Basketball Essay, Research Paper

Basketball

Basketball was created a simple game. The primary objective was to place a ball, without dribbling, into a peach basket. However, like Darwin s theory of man, basketball has evolved into the most exciting exhibition of athletic ability. Basketball has seen many rule changes, because of the increasing ability of the players. Basketball is a melting pot, where black, white, and European people excel. This is a sport that is color-blind. This sport requires complete control over one s body and mind. Pure strength is required to fight through opposing teams picks, and to gain position for rebounds. Speed is necessary to create space for a shot attempt or a pass. Concentration is vital to dribbling a ball up the court, with an opposing defender harassing you. With as much physical prowess that is required for success, basketball is a mental chess match.

Thurber, make the smart play! yelled Coach Balderama all last season.

This game is only ten percent physical as Duke s Coach K explains it. For those who deny the mental aspects of the game, John Stockton is an ideal example. He is not the fastest, strongest, or best player on the floor. Stockton uses angles and his understanding of basketball to quietly and consistently outplay much more talented opponents. There is a growing problem in the NBA, and it is evident in the Pop Warner leagues also. Basketball is not the same game it was ten years ago, and ESPN s Sportcenter, the lack of fundamentals, and the influx of teenagers into the professional ranks.

Vince Carter on the baseline He raises up Boo-ya, all in Alonzo Mourning s grill! States an exited Stuart Scott. Every day ESPN gathers the most amazing highlights from the games the night before, and creates a visually appealing collage. As a religious viewer I am fed a steady diet of no look passes, monstrous slam-dunks, and impossible fade-away shots that only NBA caliber players are capable of making. This, almost unknowingly, has assisted in creating a new mentality towards the sport. Last season I would find myself in situations where I was trying to execute a spectacular play, instead of completing the easy one. Why do I try to imitate the sweeping crossover dribble glorified by Allen Iverson? ESPN has made Playground basketball in style. Allen Iverson is the pioneer of this ghetto revolution. On the court his style is comparable to Pistol Pete on acid. He incorporates every means of Show-time , from his diamond-infested attire to his flashy antics off the court. He is from the ghetto, and ESPN exploits this dark horse image. Along with his “Playground style”, that ruins years of coaching fundamentals, he is involved in a thuggish lifestyle. Iverson, and many other players, are still young men who participate in smoking weed, beating women, and multiple other illegal activities constantly. ESPN receives the police reports and bleeds the information to the public. Hoops Junkies, like myself, hear the information and we form opinions. Contrary to logical reasoning, ESPN makes me cheer a player for these normally condemnable acts. Latrell Sprewell attempted to asphyxiate his coach, and less that six months later he is praised like a man who found the cure for cancer. Player s Realness lies in direct proportion with their lifestyle. American media wants the bad boys, because there is a more interesting behind them. With this going on, youths across the world are feed the message smoke weed, beat women, and most importantly forget the team concept and dunk the rock. ESPN is not the only source of blame for the non-existent morality of basketball, but I can directly link it to the American public s warped views and opinions of the professional basketball player.

Since the induction of the three-point arc, basketball has changed. Players reason, why settle for a sure bank shot from seventeen feet when I can step back a couple of feet and be rewarded for an additional point. That is the modern mindset of basketball players, and I catch myself taking a tough three over an easy two for no apparent reason. Players, these days, are too talented. Back in the 70 s Oscar Robertson was by far the most athletically gifted player, but today his talent would almost go unnoticed. The NBA players now are on constant training regimens that are creating the most physically impressive athletes in the world. These athletes are constantly in season, but they are spending more time with their strength/conditioning coaches than their head coaches. Each player is an impressive physical specimen, and today players can jump higher and run faster than ever. This should create an ethereal flow to the game, because with all of the talent the game reasonably would be faster and more spectacular than ever before. Contrary to this assumption, last season the NBA had the lowest scoring average per game in many years. Coaches know that talent only gets you in the door, and the rest is complete dedication to the mental aspects of the game. Rick Pitino was an excellent college coach at Kentucky; here he benefited from his player s superior talents. Now as the coach for the Boston Celtics his team consists of ex-Kentucky stars, but the results are opposite. His players lack elementary fundamentals such as teamwork, running a set offense, and the concept of team defense. Even with consistently losing seasons, players are not getting the picture. Michael Jordan was by leaps and bounds the most talented player on the floor. He, unlike his peers, chose to benefit from fundamentals and this allowed him to be the most dominant player of all time. Michael found the easiest way for himself to score, his unstoppable fade-away, and then focused his efforts on another aspect of the game. Coaches know that the lack of fundamentals are detrimental to the game, but no young, brash superstar wants to take time to learn the game when his talents alone will allow him to drive the most luxurious Lexus now.

My junior year of high school my team played one of the perennial powerhouses, Elsik. We lost the game by a large amount of points, but what was most impressive was Rashard Lewis. He was drafted right out high school into the NBA. Considering that we were about the same age, I question how can he be ready for the NBA? I can barely handle college classes, and he is already started his career. Rashard s skills were impressive, but he was undisciplined like all teenagers are. The league is flooded with his type; he skipped having possibly a historical college career to mold on the bench in the NBA. Rashard was not prepared for this level of competition, or the lifestyle and responsibility that accompany it. He was 18 years old with millions of dollars at his control, and he is expected to understand investing for the future. The league has a problem, and it first became an issue when Kevin Garnett decided he was NBA material. Although he and Kobe Bryant have been successful, they both acknowledge that college is the right option. These two are exceptions, because Jermaine O neal, Al Harrington, and now Jonathan Bender are experiencing what the NBA is like off of the television. These kids are possibly ready physically, but mentally they are retarded. Every high school player who jumps straight to the NBA has difficulties adjusting to the wild women of different cities, the power of their enormous salary, and the pressure to perform right away. Tim Duncan, as talented as any player to ever play the game, stayed in college four years and is a prime example of the benefits of maturity. He spent his time honing his talents to NBA caliber, and he educated himself about the game and life off of the court. Many of these players who jump to the pro s after little or no college are ignorant. The NBA, these days, has a combined IQ of fifteen, and we wonder what is wrong. The NBA is in a limbo, and is tripping over it s own clumsy feet. The game will not get better until the players improve their levels of play. But improvement comes with experience, and it is difficult for players to gain experience and confidence when they are only children trying to master a complex game.

In conclusion, ESPN s Sportcenter, the lack of basic basketball fundamentals, and the decreasing age of players entering into the league is a recipe for disaster. It is a cycle that is going to be hard to break. Today s kids are presented with options that are too difficult for them to comprehend. So instead of doing it the right way and going through school and listening to their coach, agents are give utter control over these exploited children. However, with all of the negatives surrounding the game, basketball will survive. David Stern is a competent commissioner and there is too much money involved for people to let the NBA self destruct.