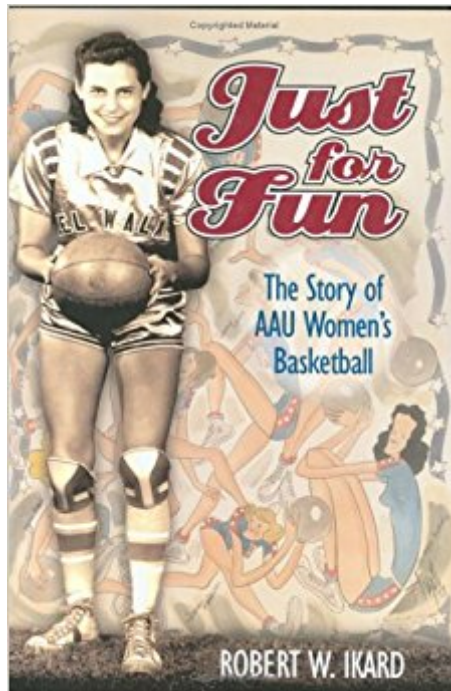




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Just For Fun: The Story Of AAU Women's Basketball



Synopsis

Prior to the 1972 passage of Title IX, women's basketball was a minor sport in the United States. It was played by companies such as Cook's Goldblume Beer and Sunoco and for obscure colleges such as Iowa Wesleyan and Wayland Baptist as part of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). But during the two generations of the mid-twentieth century, women's basketball improved and became more popular throughout the country. AAU All-Star teams dominated women's international basketball until the emergence of subsidized national teams in the 1960s. The women who played on these AAU teams helped to lay the foundation for women's athletics today. Most of the teams came from central and southern states, and most of the players had rural origins. "Country girls" from Arkansas, Iowa, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas competed at an elite level unknown to their city sisters. The AAU formed several successful international teams of gifted players that gained fame abroad but that were anonymous at home. Until nearly the last quarter of the century, skilled women basketball players had only one option after high school: the AAU. This is the history of these gifted women, their coaches, and their teams--their records, motivations, and personal stories. Extensively illustrated, Just for Fun is the first book to thoroughly explore the complex history of the Amateur Athletic Union's women's basketball program and to bring to light the four decades of women's basketball all but forgotten in the current success of women's athletics.

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Customer Reviews

"Just for Fun is a wonderful tribute to a forgotten era of women's basketball. Dr. Ikard has

painstakingly researched how a very important part of women's basketball came to exist, and has made it an exciting and fun read."--Sue Gunter, former Head Coach LSU Lady Tigers "If there's anything you've ever wanted to know about women's amateur hoops, it's in Just for Fun. Ikard has done the homework, now you hoopheads can sit back and enjoy the ride."--Rick Telander, author of Heaven is a Playground and Sports Columnist, Chicago Sun-Times "Ikard's Just for Fun is an enjoyable, folksy telling of the times, teams and players of women's AAU basketball. Ikard, a true fan of the sport, weaves an enjoyable tale--enhanced by terrific visuals--for the casual reader."--Susan E. Cayleff, professor of women's studies at San Diego State University and author of Babe: The Life and Legend of Babe Didrikson Zaharias "Bob Ikard has done women's basketball a great service with this detailed exploration of one of its most significant eras. Anyone with an interest in the sport should read this book."--Pamela Grundy, author of Shattering the Glass: A History of U.S. Women's Basketball

The Story of AAU Women's Basketball --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

"Just for Fun: The Story of AAU Women's Basketball" by Robert W. Ikard, is a book that is critical to understanding the shape of women's basketball in the years prior to passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the dramatic changes that soon came about, including some understanding of the fight between the AAU and the NCAA. Title IX gave females equal rights in schooling, athletics and other areas. This is an updated edition of "Just for Fun," with information that cannot be found anywhere else unless the reader is willing to examine all the dozens of footnotes the author has examined. It basically covers the National Women's AAU tournament from its beginnings in 1926 to its 1979 demise when the NCAA took away much of AAU's power. The book contains the names of the great players of the era from Nera White to Juliene Simpson, the woman who helped the USA to the silver medal in the Olympics in 1976. It briefly reviews all the championships during that time, and Ikard discusses the ups and downs over many years in such places as St. Joseph's, Mo., Gallup, N.M. and several other places where the tournament was held. Particularly interesting to me was the decade the tourney was in Gallup, New Mexico, a key stopping point surrounded by the Navajo Reservation, which provided a different perspective for visiting players and coaches. Author Ikard did a great job of putting together sketches of the years when the tournament was held, the material coming from an information base that was diminished by time. Why organizations like the AAU didn't keep records to the extent they should have is a mystery and a major problem for writers because the only sources available are widely scattered

newspapers and player scrapbooks. Even newspapers do not get the job done because game detail or attention to women's basketball was then seriously overlooked by newspapers. Ikard's work identifies many great players, including the all-star teams by year. It also touches on basketball politics, and changes in the women's game over time, related to structure (rules), skills, etc. Of the great players, only Olympian and Women's Hall of Famer Juliene Simpson may have been short-changed, her time in AAU "barely made the cutoff of the AAU era," Ikard wrote. Simpson continues to serve basketball at the college level as coach and administrator through this writing. I recommend the book as a research tool for basketball's development in the United States, especially women's basketball. It clearly shows the problems facing women before Title IX, and the tediously slow but welcome transitions that followed.

Excellent book! A lot of research went into making this book, my hat is off to the writer for his time & effort. The story of the women who shape, molded, & set the rules for women's basketball, the title serves the meaning for them gals, work during the day, and this was their fun & entertainment for nights & weekends, plus they got to travel the U.S., they were superb athletes, my mom played basketball, softball & bowl with Hazel Walker, a lot of good memories for them.

A well written book for anyone passionate about the women's game of basketball and its history.

This book has great historical information and is a must-read for those who want more history of women's basketball in the United States.

I have really enjoyed this book. It is so interesting to learn about the AAU Basketball League. Well written and held my attention.

Not yet finished but I'm enjoying this book. Not only is it written in a readable style, but it is well-sourced - too many books in this genre don't even have an index. This has a good index, thorough footnotes, and useful summary appendices.

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