second bill during this same session which provided that the State Board of Education would make uniform regulations governing all athletic programs, including regulations as to eligibility for individuals, teams, officials, health standards, and places where events may take place. The second bill also provided that a division would be created in the State Department of Education which would govern athletics and would be headed by a supervisor of athletics and physical education.

The quick response by superintendents, principals, coaches, game officials, media, and many others interested in high school athletics to their representatives in the General Assembly caused both bills to die in the education committees of the Senate and House. Executive Secretary Bridges summed up the issue in this manner:

TSSAA, like all organizations, has its weaknesses. So long as the rules that govern the high school athletic programs can be made by the school administrators and coaches who are in daily contact with the problems growing out of athletic competition, such weaknesses can be found and eliminated and the program can continue to contribute to the development of the youth in our secondary schools. If the management of our athletic activities is ever taken out of the hands of the school people and placed in the hands of those who do not have first-hand knowledge of the difficult problems that are involved and who are

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<sup>71</sup> "Sen. Williams Introduces Bill Stipping TSSAA," The Nashville Tennessean, 16 Jan. 1970, 29.

subject to political pressures, it will be a sad day for the schools of Tennessee.<sup>72</sup>

As the 1970-1971 season began to unfold, several proposals were facing the membership and the Board of Control. Two proposals were acted upon by the Board of Control early enough to be incorporated for the 1970-1971 season. One proposal authorized the Executive Director to prepare a supplement outlining the difference in girls' and boys' basketball rules. The supplement was to be inserted in the boys' rule book by the National Federation and would be the official rules for girls' play in Tennessee. A second proposal amended the present plan for the state tournament to provide twenty-four girls' teams instead of the present sixteen teams who would qualify for state tournament play. In actuality, the twenty-four teams would qualify for a "sub-state" playoff and only the top twelve teams would advance to the state tournament.

In January, 1971, there were 393 senior high schools and 115 junior high schools holding membership in the TSSAA. However, there were many schools that still did not have girls' basketball. A proposal was presented to the Board of Control to appoint a committee to prepare a basketball classification plan to be presented in the regular membership meeting in the spring. The initiation of a classification

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<sup>72</sup> "Attempts to Abolish TSSAA By Legislative Enactment Fails," TSSAA News 24, no. 9 (1970): 4.

system should lead to greater participation by girls on a more equal and competitive basis.

The Jackson Coliseum was again the site of the 1971 Girls' State Tournament. Even though the net to the TSSAA was almost \$20,000, part of this increase was due to the new "sub-state" site plan. The attendance figure at Jackson reached 18,433 paid admission, while sub-state games were played at Hendersonville, Murfreesboro, Jackson, Maryville, Waverly, and Athens. These sub-state games accounted for 9,064 paid attendance. In the finals of the girls' state, host Jackson Central-Merry was defeated by Lebanon High School by the score of 56-52. This was Lebanon's fourth trip to the girls' state tournament and their first state championship.

#### A. F. Bridges Announces His Retirement Plans

When the TSSAA Board of Control met at Henry Horton State Park on June 13-15, 1971, an era came to an end, not only for the sport of basketball, but for the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. At that meeting, the Board of Control accepted "with regrets" the announcement of A. F. Bridges that he planned to retire as Executive Secretary of the TSSAA as of June 30, 1972. "It is with extreme regret we accept A. F. Bridges' resignation," said Board president Jimmy Edwards of Antioch. "He and TSSAA have

gone hand-in-hand through the last twenty-five years. It was with his guidance and integrity that TSSAA has grown into the organization that it is today."<sup>73</sup>

Mr. Bridges had brought national recognition to Tennessee in high school athletics, particularly in the field of girls' athletics and in a training program for officials. In July, 1970, the National Federation of State High School Associations honored him with its highest award, the Certificate of Merit. In announcing his retirement, Mr. Bridges stated:

The time comes to all athletes and game officials when they realize that they are slowing down. Sometimes there are those who hold on too long because they love what they are doing and do not want to give it up. In many respects, the same is true for a man who works in an administrative position. There comes a time when he realizes that it is for his best interest and the best interests of the organization for which he works to place the reins of management in the hands of a younger, more energetic individual. This time has come for me.<sup>74</sup>

Mr. Bridges completed twenty-six years as the first full-time Executive Secretary of the TSSAA. Prior to being named the Executive Secretary, he had served six years as a member of the TSSAA Board of Control. He also served as coach, teacher, administrator, and a civic leader in Trenton,

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<sup>73</sup> "A. F. Bridges To Retire June 30, 1972," TSSAA News 26, no. 1 (1971): 3.

<sup>74</sup> C. B. Fletcher, "A. F. Bridges Retires As Head of TSSAA," Nashville Banner, 14 June 1972, 32.

Covington, Milan, and Henderson, Tennessee. Mr. Bridges was active in the Methodist Church and the Rotary Club, once serving as District Governor of the 236th District of Rotary International, in Trenton, Tennessee, where he and his wife lived.

The Board acted almost immediately in naming Assistant Secretary Gill Gideon to replace Mr. Bridges beginning July 1, 1972. Mr. Gideon joined the TSSAA in 1966 as Assistant Secretary. He was recognized as one of the top rules men in the country. While coaching and teaching in Lexington, Mr. Gideon coached football, boys' basketball, and girls' basketball. He had four teams (three boys, one girls) in state basketball tournaments. He also coached and served as an administrator in Jackson for four years prior to being named Assistant Secretary of the TSSAA.

As had been directed earlier, a proposed classification plan for basketball play was also presented at this meeting. Schools would be placed in three classifications: AAA, AA, and A. Enrollment figures for the purpose of classification would be in grades 9-12. Class AAA would be for enrollment over 1,000; class AA would be for enrollment of 500-999; and class A would be for enrollment of 499 and under.

The proposed Class AAA and AA for girls would divide the state into four regions with no district tournaments. The first and second place teams in each region would advance to

the state tournament. Eight teams in each class would qualify for the state tournament which would be held a week prior to the boys' AAA and AA state tournaments and the week after the class A tournament for both boys and girls.

The proposed classification plan called for such drastic changes in basketball tournament series that the TSSAA scheduled meetings across the state to explain the plan and field any questions that might arise. However, before a vote was taken on the three-classification scheme, another proposal was submitted by member schools which called for a classification plan which provided that member schools be divided into two classes, L (large) and S (small). The proposal also called for only the senior high schools which were playing basketball to be allowed to vote on the proposal.

One other item that appeared in the June, 1971, Board of Control meeting recommended that the Legislative Council adopt a regulation in the TSSAA Bylaws which prohibited boys and girls from playing on the same team in any sport.

The L (large) and S (small) classification plan emerged as the most popular plan. The new basketball classification plan was voted on by the member schools, and the Board of Control formally approved the two classification plan at its January meeting. Under the new set-up, schools with an enrollment of 550 or less would be in Class S (small), and

those with an enrollment of 551 or more would be in Class L (large). The classification of a school would be based on enrollment in grades 9-12 and would become effective with the 1972-1973 basketball season.

The state was divided into eight regions in each class. In the girls' program in Class S, each region would have two districts, and the top four teams in each district advanced to the region. Winners and runners-up in the regional tournaments would qualify for the sub-state games, and the eight sub-state winners advanced to the state tournament. Due to the fact that there were fewer girls' regions in Class L, only six teams would advance to the state tournament using the same format as Class S.

The 1972 Girls' State Tournament was again played in the Jackson Coliseum. Undefeated Marshall County (30-0) had made four previous trips to the Girls' State. In their fifth jaunt, they defeated Warren County 56-34 to claim the final true "state" championship before the new classification plan went into effect.

As had been proposed in June, 1971, the Legislative Council adopted a regulation which read: "Boys and girls shall not be permitted to participate in interschool athletic games as mixed teams, nor shall boys' teams and girls' teams

participate against each other in interschool athletic contests in sports sponsored by this association."<sup>75</sup>

During the March meeting, the Board of Control voted to return the 1973 Girls' State Tournament to the new Murphy Center on the campus of Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. However, an agreement was also made to return the tournament to Jackson in 1974.

As previously discussed, attempts had been made by individuals and special interest groups to discredit the authority of the TSSAA. Since the establishment of the TSSAA in 1925, the State Board of Education had "unofficially recognized" the TSSAA as the regulatory agency for high school sports throughout the state. On August 25, 1972, the Tennessee State Board of Education officially recognized the TSSAA as the governing body of junior and senior high school athletic activities. (See Appendix C)

Several proposals were introduced and voted on during the 1972-1973 season. Most of the proposals centered around changes in the classification system. All proposals for classification changes were voted down by the membership. However, two changes were passed that specifically addressed girls. The first change would allow fourteen girls to dress

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<sup>75</sup> "Minutes of Legislative Council," TSSAA News 26, no. 7 (1972): 8.

in uniform for regional and state tournaments beginning with the 1973-1974 season. Previously only twelve girls had been allowed to dress in uniform for these tournaments. The second change allowed eight teams (previously six) to advance to the central site for state tournament play.

