

Newsletter199

Keith's Corner/McGill News

March 3, 2023

Growing Up With Sports II

Last week's NL198 was on baseball, so how about one on basketball?

First off, basketball is usually played in a gym and we heathens didn't have one handy, so we played in the dirt, just like we did football and baseball. Pretty much everything we did was in the dirt. Riding bikes, carts, scooters, etc was mostly on dirt roads and alleys.

Speaking of alleys brings to mind, basketball. Every alley and a lot of back yards had basketball hoops in some fashion.

In my neighborhood, there were two backboards with hoops. We of course didn't have any netting on the hoops.

My dad built a backboard out of 1x6's and hung in on the front of our garage above the large car door. It stuck out about 2 feet from the garage, so we didn't crash into the garage on a layup. I painted it white. Dad managed to get a hoop somehow and we were in business.

I got a rubberized basketball for Christmas in 1947. It was designed for playing in the dirt. It never wore out after more than 7 years of playing in the dirt. Why can't they make one like that now??

Hank Slater put up a hoop and backboard just down the alley a bit. It was on a tall wooden post just behind Crawford's garage.

The alley above 1st street had a lot of backboards. Mickey Johnson had one, that he practiced on, but he usually played with the rest of us renegades on the Slater backboard.

It didn't take long to get a game up. Just go out in the alley and start bouncing a ball around and shoot a few hoops and walla, several players showed up, teams were put together and the games got under way..

In the evenings we could play basketball at the Rec Hall, unless there was roller skating. Art and Hazel Nicholson ran the rec hall. Art and Sid Simpson organized a rec hall team and we played the Ruth Rec Hall several times. One time we went to wells and played a team. Also, one year we played the WPHS Tomcats. After I left for college, the Rec Hall team played a lot of games around the area and several times in Wells and Eureka.

The Rec Hall was originally built as a theater and later became the Grade School gym. The original grade school gym was in the bottom floor of the 6th, 7th, 8th grade building, we called the 'new building'. During my grade school years, 1947-1950, we played in the Clubhouse Gym. In 1950 the grade school gym was built.



McGill Rec Hall team of the early 1950s. Back, l-r. Coach Sid Simpson, Dick Munson, Ed Harris, Mickey Johnson, Roger Patterson. Kneeling, l-r, David Robb, Gerald Crow, Manager Art Nicolson, Paul Gibson, Gary Simpson/

As these guys got a little older they played on a McGill Town Team.



Standing, l-r, Coach. Ramsey McDonald, ??, Carl Conrad, ??, Nucoa Symes.
Kneeling, l-r, Willie P:ooole, Paul Gibson, ? Brunson, ??.

I will try to find the right names and have them in a future NL.

So, all in all, McGill raised a lot of ballplayers. It was a great way to grow up. We were in top physical condition as well as mental. We learned the value of friendship and how to work with others to obtain a goal. This things are lacking in so many ways in the present world of computers and pretending.

Oh and don't fret ladies I have some good stuff on girl's, basketball back in those days. Our young ladies in McGill Grade School had a team.

Old Photo



Old photo of the train depot in EE, date unknown. I see the depot and the building next to it on the left. Is the next building on the far left, a hotel? Anyone??