

Playing Time Reduced Drastically

Basketball Game Undergoes Revision

The Strat-O-Matic Game co., never resting and continually striving to maintain its position as a leader in the sports tablegame world, has added six new and exciting changes to its basketball game that will soon be in its second season.

Reducing the playing time of the newest S-O-M creation was the No. 1 reason for the changes. Plus some of the others will now accurately reflect the concept of "team defense" that has become so popular in the NBA in recent years.

In addition to the changes that are listed below, S-O-M has devised a method whereby the result of the white die roll will determine the play and also whether the defense is close or back--thus eliminating most of the movement of the defensive players (pegs) and greatly speeding up the game. The new method can be used either solitaire or head-to-head and S-O-M reports games are easily played in less than an hour--and often as little as 50 minutes.

Now S-O-M Basketball fans will have three options as to how they want to play the game: (1) basic version; (2) advanced version with the new shooting method; or (3) advanced version with all the new changes.

When you consider the average NBA game consists of 190 shots, 48 fouls, 46 turnovers, plus the assists and rebounds, you can see that condensing over 400 "actions" into a game that takes only about an hour or less is quite an accomplishment.

Lack of space prevents a full explanation of each of the new changes, including the new shooting method listed above, but it won't be long after reading this that the game company mailing will be in your hands and a complete explanation provided.

Nevertheless, here, in capsula form, are the six additional new changes that will be coming up in Strat-O-Matic Pro Basketball:

- (1) Any player, not just the center, can now go "inside". Previously only the center could. This is designed to allow more physical forwards (such as Chet Walker) to work against and take advantage of smaller forwards (Bill Bradley).
- (2) The double-team can now be used against any player, and at any time.

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No longer will the coach of the Milwaukee Bucks be able to surround Kareem Abdul-Jabbar with low-number shooters and avoid the double-teaming of the big guy. Also, a new double-teaming chart has been added for the play's results.

(3) The whole defensive concept has been revised. There now will be three defensive ratings--outside, inside and penetration [new]. The offense, likewise, will have the option of shooting from the outside, penetrating or setting up inside. Many of the ratings have undergone drastic changes in this area, as you will see when the new cards become available. For instance, it now will be possible for a tall center to go outside and guard a smaller forward well because of his long reach. But, at the same time, a guard could also penetrate against a center and find the "mismatch" in the guard's favor because of his speed against the slower-moving center.

(4) Switching on defense will be incorporated onto the cards. This is so much a part of the team concept of defense in the NBA, that it's a necessity for any tabletop basketball game seeking to simulate the real-life game. The switching, as mentioned, will be built into the game via the player cards. By this the mismatches [such as a guard working against a center] will come about. About one-third of the time switching will occur. A split-deck number will have to be consulted to find out the options and matchups because of the switching. A new split-deck, incidentally, will be included free of charge when the new cards are purchased. The same holds true for the new double-team chart. This new concept should cut down the movement of the defensive pegs considerably, and likewise shorten the time needed to play a game.

(5) You now will be able to keep exact individual rebounding and assist totals. Multiplying one number by another won't be necessary if you desire to use this system. This will add to the playing time, however, usually about 15-20 minutes. This is an option that many figure fanatics have wanted.

(6) The cards will be simplified and standardized. All of the cards, for centers, forwards and guards, will have five columns: close and back columns for outside shots, close and back for penetration shots and an inside shot column.

After reading through the changes coming up, it appears the game company has solved the dilemma of how to shorten the playing time and yet not leave out any of the features that are part of real-life basketball. The defensive changes promise, in particular, to make the game even more exciting. And, especially the switching feature. Since rival coaches continually strive to create matchup situations beneficial to their team, switching pops up all the time. It's a definite part of the game, like platooning in baseball, and definitely a feather in the cap of the Strat-O-Matic creators.