In December, 1972, the TSSAA News reported 190 schools in Class S and 185 schools in class L. Of this number, twenty-one Class S schools did not play girls' basketball and eighty-seven Class L schools did not play girls' basketball. The majority of the schools that did not field a girls' team were from the upper East Tennessee area, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Memphis. However, just prior to the 1973-1974 season, Knoxville City Schools announced they would field girls' basketball teams. This would still leave several schools in Knox County without a girls' basketball program.

With the announcement from Knoxville, Memphis also announced that girls' basketball would be added to their sports program beginning with the 1974-1975 season. This would add thirty-five teams in girls' basketball from the Memphis area, which would mean two additional regional tournaments as well as a possible increase in the number of girls' teams for the state tournament in Class L.

With the 1972-1973 season just starting, a new classification plan was being proposed for basketball play.

The proposed plan called for classifying schools into three classifications based upon enrollment. Schools with an enrollment of 450 or less would be classed "A"; schools with an enrollment of 451-1000 would be classed "AA"; schools with an enrollment of 1001 or more would be classed "AAA". Each classification would have sixteen districts with Class A schools having eight regions and Class AA and Class AAA schools having four regions.

As the vote was taken across the state by member schools in regional meetings, the new classification system passed by over a two-to-one margin. During the January meeting of the Board of Control, a committee was appointed to work up a three-classification plan in basketball. The committee consisted of: Norman Tunnell, Principal of Rogersville High School; Joe Vann, Principal of Flintville; Joe Higgins, Principal of Nashville Cumberland; Wylie Wheeler, Principal of Milan; Coach Bob Fry at Knoxville Fulton; Coach Sam Brooks of South Pittsburg; Coach Ralph Benson of Lawrence County; Coach Mack Chandler of Parsons Riverside; and Coach Lloyd Williams of Memphis Hamilton. A. F. Bridges, Gill Gideon, and Bob Baldrige of the TSSAA staff were also on this committee. The plan would be to return the proposed classification system for Board approval and then be placed on the agenda for the annual December vote by TSSAA schools.

The first year for the Class S and Class L classification system found Bradley County defeating Warren County 45-43 in the Class L championship, and Jackson County (Gainesboro) defeating Woodbury 43-30 in the Class S championship. Jackson County boasted a 36-0 record in their first and only state championship team.

The 1974 Girls' State Tournament was held in Jackson for the final time. Shelbyville Central topped McNairy Central of Selmer 50-47 for the girls' Class L crown. Trezevant beat defending state champion Jackson County of Gainesboro 51-50 in overtime for the Class S state championship. It is interesting to note that the girls' state tournament was moved back a day so the finals would be on Friday night to make it possible for teams and fans to return home on Saturday in order to avoid the possibility of not being able to find gasoline on Sunday with the federal mandatory closing of all service stations due to a fuel crisis.

When the Board of Control met at Falls Creek Falls State Park on June 9 and 10, 1974, approval was given to the classification plan that had been adopted by the committee appointed in January. The state office was instructed to make the necessary adjustments in the districts and regions in order to have the plan ready for a vote by member schools in September. Another agenda item requested that the Girls' State Tournament be played prior to the Boys' State

Tournament. Since 1958, the Boys' State Tournament had been played first. The Board delayed taking any action on this until the membership voted on the three-classification plan.

Even though the main topic of conversation at the regional meetings around the state was to remain with the Class L and Class S system or restructure to a Class A, AA, and AAA, a vote had to be taken on an agenda item prior to the three classification proposal. A member school had proposed to eliminate classification altogether which would revert to the old system prior to 1973. However, this proposal was defeated by almost a six-to-one margin. When the three regions voted on the proposed three classification system, the member schools voted 130-72 in favor of the new classification system.

As the Board of Control met at the TSSAA state office January 13 and 14, 1975, the new basketball classification plan was formally adopted and would go into effect with the 1975-1976 school year. Both the Girls' State Tournament and the Boys' State Tournament would be played in Murphy Center at Middle Tennessee State University. Additional expense allowances for teams participating in the state playoffs were also approved. The state tournament dates were set with the Girls' State Tournament still following the Boys' State Tournament.

The basketball classification plan adopted by the Board of Control in January varied only slightly from the original proposal in 1972. The new plan was as follows: (1) Class A: school population 0-499, eight regions, sixteen districts; (2) Class AA: school population 500-999, four regions, sixteen districts; and (3) Class AAA: school population 1000 and above, eight regions, sixteen districts. Class A and Class AAA would have two districts in each region. Class AA would have four districts in each region. Districts would vary from as few as four teams to as many as fourteen teams.

The third and final Girls' State Tournament in Class S and Class L found Bradley Central of Cleveland capturing the Class L championship and Ooltewah winning the Class S championship. Bradley County, sporting a 36-0 record, defeated Lebanon 54-34 for its fourth girls' state title. Ooltewah used two overtimes to take the Class S crown by defeating Yorkville 53-48. During the tournament, it was also announced that TSSAA member schools had voted 272-32 on the proposal to play all three classes of basketball at the same time and at the same place in state tournament competition. After one sub-state game on Saturday, all teams would move to Murphy Center at Middle Tennessee State University where the Girls' State Tournament would be played the week before the Boys' State Tournament.

## Chapter 5

### The Modern Era Begins

Even though many changes have taken place in girls' basketball, the three-classification plan and the five-on-five style of play for girls have remained in place since the mid-1970's, thus creating basketball as we know it today.

The new three-classification plan increased competition with schools of equal size. After regular season play concluded, the plan brought twenty-four teams to Murphy Center for state tournament action. The first teams to win the state tournament under the three classification plan were Bradley County (AAA) of Cleveland, Marshall County (AA), and Trezevant (A). This year also marked the year that the Girls' State Tournament was played the week before the Boys' State Tournament since the girls' tournament was reinstated in 1958.

During the tournament, there appeared to be some concern and discussion about the possibility of moving the Class A tournaments (both girls' and boys') to a different location from Class AA and AAA. Under the newly proposed three class system, the first week of the state tournament would be Class A boys and girls, followed by the Class AA and Class AAA girls meet. The boys' AA and AAA would then be held the third week. However, the vote by the Board of Control was to

return both girls' and boys' state tournaments back to Murphy Center with all the classifications playing the same type format as the 1976 tournaments, girls' playing the week preceding the boys' tournament.

#### Six-on-Six vs. Five-on-Five

In 1972, Congress passed a new federal law that would guarantee equal access to sports opportunities for both sexes in public schools and universities. The federal legislation commonly became known as "Title IX." Although Tennessee had recognized girls' basketball for many years, Title IX forced many schools in the state in areas such as Memphis, lower and upper East Tennessee, and Chattanooga to begin playing girls' basketball. Bob Baldrige, Assistant Executive Director of the TSSAA, said, "Even though these areas were reluctant to begin, they worked into it."<sup>1</sup> He went on to say, "The Tri-Cities area did not really recognize women's athletics for many years; although they had it, they made the girls play on odd nights and they would not play girls and boys basketball like the rest of the state played."<sup>2</sup>

In 1976, the TSSAA was confronted with a suit filed under Title IX. Victoria Ann Cape, a junior from Oak Ridge,

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<sup>1</sup> Bob Baldrige, interview with author, 30 Dec. 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

complained the divided court rules were too confining and made it virtually impossible for her to obtain a basketball scholarship in college, where women were playing full court basketball. The complaint essentially asked that girls be allowed to play the full court, five-on-five game like the boys.

The case, Cape v. Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, was heard by U. S. District Judge Robert Taylor in Federal Court in Knoxville. In his order, Judge Taylor ruled that the TSSAA must change from six-girl basketball rules to five-girl basketball rules. Judge Taylor stated that "He planned to place an injunction against TSSAA ordering the change from the six-girl game to the five-girl game on January 1, 1977."<sup>3</sup> However, Judge Taylor agreed on December 27, 1976, to permit the TSSAA to continue the six-player game for girls through the tournament series ending March 12, 1977. In his ruling, Judge Taylor ruled the TSSAA regulations represented sex discrimination and violated the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment.

In December, 1976, the TSSAA membership voted 192-172 to retain the six-on-six rule, thereby supporting the Board of Control to appeal Judge Taylor's decision. Not knowing when the appeal would be heard, the Board of Control met on

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<sup>3</sup> Gill Gideon, Letter to Principals and Girls' Basketball Coaches of TSSAA Schools, 30 Dec. 1976.

