



# James Naismith: The Man Who Invented Basketball

*Rob Rains*

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It seems unlikely that James Naismith, who grew up playing “Duck on the Rock” in the rural community of Almonte, Canada, would invent one of America’s most popular sports. But Rob Rains and Hellen Carpenter’s fascinating, in-depth biography *James Naismith: The Man Who Invented Basketball* shows how this young man—who wanted to be a medical doctor, or if not that, a minister (in fact, he was both)—came to create a game that has endured for over a century.

James Naismith reveals how Naismith invented basketball in part to find an indoor activity to occupy students in the winter months. When he realized that the key to his game was that men could not run with the ball, and that throwing and jumping would eliminate the roughness of force, he was on to something. And while Naismith thought that other sports provided better exercise, he was pleased to create a game that “anyone could play.”

With unprecedented access to the Naismith archives and documents, Rains and Carpenter chronicle how Naismith developed the 13 rules of basketball, coached the game at the University of Kansas—establishing college basketball in the process—and was honored for his work at the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin.

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