

NEWS SPORTS COMMENT

AAU Has Its Side In the Controversy

By Evening News Sports Writer

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The fight between the Amateur Athletic Union and the National Collegiate Athletic Association for control of amateur sports in the United States has been avoided in this space for one reason.

It is too complex an argument for a bystander to attempt to label one side right and the other wrong.

An absurd attack on the AAU in a national magazine last week, however, was easy enough to understand.

The AAU was lashed because of the quality of the players it has selected to play eight games against a touring Russian team this month and to represent the United States in the World Championships at Manila in December.

The magazine is upset because "95% of U. S. players are ineligible, since the AAU controls only about 5% of the amateur basketball played in this country."

The AAU has its faults, but suicidal tendencies aren't among them.

"We asked for lists of available players from every source in the country, including the NCAA and the armed forces," says Herb Mols, executive secretary of the Niagara AAU.

Guess how many college players are available from the NCAA in November and December?

"We'd love to have good college players," says Mols, "but the only way we could get them would be to find boys willing to give up a year of school to play the Russians, then compete in the World Tourney in December and the Pan-American Games in April."



ADOLPH RUPP

The magazine is upset because Adolph Rupp, among others, was overlooked in picking a coach. Rupp's Kentucky team plays ten games in December. Commuting costs between Manila and Lexington are prohibitive.

All right then, why play at this time of year?

First, the AAU does not dictate the time and place of the World Championships. Second, the dates for the Russian tour were decided by the Russians and the United States State Department.

"The original dates were in February," says Mols. "We asked the State Department to set it back to March so that college players would be available. This couldn't be arranged. So, with advice from some college coaches, we decided it would be best to play the Russians in November."

The theory was that, since the college season would not have started, a few key players would be available. Just how quickly this fell apart was seen here when an effort was made to form an All-Star team to play the Russians in the Auditorium.

Area coaches were not willing to disrupt their practice for the two weeks necessary to prepare for the tour.