August 22, 1977, and passed the following rule: "If schools begin practice October 10 with the five-girl player rules and the court appeal is in favor of the TSSAA, the six-player rule will be immediately in force; and if the season begins and games have been played by the five-player rules and the appeal is in favor of TSSAA, the TSSAA will change to six-player rules."<sup>4</sup>

The appeal was heard by the U. S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. On October 3, 1977, the Court reversed the earlier decision of Federal Judge Taylor, thus allowing the TSSAA to continue the six-on-six girls' play. The Appellate Court held "there is no evidence of any intent to discriminate between the sexes."<sup>5</sup> The Appeals Court pointed out that the case was not a "class action" suit and that the "Plaintiff (Ms. Cape) did not sue as a representative of a class and there is no indication that the other members of her sex who play girls' basketball under present rules share in any way plaintiff's views."<sup>6</sup>

With the Appellate Court ruling, the 1977 girls' basketball season progressed with the state tournament

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<sup>4</sup> Minutes of Board of Control Meeting, TSSAA News 31, no. 2 (1977): 10.

<sup>5</sup> Rick Van Zant, "United Press International Press Release," O56T, 3 Oct. 1977.

<sup>6</sup> Cape v. Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, 563 F. 2d 793 (1977).

setting a new attendance record with 25,683 paid fans. Pickett County defeated South Fulton 39-37 in Class A, Bolivar won over Chester County 52-46 in Class AA, and the Class AAA crown was captured by Mt. Juliet defeating Everett by a score of 57-46.

The TSSAA Legislative Council approved a bylaw's change in April, 1977, that limited practice for girls. Prior to this change, there had been no restriction on girls' basketball practice. The new rule prohibited practice for boys or girls from the opening of the school term until the second Monday in October.

Girls' basketball continued to grow in attendance with the continuance of the six-on-six game. The 1978 Girls' State Tournament played in Murphy Center at Middle Tennessee State University set another new attendance record with 25,842 paid fans. This was the second time in as many years the attendance record had been topped since moving to Murfreesboro. The finals on Saturday night also broke a record with 9,003 paid in attendance. For the second consecutive year, Pickett County won Class A, with Chester County from Henderson, 1977's runner-up, winning Class AA, and 1977's Class AA winner, Bolivar Central, winning 1978's Class AAA.

During the December, 1977, regional meeting, the TSSAA membership voted 191-153 to adopt the five-player rules for

girls beginning with the 1978-1979 school year. The proposal was presented to the Board of Control in January, 1978. A vote was taken to postpone the decision until the March, 1978, Board of Control meeting. When the proposal was again presented, the Board of Control voted to continue to play the two-court division six-girl rules for the 1978-1979 year.

On June 15, 1978, Ronnie Carter, a coach and teacher from Nashville Overton High School joined the staff at the TSSAA. Mr. Carter had coached football, basketball, wrestling, and track. He had also directed the State Wrestling Tournament on two occasions and worked as "Clerk of Course" at four state track and field meets. Ronnie Carter would later play a very important role in the TSSAA as the Executive Director.

The Board of Control met in June, 1978, at Burns, Tennessee, and passed an agenda item that had been on the minds of many the past three years. In that meeting, the following regulations were passed that would apply to girls' basketball for the 1978-1979 school year:

1. All TSSAA district, regional, and state basketball tournaments for girls shall be played by six-girl basketball rules.
2. By mutual agreement, schools may play the National Federation five-player rules for girls during the regular season or in invitational tournaments.

3. If two schools cannot agree on the girls' rules to be played, the six-girl rules shall be used for that game.

4. All invitational tournaments must be approved by the state office and a letter requesting approval must indicate which rules will be played in the tournament.<sup>7</sup>

The issue raised earlier in a suit filed by Oak Ridge High School student Victoria Ann Cape and her father, James Cape, again surfaced when it was announced that the Cape's attorney would file an appeal in the U. S. Supreme Court based upon the decision handed down by the U. S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. However, "no further action was ever taken."<sup>8</sup>

In keeping with the TSSAA commitment to academic standards and at the request of the State Board of Education, the Board of Control voted to recommend to the Legislative Council that all students be required to pass four full units rather than three full units each semester in order to be eligible to participate in athletics. A similar proposal had been voted down by the membership in 1975. The Legislative Council passed this requirement in March as an effort to support the academic criteria as well as the athletic standards for participation.

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<sup>7</sup> "Summary of Board of Control Meeting," TSSAA News 33, no. 1 (1978): 9.

<sup>8</sup> Carter, 1993.

In what was to be the last six-on-six girls' basketball tournament, attendance records were again broken for the third consecutive year at Murphy Center. A total paid attendance of 30,799 saw the 1979 Girls' State Tournament with 10,417 fans witnessing the finals on Saturday night. In those final rounds, Pickett County (Class A) of Birdstown became the first girls' basketball team to ever win three straight titles. Humboldt won the Class AA crown, while the Class AAA title went to Warren County High of McMinnville.

The week following the Boys' State Tournament, the TSSAA Board of Control voted to adopt the National Federation of State High School Association rules for five player girls' basketball. F. M. Williams, a sports writer for the Nashville Banner, suggested this was a "shot in the arm" for the TSSAA. Mr. Williams wrote, "It (the move to five-on-five) was hailed as the greatest move the TSSAA had ever made by some, condemned as the end of the popularity of the girls' sport by others."<sup>9</sup>

The article went on to say that Tennessee's women's coach Pat Head Summitt had commented that if the high schools did not conform with college rules and adopt the five-on-five format, she would not be able to recruit future high school players from her native state of Tennessee. Summitt was

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<sup>9</sup> F. M. Williams, "Five-on-Five Shot in Arm for State," Nashville Banner, 14 Mar. 1986, C1.

quoted as saying, "It takes so long to teach them how to play both ends of the court that they graduate before they catch on."<sup>10</sup>

In the interview with Mr. Bridges concerning the impact of the five-on-five play, he commented, "Quite frankly, when it started, I was not enthusiastic about it, I questioned it in my own mind."<sup>11</sup> He went on to say, "As I watched it and as I have seen the development with what women do now, I think the idea about it too much physically is, (pause) I don't think we need to worry about it."<sup>12</sup>

Mr. Bridges believed the change had made the game a little faster and a little better game of basketball. He also thought that it had simplified the game with respect to officiating, game play, and the fans' understanding of the game and rules. When asked why the state went to a full count five-on-five, Mr. Bridges answered "There were two reasons: (1) it would simplify officiating, and (2) we had coaches who felt it would make it a better, faster game and we had girls who liked to play, (pause) they liked to be able to take a shot at the basket."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Bridges, 1987.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

As the 1979-1980 basketball season came to an end, Pickett County High School (Class A) girls' became the first school ever to win four consecutive state championships. Marshall County of Lewisburg won the Class AA, their third state title, and Nashville Pearl High School won the girls' Class AAA title. As was feared by many, the tournament attendance was down from 1979's 30,799 to a paid attendance in 1980 of only 18,768, the first year of the five-on-five game. The 1980 tournament also was the beginning of new tournament records for girls because of the new style of play in girls' basketball. All old state tournament records were retired by the TSSAA.

During the 1979 state tournament, the first female, Anita Malone of Memphis, was selected as an official. The only other female to call a state tournament was Courtney Erickson of Murfreesboro in 1990. Malone retired from officiating the year after the tournament and Erickson is still an active TSSAA official.

A new tournament format was initiated for the 1981 state tournament. Under this new plan, four teams would advance to the regional tournament with the regional winner and regional runner-up advancing to the sub-state. The sub-state winners would then go to the first round of the state tournament. All first-round games would be played on Wednesday and Thursday with two sessions of three games each. Winners

would advance to the semi-finals on Friday using the two session, three-game format; the final three games in all classes would be held on Saturday. Memphis' B. T. Washington defeated Mt. Juliet in Class AAA, undefeated Giles County won over Milan in Class AA, and Polk County defeated Eagleville in Class A to end the 1981 season.

The TSSAA had always made it a practice of helping schools finance their trips to the state tournament. When the sub-state format began, each team was allowed \$200 for expenses in the sub-state game, and \$200 per day for each team participating in the state tournament. During the spring meeting of the Board of Control, the amount was increased to \$300 per sub-state game and \$300 per day for each team who reached the state tournament. Teams would also receive mileage and would be allowed expense accounts beginning the day they played or the day prior to their scheduled game. Expenses would end the next day the team was eliminated from the tournament or when they won the tournament.

In February, 1982, another honor was bestowed upon a staff member of the TSSAA. Mr. Gill Gideon, Executive Director, was elected President of the National Federation of State High School Associations. Mr. Gideon would be responsible for the membership of the fifty state associations and the District of Columbia which represents

more than 20,000 high schools and some ten million high school students. Mr. Gideon had served as a vital force in high school athletics and was recognized for his contribution with this honor.

For the 1982 state tournament, Smyrna High won the Class AAA, while Giles County of Pulaski took Class AA honors, and Bradford High ruled in Class A.

There had been problems with players and fans in the motels during the past two years in Murfreesboro. The Board of Control had been approached to help work out a solution to the vandalism and mischievous conduct. One outcome from this concern made it mandatory that all schools entering the state tournament attend an orientation session for coaches and principals prior to the tournament. Among the items to be discussed during these orientation meetings were behavior during the tournament, motel assignments of the TSSAA, and behavior of teams at motels. Also, expense checks would not be mailed until after the motel cleared the rooms with the TSSAA.

