

Hart Was State Basketball Legend

BY JON GARRETT
Press Sports Editor

Before there was Michael Jordan, Larry Bird or Magic Johnson to talk about there was a 5-10 hard-nosed player by the name of George Hart down in the small community of Frances.

Hart was a fan-favorite at the tiny school and brought the team national attention with his impressive scoring on the court. He also garnered lots of recognition for his antics on the court, and was a crowd favorite everywhere the Bulldogs traveled.

Many schools would have to transfer their home games to a larger gym to accommodate the fans that wanted to see the "Sensational Hart" play.

This bullnecked forward learned to play basketball in his childhood years in Baltimore, playing "alley-ball." He was a four-year starter for Frances (1946-50) and shattered the high school scoring mark set by Wallace "Wah Wah" Jones of Harlan.

"I grew up playing with the blacks in Baltimore," explained Hart. "And even back then they were more advanced in the game."

Hart scored 402 points in his freshman season, an amazing 840 his sophomore year. 565 as a junior and finished his illustrious career with 698 senior points, to give him a 4-year total of 2505 points.

During his career at Frances Hart's team had a combined record of 130-18. Not bad for a school that had a grand total of 27 boys — all of which played basketball.

"Back then people were too poor to do a whole lot, so basketball offered the kids entertainment," he said.

Three times Hart led his team to the regional finals, and three times they were defeated by Frank Ramsey and the Madisonville Maroons.



George Hart

as he did was amazing."

Following his high school career Hart was offered a scholarship to play for the University of Kentucky and legendary coach Adolph Rupp.

Hart traveled to Lexington and worked out with the Wildcats during summer practice following his graduation, but things didn't work out.

"I got up there and was amazed by all the pretty girls and things to do. It was a big adjustment coming from Frances.

"Coach Rupp told me I wasn't here to look at the girls, I was here to play basketball. It just didn't work."

Hart said another factor in him opting not continue his playing career was the opportunity to get a job and start making some money.

"Back then things were a lot

THE COURIER-JOURNAL, LOUISVILLE, SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 22, 1950.

Sensational George Hart of Frances May Eclipse Wah Wah Jones' Record

BY HARRY BOISER, Courier-Journal Staff Writer



Frances, Ky., Jan. 21.—Bullnecked George Hart, the husky hardwood harrier of the Frances Bulldogs, is rolling on to a new individual scoring mark in Kentucky high school basketball.

Hart hit the hoops for 32 points in his first game, January 10, 1949, at the home of the Bulldogs. That day, full of baskets, he scored 14 points in a game that was a record for him. In his second game, he scored 20 points, and in his third game, he scored 25 points. He says that he has averaged 25 points a game since he started playing basketball.

It's going to be a little tougher for Hart in the stretch drive to the State high school basketball tournament. Now that he has a chance of setting a new record, he has a lot of eyes on him. He has a lot of fans, and he has a lot of respect from his teammates and coaches.

Sturdy Grove. He played 14 games against Shiloh. He has a total of 402 points in 14 games. He has a 28.7 average per game. He has a 225 point average per game in the first 14 contests.

Gifted With Good Hands. The boy also is gifted with good hands. He has a very strong grip. He can handle the ball in a way that is unusual. He can shoot the ball in a way that is unusual. He can pass the ball in a way that is unusual.

IN THE LATE '40s and early '50s George Hart burned the nets at Frances High School. The Courier Journal was just one of many papers following his accomplishments. To the