In early November, 1982, the Board of Control approved a new classification plan placing one third of the schools in each classification with the cut off point being 290 for Class A, Class AA from 291 to 695, and Class AAA schools being 696 and above. However, this action was rescinded in a special called meeting in December. The Board requested

Ronnie Carter to "review all classification plans sent to the state office including six classes, five classes, four classes, and three classes."<sup>14</sup> After much discussion, the three-classification plan was reapproved with the discretion of the Executive Director to make adjustment in districts in order to balance the number of teams in each district. The classification plan would be for two years.

The Legislative Council met in December, 1982, to consider, among other items, letting persons not having teacher certification or who were not full-time employees of the local Board of Education serve as assistant coaches for TSSAA football and basketball and as assistant or head coaches in all remaining TSSAA-approved sports. These non-certified and non-full-time employees could be used only after every effort was made to fill a coaching vacancy with a qualified and certified person employed by the school or school system. This proposal was voted down by 53 to 268.

For the first time since 1975, the 1983 Girls' and Boys' State Tournament would be played at separate locations. The girls would continue to play at Murphy Center on the Middle Tennessee State University campus while the boys' tournament would move to Vanderbilt University in Nashville. The girls' tournament would still be played the week prior to the boys'

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<sup>14</sup> "Summary of Board of Control Meeting," TSSAA News 38, no. 5 (1983): 8.

tournament. In girls' state tournament action, Mt. Juliet won its second girls' Class AAA title over Memphis Mitchell, Chattanooga City won the AA title after finishing second in 1982, and Clarkrange edged Richland for the Class A championship.

During the summer of 1983, the TSSAA and the State Board of Education joined forces to study the athletic and academic relationship in the schools. The committee was given the title of "Ad Hoc Committee To Study the Role of Interscholastic Athletics in Grades K-12." The purpose of this committee was "to study all aspects of interscholastic athletics, including the appropriate governance structure, but with special emphasis on athletics as it relates to the school curriculum and its relative importance to the overall scholastic program."<sup>15</sup> Ronnie Carter pointed out that the meeting was prompted by the question of "Where do TSSAA regulations need to start and how does this need to be set up."<sup>16</sup> As a result of the committee, a new rule was established which basically said that "TSSAA regulations will start at the conclusion of the school day; when the last bell rings at 3:00 p.m., that's when TSSAA practice regulations will begin and during the school day the principal will

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<sup>15</sup> "Summary of Board of Control Meeting," TSSAA News 39, no. 1 (1983): 6.

<sup>16</sup> Carter, 1993.

determine what that school will allow in relationship to athletics."<sup>17</sup>

As previously mentioned, the TSSAA had given financial help to defray expenses for teams who were playing in the sub-state and state tournament games. During the 1983 sub-state games, the TSSAA had an excess income after expenses. The state office had been instructed by the Board of Control to draw up a plan to divide this excess among the teams who participated in the sub-state basketball tournaments, both girls and boys. A total of \$43,708 was shared by each team, which represented \$1.00 for each paid admittance to sub-state games.

The 1984 Girls' State Tournament was again played at Middle Tennessee State University. Chattanooga Brainerd defeated Shelbyville Central by a score of 51-50 in a double overtime game in Class AAA, while York Institute won over Alcoa, and Clarkrange won its second straight Class A title over Rickman 40-38.

One of the original purposes of the TSSAA was to regulate eligibility standards. Early on, the concept of "recruiting" had always been a major concern of the organization. The increasing number of private schools caused the TSSAA to re-examine and re-emphasize to its member

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

schools the recruiting policy. The Legislative Council took another firm stand during the 1983-1984 season. The recruiting rule was amended to read: "The use of undue influence on a student (with or without an athletic record), his parents or guardians by any person connected, or not connected, with the school to receive or to retain a student for athletic purposes shall be a violation of the recruiting rule."<sup>18</sup>

Throughout the history of basketball, many rules have been adjusted with respect to the differences between men (boys) and women (girls). One aspect of the game that had remained constant was the size of the basketball. As the 1985 season drew to a close, another significant change was being considered by the TSSAA and its member schools. Since 1984, women's college teams had been experimenting with a small basketball. The "smaller ball" was an inch smaller in circumference and two ounces lighter than the standard men's basketball. Ronnie Carter, then TSSAA Assistant Executive Director and a former rules committee member, remarked "It's my feeling that the National Federation basketball rules committee will go with the small ball next year (1986-1987)."<sup>19</sup> Several coaches seemed to be in favor of the small

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<sup>18</sup> "Recruiting Rule," TSSAA News 39, no. 8 (1984): 10.

<sup>19</sup> Cindy Smith, "Small Ball Gaining Support," The Tennessean, 8 Mar. 1985, C6.

ball. Middle Tennessee State Coach Larry Inman and Tennessee Coach Pat Head Summitt agreed it was probably one of the greatest changes in college basketball as far as women are concerned because "A girl's (female's) hands are naturally smaller than the guys."<sup>20</sup> The only concern expressed by Galen Johnson, Maryville principal and twenty-seven-year veteran coach, was the financial burden it could place on some schools. Unlike the change from split-court basketball, many traditionalists and coaches favored the "small ball" for girls. This change was another brought on by the colleges.

On March 14, 1985, the Board of Control accepted the retirement of Gill Gideon as the TSSAA Executive Director. The effective date was for April 30, 1986. During that same meeting, Ronnie Carter was named to succeed Mr. Gideon as the third Executive Director of the TSSAA.

The 1985 Girls' State Tournament, held at Murphy Center, saw Memphis Melrose win Class AAA, Humboldt taking the Class AA crown, and Clarkrange defeating Rickman to gain their third consecutive state title in Class A.

Several companies had requested that the TSSAA adopt an "official ball" for state tournament play. During the September, 1985, meeting, the Board of Control adopted the Wilson basketball for a five-year period as the "official

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<sup>20</sup> Carol Stuart, "Women's Coaches Differ Over Ball," The Tennessean, 7 Mar. 1985, E3.

basketball" for state tournament play. Both girls' coaches and boys' coaches had been polled by the TSSAA state office, and sixty-plus percent indicated they preferred the Wilson basketball.

The "small ball" became the basketball used by girls for the 1985-1986 season. It was hoped that the use of the small ball would add to the girls' game. The small ball was designed to allow better ball control by the female hand, increase shooting accuracy and range, and make the game livelier. As tournament time approached, the girls had had a year to make adjustments using the small ball. Even though there were no official statistics available, it was generally believed shooting percentages and scoring would eventually be boosted, but the impact would probably be greater in the future after more time had elapsed to make the necessary adjustments.

In early February, 1986, the TSSAA was joined for the first time by a corporate sponsor. American General Life and Accident Insurance Company, along with the TSSAA, announced it would honor the top girl and boy basketball player in Tennessee in all three classes. Carroll Shanks, President and CEO for American General, commented, "American General wants to promote youth and education in Tennessee and we feel one of the best ways to do it is by joining TSSAA in their project. In this way we can be a part of beneficial programs

which encompass the entire state."<sup>21</sup> The TSSAA would poll every high school basketball coach in Tennessee. These coaches would vote for the top player in their school's classification. American General would pay the expenses for the six winners and their families and coaches to attend the state tournament. The awards would be made during the championship games on Saturday night. American General would also award each player and coach a championship ring.

The first championship rings went to undefeated Shelbyville (39-0) in Class AAA, their third state championship, David Lipscomb in Class AA, and Frank Hughes (Clifton) in Class A. The first "Miss Basketball 1986" awards were won by Sherelle Warren (AAA-Dyersburg), Amy Fuller (AA-DLH), and Lynn Stevenson (A-Richland).

A proposal by Hamilton County schools that would require a student athlete not only to take five academic subjects, but to pass five subjects the preceding semester to be eligible for athletic participation beginning the second semester of the 1986-1987 school year was passed by both the Board of Control and the Legislative Council in March, 1986. This was the second change since a proposal in 1975 had been strongly defeated to increase academic standards, the first change coming in 1979.

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<sup>21</sup> "American General joins TSSAA," TSSAA News, 41, no. 6 (1986): 3.

For the first time in the history of the TSSAA, the state tournament drawing took place with the participating coaches and media present at the drawing. Prior to this format, the drawings were held at the November Board of Control meetings. Because two teams from the same region could advance to the state tournament, the brackets had to be "arranged" where two same regional teams were not in the same bracket.

When asked why the procedure had been changed, Ronnie Carter responded by addressing three issues. The first reason allowed the TSSAA to meet with coaches and administrators to discuss and establish state tournament procedures such as hotel assignments, passes, financial arrangements, practice schedule, and general housekeeping and administrative policies. A second reason was to call attention to the media aspect of the tournament. Carter stated, "This was seen as a major media event and would give us good lead-in coverage to the state tournament."<sup>22</sup> A third reason was to dispel the theory that the Board of Control "fixed" all brackets. With the media and coaches actually watching the drawing, this issue was quickly eliminated.

The 1987 Girls' State Tournament saw a three-time championship winner losing in the semi-finals. This defeat

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<sup>22</sup> Carter, 1993.

was also more difficult to accept because Shelbyville saw a seventy-two-game winning streak come to an end.

Unfortunately, the team that ended Shelbyville's hopes of a repeat championship, Oak Ridge, was defeated in the finals by undefeated Gallatin (62-61). Even though this was Gallatin's third trip to the state tournament, it was to be their only state Class AAA championship. South Greene, also undefeated, strongly won over Cannon County in Class AA, and Greenback took the Class A championship with a win over Collinwood.

Another major decision making the high school level more uniform with the college level was made by the National Federation of High School Athletic Association. The three-point shot, nineteen feet, nine inches from the basket, was adopted by the NFHSA and would be used by both girls and boys in all fifty states. Since the TSSAA had adopted the NFHSA rules, the three-point shot would be used beginning in the 1987-1988 season. Ronnie Carter, TSSAA Executive Director, and chairman of the Rules Committee for the Federation, described it as follows, "The debate was not over whether the rule would be adopted, but when. There was such a positive response from the nine states that used it this year that the committee decided to go ahead and install it. It will be a great change in my opinion."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

During this same National Federation meeting, the committee also considered the "shot clock" being used by the colleges. The NFHSA had circulated a nation-wide questionnaire to coaches, apparently receiving an unfavorable response. Carter estimated the shot clock would cost \$500-\$600 and would be too much expense for most high school programs.

At the Girls' State Tournament in 1988, Oak Ridge (37-0), having been to the state tournament on five prior occasions, finally won the Class AAA championships in a close win over state tournament rival, Shelbyville by a score of 60-58. This was the third time in as many years that the Oak Ridge-Shelbyville match-up had occurred. South Greene defeated Cannon County for the second year in a row to take Class AA honors, and Collinwood won over Wayne County to claim the Class A championship in the 1988 state playoff.

Adamsville coach Tee Scarborough returned to coach in the 1988 state tournament. Scarborough played on the 1980-1981 team from Humboldt, making her the first woman to play in the five-on-five game in the tournament and return to the state tournament as a coach. Two others who had played and coached in girls' state tournaments were former McGavock coach Doris Rogers, who played at Maryville Porter, and Brentwood coach Kim Grizzle Kendrick, who played in the state tournament when she prepped at Gallatin.

Scarborough was joined by three other female coaches in the 1988 tournament series: Charlene Mason, Beech High; Cherrie Piplain, Jackson University School; and Jill Pruden, Oak Ridge. With Oak Ridge's victory over Shelbyville in the finals, Pruden became the third woman coach to win a state basketball championship, joining Betty Robinson of Ooltewah (1973) and Carolyn Jackson of Chattanooga Brainerd (1984).

The Legislative Council took no action on a proposal to change the five credit rule from a semester to a yearly basis. The Board of Control, however, passed a revised classification plan for 1989-1990 and 1990-1991. The plan called for the continuance of the three-classification format based on grade structure. With approximately thirty schools in Tennessee with grades 10-12, the TSSAA determined that they would take the percentage of ninth grade students in all schools with grades 9-12. This percentage would then be applied to schools with the 10-12 enrollment to determine their total enrollment for classification purposes. One third of the TSSAA member schools would be placed in each classification based on school enrollment during the month of September. The enrollment figures would be from enrollment, not average daily attendance, and verified through the State Department of Education. Schools could move up in classification if they chose to, but could not move into a lower classification.

The 1988-1989 basketball season began with an experiment, not for the players but for the coaches. Tennessee high schools were working with the National Federation rules committee in a rule that had become known as the "coaches' box." Heretofore, coaches were not allowed to stand any time while coaching their teams except during time-outs or checking on injured players. Under the experimental rule, "the head coach may rise in front of the players' bench within the confines of the designated coaches' box to give instructions to the players or substitutes and then immediately be seated."<sup>24</sup>

The "coaches' box" would begin twenty-eight feet from the end line (opposite the mid-court line) and extend six feet toward the end line. The six-foot area could be the end of the bench, the beginning of the bench, or the middle of the bench, depending on how players and substitutes were seated in relation to the area occupied by the head coach. The "coaches' box" proved to be acceptable and was adopted in September, 1989, by the Board of Control.

For the third time in the last four years, the Shelbyville-Oak Ridge match-up once again headlined the Class AAA finals. Shelbyville (39-0) dominated the game and won its fourth state championship. Cannon County of Woodbury,

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<sup>24</sup> "From the Desk of Gene Beck," TSSAA News 44, no. 3 (1988): 16.

making their third consecutive state tournament appearance, defeated Happy Valley to gain the Class AA title, while Pickett County won their fifth state championship in Class A with a win over West High in Denmark.

The 1989-1990 season saw the Legislative Council defeat one proposal, while the Board of Control adopted another "official" basketball for tournament play. The Legislative Council again took no action on a proposal that would require student athletics to pass five full units of credit on a yearly basis as opposed to the present semester rule. This was the third such proposal dealing with academics and athletics. The Rawling RLA-NCAA was approved as the official basketball for tournament play for the 1990-1991 through the 1992-1993 season by the Board of Control.

Shelbyville High School again entered the 1990 tournament with an undefeated season. This was their twelfth state tournament appearance. The fifth state championship was achieved with a win over Nashville Glencliff. Livingston Academy easily defeated Memphis Mitchell in Class AA, while Clarkrange succeeded in a victory over Wayne County to claim their fourth Class A title.

Anyone who had followed girls' basketball began to ask the question, "Why has the Upper Cumberland Plateau region become so dominant in small school competition?" Larry Taft,

a writer for The Tennessean, addressed this question. Taft wrote, "While larger schools like Shelbyville, Oak Ridge, and Bradley County had promoted the most attention in Tennessee girls' basketball, the Upper Cumberland area had been the powerhouses in Class AA and Class A. Pickett County and Clarkrange had combined for nine of the fourteen Class A state champions. In the same area, York Institute, Livingston Academy, and Cannon County had been consistent winners in Class AA."<sup>25</sup>

Even though the residents of the Upper Cumberland area are among the poorer regions of the state, they take great pride in their basketball excellence. Taft further stated, "The girls' programs combine the best of a solid work ethic, a dedication to hard work and small, rural educational systems that have not been beset by excessive consolidation and the loss of neighborhood schools."<sup>26</sup> In the article, Ronnie Carter, Executive Director of the TSSAA, explained, "Girls' basketball is very important to them. It is important to the people who coach, and they are a very dedicated group of people. Girls' basketball is important to the communities and the kids that play it. Any time you have those combinations, something positive is bound to happen.

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<sup>25</sup> Larry Taft, "Tradition, Work Builds a Mountain of Winners," The Tennessean, 19 Mar. 1991, C3.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

### Tennessee Girls' Basketball Draws National Attention

The 1991 season was a history-making season not only for the game of basketball itself, but for an individual and a team. Jim Smiddy, girls' basketball coach at Bradley Central High School, became the coach with the greatest number of wins in basketball at any level in the history of the sport. When Smiddy's Bearette team defeated Rhea County High School on January 4, he posted his 1,153rd career win. While Coach Smiddy was being honored as an inductee into the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame, he attributed his victories to "ninety-nine percent to the players and their ability and one percent to coaching."<sup>28</sup> While compiling this enviable record, Coach Smiddy's Bearettes were acclaimed the National High School Champions in 1975 and 1976 and the TSSAA Girls' State Champions in 1975, 1976, 1962, 1970, and 1973.

History was also made on the team level to highlight the finals of the TSSAA Class AAA State Championship at Murphy Center. Ranked number one in the nation for several weeks by USA Today, Shelbyville defeated White County to post their 104th consecutive victory. The victory also assured a second National High School Championship in three years for the Shelbyville team. This was the fourth state title under Coach Rick Insell. Shelbyville had won two other state

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<sup>28</sup> "Smiddy's Got The Record," TSSAA News 44 (Spring 1991): 4.

titles (1964 and 1974) under Head Coach Bobby Locke. Harris School in Shelbyville, an all-black school, won the 1965 TSSAA-Affiliate state title before integration under Coach Will Porter Martin. The 1991 win in the Girls' State Tournament gave Shelbyville Central the most state tournament championships of any other school in the state.

The Class A and Class AA championships also saw repeat winners. South Greene won the Class AA championship for the third time in the past five years, while Clarkrange High won their fifth state title in nine years and their second in succession.

In December, 1991, the game of basketball turned 100 years old. As had been discussed earlier, Dr. James Naismith, an instructor at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts, had been asked by Dr. Luther Gulick to develop a game that could be played indoors during the winter months. Dr. Naismith literally nailed peach baskets to a gym balcony at Springfield for his physical education class. Even though the game was originally invented for boys with thirteen rules, the game was quickly picked up by the girls. From the thirteen rules, modifications were made for women and the rest is history.

### A. F. Bridges Dies at the Age of 86

As the nation was celebrating the 100th anniversary of basketball during the 1991-1992 season, a sad note fell upon the state of Tennessee. On Sunday, February 2, 1992, Mr. A. F. Bridges, a founder and the first full-time Executive Secretary of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, died in Memphis, Tennessee, of pneumonia at the age of 86.

Among his many accomplishments, Mr. Bridges is credited with making high school athletics, and particularly girls' basketball in Tennessee, a front-runner in women's sports. Mr. Bridges was a leader in the formation of the Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee for Secondary Schools and served as its secretary-treasurer for seventeen years (1952-1969). The students and their education were always the first consideration of Mr. Bridges' high ideals.

According to Ronnie Carter, who joined Bridges and Gill Gideon as the only men ever to head the TSSAA, "Mr. Bridges was the TSSAA. He gave the TSSAA the strength and creditability it had to have. People had trust in Mr. Bridges. He was a fair and strong person when there was a need for such people."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> "Ex-TSSAA head Bridges dies at 86," Nashville Banner, 10 Feb. 1992, E6.

Gill Gideon, who succeeded Bridges, stated, "He was a great mentor. He was the kind of man everyone would want in a leadership position, even as President of the United States. He was a fine writer, and when he administered penalties, the language could be stinging. But in the end, he always had the book to back him."<sup>30</sup>

Bob Baldrige, Assistant Executive Secretary of the TSSAA wrote,

He once told me that he had always tried to do what he thought was the very best for the TSSAA and children of the state. He was recognized across this United States for being a staunch supporter of and one of the very few administrators to recognize and advance girls' athletics in the United States. He was also the very first in the United States to inaugurate integration in his athletic program, and the first to do so before Federal Court orders mandated it.<sup>31</sup>

When asked what he felt was the biggest problem or obstacle in the development of girls' basketball, Mr. Bridges answered, "The people who originally wrote the rules and who thought that the girls' game ought to be a social event as well as a contest...but that is about over with what's happened in colleges now and the amazing thing to me is how that thinking has turned around over the years."<sup>32</sup> Having

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<sup>30</sup> Larry Taft, "Bridges Played by the Rules, Made Sure Everyone Did, Too," The Tennessean, 11 Feb. 1992, C6.

<sup>31</sup> Bob Baldrige, "We Were Touched by a Legend," TSSAA News 45 (Spring 1992): 13.

<sup>32</sup> Bridges, 1987.

spent some time talking and visiting with Mr. Bridges and his wife, Margaret, in their home in Trenton, this author can personally attest to the fact that Mr. A. F. Bridges was a gentleman and a scholar.

The Shelbyville Golden Eaglettes put another page in the history book in the 1992 state finals by defeating White County for the second year in a row and winning the Class AAA title for the fourth consecutive year. In their win, Shelbyville joined Pickett County's 1977-1980 squads as the only teams to win four state titles in a row. Rick Insell was also the first coach, boys or girls, to win state championships in four straight seasons. Insell joined Bradley Central's Jim Smiddy and Clarkrange's Lamar Rogers as the only coaches in the state to win five state titles.

A winning streak of 110 consecutive victories had come to an end in December when Cardinal O'Hare slipped by the Eaglettes 77-75. After three more defeats during the season, Coach Insell summed it up by saying, "It's been a tough season. The other three years, we were able to go undefeated, but we've been through adversity this year..."<sup>33</sup>

South Greene reclaimed the Class AA championship for the second year in a row and fourth in six years. In Class A,

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<sup>33</sup> Toni Pettis, "'Down' Shelbyville add 4th Straight State Title," Nashville Banner, 16 Mar. 1992, E1.

Gleason defeated Celina to claim its first state title in four state tournament appearances.

During the Legislative Council meeting in December, 1992, a proposal was adopted with respect to regulations allowing non-teaching persons to coach in certain TSSAA-approved sports. A similar proposal had been strongly defeated in 1982. The newly adopted regulation states, "All head coaches in football, basketball, baseball, softball, and track must be certified teachers and full-time employees of the Board of Education."<sup>34</sup> However, the regulations specified provisions which non-teaching coaches must meet. The individual must be recommended by the school principal and approved annually by the local board of education. The individuals must also attend rules meetings for the sport in which they are working, and coaches must be paid entirely from funds that have been approved by the local board of education or the governing board of the school. A school would be limited to only one part-time employee in each sport.

The midstate continued to dominate the Class AAA 1993 state tournament. However, for the first time in nine years and four consecutive championships, Shelbyville was not the dominant team.

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<sup>34</sup> "Legislative Council Minutes," TSSAA News 46 (Winter 1993): 9.

In their first-ever appearance in the TSSAA Girls' State Basketball Tournament finals, the Lady Raiders from Coffee County captured the Class AAA crown with a win over Oak Ridge 56-49. The win was not only the first for Coffee County, but also a first for Coach Missy Donaldson in her first year as a head coach. Donaldson also became the first female coach to win a Tennessee girls' basketball state title as a player and as a coach, having played on Shelbyville's undefeated championship squad in 1986 which incidentally defeated Oak Ridge in the finals. When asked about the team and the win, Donaldson responded, "When I came here (to Coffee County), I found several seniors who were very seasoned and had been in some tough games. I like to think I brought the extra effort and determination that it takes."<sup>35</sup> Ironically, Donaldson's assistant, Laurie Hopkins Sain, helped Franklin County to the state title as a guard in 1969 and Sain's daughter, Allison, played post for the 1993 state champions.

Meigs County, in its third consecutive Class AA state tournament appearance defeated Livingston. This win was also the school's first-ever state championship in any sport. In the Class A finals, Bradford High soared past defending champion Gleason 55-42. This win was Bradford's second state championship in eight appearances.

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<sup>35</sup> Maurice Patton, "Coffee County Likes Taste of Victory," The Tennessean, 15 Mar. 1993, C3.

The 1993 Girls' State Tournament had seven female coaches. Of the seven, five were coaches in Class AAA, with one each in Class AA and Class A. The 1993 state tournament also made history as having the smallest crowd to witness a state tournament final. On Friday night, the midstate was blanketed with a snow and ice storm. The storm virtually closed down all the main arteries to Murphy Center with snow and ice depths in the mid-state ranging from two to twenty-one inches. At the tournament site, the snow depth averaged seven inches.

As the tournament ended, the Board of Control voted to return the Girls' State Tournament to Murphy Center for the twentieth consecutive year, making Middle Tennessee State the tournament host twenty-nine times.

Why has girls' basketball in Tennessee been so successful and what does the future hold for the TSSAA and girls' basketball? This was the question proposed to the current Executive Director Ronnie Carter of the TSSAA. In responding to this question, Mr. Carter replied as to what he thought were key factors. "I think one [key influence] is 'tradition'. Girls' basketball had a very rich tradition in the state of Tennessee, as opposed to the so many states that started it as a result of Title IX."<sup>36</sup> Carter went on to say

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<sup>36</sup> Carter, 1992.

that a second factor is the caliber of coaches Tennessee has in girls' basketball. "Coaching girls' basketball in our state is a very major job; it is not a job that an assistant football coach gets, like other sports...to be the girls' basketball coach at our schools in our state is a major position."<sup>37</sup>

Mr. Carter also believed the success of the college programs in Tennessee and the success of players in our state would be major factors in the continued growth of girls' basketball throughout the state and the nation. Mr. Carter concludes that "All of these factors...will make the state continue to grow and we (TSSAA) will be a part of the growth, only to make that program better as we try to make all other programs better. Our role is to advance the program for the benefit of the participants."<sup>38</sup>

A little more than a century ago, a physical education instructor, Dr. James Naismith, nailed a peach basket to a balcony in Springfield, Massachusetts, established thirteen simple rules and the game of basketball was invented. Today, the game is perhaps the fastest growing sport worldwide. Not only has it become a multi-billion dollar business, but a chance for both men and women to express individual physical talents in a team game. As Dr. Naismith wrote in an article

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

for The Rotarian in 1939, "The more I watch the game, the more I realize that, while easy to understand and simple to demonstrate, it is nevertheless a challenge to skill."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Jim O'Connell, "Basketball Turns 100," The Tennessean, 22 Dec. 1991, C4.

## Chapter 6

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summary

When Dr. James Naismith invented the game of basketball in 1891, the intent was to develop an activity at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts. Although women were not in Dr. Naismith's original plan for the game, they quickly saw the value and excitement of the game of basketball. Dr. Naismith's original thirteen simple rules have developed into literally hundreds of rules and changes to aid in the adaptation for girls' play.

A review of related literature revealed that even though studies have been conducted with relationship to women's rule changes, various organizations, and the pros and cons of girls' athletic abilities, no specific information was found which systematically compiled important events, decisions, influences, or problems that the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) has undergone in the development of girls' basketball in Tennessee.

The early years of girls' basketball in Tennessee were based on the philosophy that an activity of this type was for the development of physical education and not a contest for girls to engage in on a competitive level. This philosophy

quickly changed with the first state playoff for girls occurring during the spring of 1922. However, the state playoff tournament was short lived. In 1929, the tournament was discontinued due to several factors. The fact that there were no fixed rules and regulations governing the Tennessee girls' basketball competition made a state tournament difficult to stage.

Prior to 1925, there were no eligibility standards or regulations for interscholastic athletics in Tennessee. During the State Teachers Meeting in the spring of 1925, a group of principals and other school administrators met at Hume-Fogg High School in Nashville to form a state secondary school athletic association, the purpose being to stimulate and regulate athletic relations of secondary schools in Tennessee. All secondary schools, both public and private, in Tennessee were eligible for membership at an annual fee of five dollars.

In 1932, F. S. Elliott, Secretary of the TSSAA, started a monthly news bulletin entitled Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. This news bulletin became the major communication link between the membership and the TSSAA. Also in 1932, two other significant events occurred. The first was the addition of the seventh and eighth grades which were to become subject to the same rules and regulations of the secondary (9-12) grades. The second major event of the

TSSAA divided the state into four regions for tournament play with an unspecified number of district tournaments.

The first major rule change specifically for girls allowed for the ball to be tossed-up at center court to put the ball in play and that all conference (tournament) games for girls be played on a three-division court. Early years also saw a difference between boys and girls' rules such as the maximum number of games played, times for tournaments, number of players allowed for tournament play, and no state tournament for girls.

As the TSSAA grew, two other governing bodies evolved. The Board of Control established a TSSAA Legislative Council which would be responsible for making amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws as it saw fit or at the suggestion of at least twenty-five members of the Association. Another very important organization developed which was known as the Tennessee Approved Officials Conference of the Tennessee Secondary Schools Athletic Association. The need for this second organization was created because rules were continually being modified for girls' play and adequately trained officials were needed. In order for an official to work a tournament, he must be a member of this organization which assures the official's training and versification in girls' rules.

In 1939, a new publication entitled The Tennessee High School Athlete began. The new publication was to be more extensive than the former news bulletin. That same year, the Rules Committee of the TSSAA for girls' basketball decided the new rules would be those published by A. S. Barnes and Company with exceptions, one of which was the three-court division.

Since several other organizations had made rules for girls, it was also necessary for the Board of Control to examine rule books to determine which best governed Tennessee. In addition to the Spaulding Rules, rule books by A. S. Barnes and Company, the National Association on Woman's Athletics of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, Girls' National Basketball Rules Committee, and The National Federation have been adopted at one time or another by the TSSAA.

While many states have not had the success with girls' basketball as has Tennessee, there were times when many of the larger school systems abolished girls' basketball on a competitive basis. Shelby County was one of the first in Tennessee to do away with the girls' program, followed by Chattanooga City, Bristol, Knoxville, and a few Nashville schools. The concern was that competitive basketball was too strenuous for girls. However, World War II brought a new perception on physical and mental fitness with the concept of

"National Preparedness." Even though the war years limited the amount of play, school systems began to reestablish girls' teams.

Many individuals have played an important and influential role in the development of the TSSAA. However, one man probably stood out as being the "Father of the TSSAA." That one man was Mr. A. F. Bridges. Mr. Bridges began his official association with the TSSAA in 1940. Mr. Bridges, while serving as Superintendent of Schools in Trenton, was appointed to serve on the TSSAA Board of Control. In 1946, Mr. Bridges was selected as the first full-time Executive Secretary of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association. One of Mr. Bridges's duties was to renew a publication to all association members and schools. The new publication was known as The TSSAA News. In addition to The TSSAA News, Bridges also renewed publications of the TSSAA Constitution and By-Laws.

Mr. Bridges became known for his courage and fairness. His strict interpretation and enforcement of the rules and regulations of the TSSAA became apparent many times when called upon to discipline schools, teams, and players for infractions of established policies, rules, and regulations. Mr. Bridges served as the Executive Secretary until June, 1972.

Mr. Gill Gideon was named by the Board of Control to succeed Mr. Bridges. Mr. Gideon had joined the TSSAA in 1966 as an Assistant Executive Secretary. Gideon had served as a teacher, coach, and administrator in Lexington and Jackson before joining the TSSAA staff. Mr. Gideon was recognized as one of the top rules men in the country and continued to head the TSSAA with quality leadership and guidance. In March, 1985, Mr. Gideon announced his retirement as Executive Director of the TSSAA. Mr. Gideon's replacement was Mr. Ronnie Carter, who had also served as an Assistant Executive Director since 1978. Mr. Carter still serves as the Executive Director of the TSSAA.

The growing interest in girls' basketball saw several changes occur with respect to tournament formats. An early tournament set-up called for a four section tournament for girls: county, district, unit, and regional. The county and unit tournaments were later dropped leaving only the district and regional tournaments. The idea of a state tournament surfaced in 1950 but was voted down by the membership. However, in 1957, member schools voted to adopt an eight team format for a Girls' State Tournament to be held for the first time since 1929. The new tournament would be played at the end of the 1959 season, one week following the Boys' State Tournament. The renewal of the Girls' State Tournament saw tournament sites in only three locations: David Lipscomb

College in Nashville, Jackson Coliseum in Jackson, and Middle Tennessee College, now Middle Tennessee State University, in Murfreesboro. The girls' state tournament has continued to grow in paid attendance and revenue to the TSSAA. Part of this growth can be attributed to the "sub-state" format now in place for tournament play.

In addition to the three sites, the Girls' State Tournament saw three other changes occur. The first change went from an eight to a sixteen team format. The second change saw the tournament being played the week before the boys' and a third change saw a tournament format based upon a classification of schools into Class S and Class L, and later into the present three classification system, A, AA, and AAA.

The rules for girls and boys had continued to be somewhat different. Even though some basic rules were the same, modifications were continually being made to accommodate and adapt the game for girls play. Among the most common differences were the way the court was divided, the method of putting the ball into play, the number of points each basket counted depending on where the ball left the hand, the number of players on the court at any one time, and the amount of time allocated during each quarter, just to name a few.

With a new federal regulation known as Title IX, the game for boys and girls began to see similar rules. Even

though a federal law suit had been filed to force the TSSAA to change from six-player girls' rules to five-player rules used by boys, the state was slow in making the change due to "tradition." However, in 1979, the TSSAA adopted the National Federation of State High School Association rules for five play girls' basketball.

The next major rules change came in 1985 for girls. The National Federation adopted the "small ball" for girls' play. This "small ball" was an inch smaller in circumference and two ounces lighter than the standard men's basketball.

The third major change was the three-point shot, which came in the 1987-1988 season. The three-point shot, from nineteen feet, nine inches from the basket, was adopted by the NFHSA and would be used by both boys and girls in all fifty states.

Today, the only rules difference in Tennessee between the girls and boys is the use of the "small ball."

The authority and power of the TSSAA had been challenged on two separate occasions. The first challenge came in March, 1968, by a Senate Joint Resolution introduced by Senators Goodard and Ayers, both from East Tennessee. The resolution arose out of two situations involving a transfer rule and an attack on a coach by a parent. In both cases, Mr. Bridges, Executive Secretary of the TSSAA, had followed and upheld the rules of the TSSAA. The decisions were

unpopular with the schools and individuals involved, thus leading to political pressure from the legislature to abolish the power and authority of the TSSAA.

The second such challenge came in January, 1970. Senator Avon Williams of Nashville introduced a bill which again attempted to take away the power and control of high school athletics from the TSSAA. As had been the case earlier, Executive Secretary Bridges had suspended a school in Nashville from tournament competition due to an incident involving gross unsportsmanlike conduct. Williams' bill would have prohibited any secondary school in the public school sector from joining any organization which was not created by state law. Senator Williams also introduced a bill which provided that the State Board of Education would regulate and govern all school athletic programs and events. All challenges from political pressures were either voted down or failed to come out of committee.

Since the establishment of the TSSAA in 1925, the State Board of Education had unofficially recognized the TSSAA as the regulatory agency for high school sports throughout the state. In August, 1972, the State Board of Education passed a resolution officially granting authority of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) as the organization to supervise and regulate the athletic activities in which secondary school participate on an

interscholastic basis. The authority was to remain in effect until revoked by the State Board of Education.

### Conclusions

The vision of the TSSAA has always been to stimulate and regulate athletic programs in the state of Tennessee. The organization, composed of member schools, establishes rules and regulations that benefit students in both an athletic and academic environment. The TSSAA has continued to foster strong academic requirements for student athletes, ranging from attendance requirements to setting minimum passing requirements to participate in athletics.

Tennessee girls' basketball has been recognized as a predominant power in the United States. On more than one occasion, Tennessee has had teams in national rankings for both high schools and colleges. Even though the girls' basketball program had not received the media and fan support in earlier days as did the boys, the influence and guidance of the TSSAA has certainly created one of the strongest girls' basketball programs in the United States, not only through national prominence with teams and players, but through sound leadership of school administrators and coaches.

### Recommendations

Within the design of this study, the author presents the following recommendations: (1) encourage more women to become involved in officiating and provide training and additional opportunities which would enable more women to officiate state tournaments, (2) continue the present three classification system, (3) solicit additional corporate sponsorships to help defray tournament expenses, thereby being able to further assist teams with increasing costs in order to participate in tournament play.

In addition, further research should be considered pertaining to: (1) an historical study of boys' basketball in Tennessee, (2) an historical study of officials' organizations, (3) the history and development of the Black athletic organization(s) prior to 1964, (4) a study of the perceived attitudes and acceptance by fans, coaches, and basketball officials relative to women officiating, and (5) the life and influence of Mr. A. F. Bridges on the TSSAA.

APPENDIXES

## Appendix A

## Thirteen Original Rules of Basketball

1. The ball may be thrown in any direction with one or both hands.
2. The ball may be batted in any direction with one or both hands (never with the fist).
3. A player cannot run with the ball, the player must throw it from the spot on which he catches it, allowance to be made for a man who catches the ball while running at good speed.
4. The ball must be held in or between the hands, the arms or body must not be used for holding it.
5. No shouldering, holding, pushing, tripping, or striking in any way the person of an opponent shall be allowed. The first infringement of this rule by any person shall count as a foul, the second shall disqualify him until the next goal is made, or if there was evident intent to injure the person, for the whole of the game, no substitute allowed.
6. A foul is striking at the ball with the fist, violation of rules 3 and 4, and such as described in rule 5.
7. If either side makes three consecutive fouls it shall count a goal for the opponents (consecutive means without the opponents in the meantime making a foul).
8. A goal shall be made when the ball is thrown or batted from the grounds into the basket and stays there, providing those defending the goal do not touch or disturb the goal. If the ball rests on the edge and the opponent moves the basket it shall count as a goal.
9. When the ball goes out of bounds it shall be thrown into the field, and played by the person first touching it. In case of a dispute the umpire shall throw it straight into the field. The thrower in is allowed five seconds, if he holds it longer it shall go to the opponent. If any side persists in delaying the game, the umpire shall call a foul on them.
10. The umpire shall be judge of the men, and shall note the fouls, and notify the referee when three consecutive fouls have been made. He shall have power to disqualify men according to rule 5.
11. The referee shall be judge of the ball and shall decide when the ball is in play, in bounds, and to which side it belongs, and shall keep the time. He shall decide when a goal has been made, and keep account of the goals with any other duties that are usually performed by a referee.

12. The time shall be two 15-minute halves, with five minutes rest between.
13. The side making the most goals in that time shall be declared the winner. In case of a draw the game may, by agreement of the captains, be continued until another goal is made.

James Naismith, Rules for Basket Ball (Springfield, MA: Springfield Printing & Binding Co., 1892) 12-14.

## Appendix B

## "TSSAA Not A Separate Entity In Itself"

"The TSSAA differs from legally established organizations in that it was established by the schools themselves to exercise those responsibilities that they wish to have handled collectively by the schools instead of each school assuming individual responsibility.

"The TSSAA, therefore, is not a separate entity but is a voluntary organization of schools. Each member school is as much a part of the TSSAA as any other one school. It agrees to abide by the same minimum standards and regulations as do all other member schools.

"As in all other democratic organizations, the will of the majority is followed. There are some standards and regulations to which an individual school might object. However, the majority of schools can change any provision of the Constitution and By-Laws through the process of amendment.

"The impression left with many individuals outside the schools is that the TSSAA is an organization that exercises authority over the schools. In reality, the only authority exercised over the schools is by the schools themselves. They simply act collectively through the TSSAA instead of individually in those matters that the majority think can better be handled in such manner. The Board of Control is only the executive body elected by the schools to carry out their desires. The schools administer their program through the TSSAA with the help of the Board of Control in a manner very similar to that of a community administering its program of public education through its Board of Education.

"It is important that all school administrators keep their Boards of Education clearly informed of the nature of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association of which their schools are members. This policy will help to avoid any misunderstanding and embarrassment for any local school administrator if questioned by members of his Board of Education as to why the school must comply with regulations of the TSSAA. It will help them to acquire a more complete understanding when they realize that the school is complying only with standards that it has agreed collectively with other schools to uphold."

"TSSAA Not A Separate Entity In Itself," TSSAA News, 22, no. 4 (1967): 9.

## Appendix C

## State Board of Education Resolution

"WHEREAS, The State Board of Education by deference has recognized since 1925 the functions of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association in providing standards, rules and regulations for interscholastic competition in the public schools of Tennessee, now therefore, be it resolved: The Tennessee State Board of Education recognizes and designated the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association as the organization to supervise and regulate the athletic activities in which the public junior and senior high schools of Tennessee participate on an interscholastic basis. (Junior high schools must include grade nine in order to qualify for membership.) The authority granted herein shall remain in effect until revoked.

"Further, The State Board of Education approves the current rules and regulations as stated in the 1972-1973 Official Handbook of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association and reserves the right to review the appropriateness of any future changes.

"Further, the Chairman of the Tennessee State Board of Education shall designate a person or persons to serve in ex-officio capacity on the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Board of Control and Legislative Council."

Tennessee State Board of Education Minutes, 25 Aug. 1972.

Appendix D  
Girls' State Champions  
(No Classification)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Site</u>
1922	Memphis Central	Nashville
1923	Nashville Central	Nashville
1924	Murfreesboro	Nashville
1925	Union City	Nashville
1926	Hume-Fogg	Murfreesboro
1927	Peabody	Nashville
1928	Millington	Jackson
1929	Sparta	Sparta
1930-1957	(No Tournament)	
1958	Loretta	Nashville
1959	Porter (Maryville)	Nashville
1960	Milan	Nashville
1961	Smyrna	Murfreesboro
1962	Bradley County	Murfreesboro
1963	Porter (Maryville)	Murfreesboro
1964	Shelbyville	Murfreesboro
1965	Fayette County	Murfreesboro
1965*	Harris (Shelbyville)	Nashville
1966	Maury (Dandridge)	Murfreesboro
1967	Porter (Maryville)	Murfreesboro
1968	Waverly	Jackson
1969	Franklin County	Jackson
1970	Bradley County	Jackson
1971	Lebanon	Jackson
1972	Marshall County	Jackson

\*Affiliate Tournament

Appendix E  
Girls' State Champions  
(Class S and Class L)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Site</u>
1973	(S) Jackson County (L) Bradley County	Murfreesboro
1974	(S) Trezevant (L) Shelbyville	Jackson
1975	(S) Ooltewah (L) Bradley County	Murfreesboro

Appendix F  
Girls' State Champions  
(Class A, AA, and AAA)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Site</u>
1976	A Trezevant	Murfreesboro
	AA Marshall County	
	AAA Bradley County	
1977	A Pickett County	Murfreesboro
	AA Bolivar Central	
	AAA Mt. Juliet	
1978	A Pickett County	Murfreesboro
	AA Chester County	
	AAA Bolivar Central	
1979	A Pickett County	Murfreesboro
	AA Humboldt	
	AAA Warrenn County	
1980	A Pickett County	Murfreesboro
	AA Marshall County	
	AAA Pearl (Nashville)	
1981	A Polk County	Murfreesboro
	AA Giles County	
	AAA B. T. Washington (Memphis)	
1982	A Bradford	Murfreesboro
	AA Giles County	
	AAA Smyrna	

<u>Year</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Site</u>
1983	A Clarkrange AA Chattanooga City AAA Mt. Juliet	Murfreesboro
1984	A Clarkrange AA York Institute (Jamestown) AAA Brainerd (Chattanooga)	Murfreesboro
1985	A Clarkrange AA Humboldt AAA Melrose (Memphis)	Murfreesboro
1986	A Frank Hughes (Clifton) AA David Lipscomb (Nashville) AAA Shelbyville	Murfreesboro
1987	A Greenback AA South Greene (Greenville) AAA Gallatin	Murfreesboro
1988	A Collinwood AA South Greene AAA Oak Ridge	Murfreesboro
1989	A Pickett County AA Cannon County AAA Shelbyville	Murfreesboro
1990	A Clarkrange AA Livingston Academy AAA Shelbyville	Murfreesboro

<u>Year</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Site</u>
1991	A Clarkrange	Murfreesboro
	AA South Greene	
	AAA Shelbyville	
1992	A Gleason	Murfreesboro
	AA South Greene	
	AAA Shelbyville	
1993	A Bradford	Murfreesboro
	AA Meigs County	
	AAA Coffee County	

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