

The complete Doofus' guide to excellence in basketball fandom

by Suzyn Smith and Melissa Collins

Basketball is a big deal at SAPC. Unfortunately, some people don't quite have a grasp of the subtle intricacies of this quite complex sport. I am one of those people. That's why I went to two basketball games last week (the womens' and mens' games against Mt. Olive,) sat next to Melissa Collins, the Lance's sports editor, and asked every question that came to mind. This is our conversation. Here's hoping that this article will enlighten other basketball doofuses as much as it enlightened me.

Okay, the other team has two fouls and we have five. Does that mean we're the bad guys?

Nope. The ref has made a couple of bad calls.

If the other team had five fouls and we had two, would they be the bad guys?
(Melissa grins.)

No, as long as the fouls weren't intentional.

There are a lot of numbers out there. How come two people on different teams often have the same number? Isn't that confusing?

Maybe a little, but some numbers are more popular than others because NBA players have them. 23 is popular because of Michael Jordan and 32 is popular because of Magic Johnson.

Why do we wave our hands when someone tries for a foul shot and yell "Whoosh" if they make it?

Because it's fun.

(I tried it a few more times. It is fun.)

Doesn't yelling "SA" sound kind of strange? It sounds like we're cheering for a piece of writing by H.L. Menken.
(Melissa gives me a funny look. We sink a basket and struggle to think of an appropriate cheer.)

Yay us!

(Melissa looks at me funny again. Not cool. One of the Mt. Olive players shoves a St. Andrews player. She falls down. Someone yells, "If she's on the ground, it's a foul!")

Why didn't that Mt. Olive girl get fouled?

I guess the ref didn't see it happen.

Do you think they'd notice if a Mt. Olive player pulled a gun?

Probably.

(Ten minutes later, two more St. Andrews players have either fallen down or been shoved.)

Either we're doing some sort of Victorian

fainting thing or those guys are pretty violent.

It's been a rough game. Our players don't normally fall down much at all.
I really don't get this game.

That's okay. Apparently, the refs don't either.

(The game ends. We won. After a little while, the guys' game begins.)

How come some of the professors watched the girl's game and then left before the guys game began?

Because some professors want to cheer on the womens' team. The womens' games aren't very well attended.

Oh.

Did you know that we have two players named "Dion" and they both have the same tattoo on their arms?

Are you sure it's not the same guy?

(Melissa gives me that look again. Chris Novello, Melissa Moore and Sal Morale come out in kilts. Chris runs by and the crowd goes nuts. Sal runs by and you could hear a pin drop.)

How come every time Chris tries to make us cheer, we cheer, but every time Sal tries to make us cheer, we ignore him?

It's a Novello thing.

(I look back to the game.

We're a little behind.)

We're five points behind. Does this mean we're getting killed, or is it just a fluke?

Below twenty is just a fluke. If we're being beaten by more than twenty points, we're getting killed.

Why are those guys in such long shorts?

It's a fashion thing. Michael Jordan started it. But if you really want to see long shorts, look at the University of Michigan. They can tuck their shorts into their socks. Fascinating. I've noticed that we sometimes repeat cheers twice, sometimes three times. **How many times should you repeat a cheer?**

As many times as you need to.

(It is then Suzyn fully accepts that she will never understand basketball.)

That was a neat little leap that guy did.

Mens' games are often more aggressive than womens' games.

(Mt. Olive player #34 is knocked to the ground. It looks painful. Someone behind me yells "34's a drama queen." Rough sport.)

Are we getting killed yet? We're fifteen points behind.

No, really, unless you're twenty points behind, don't worry. Basketball



moves fast.

(We would eventually win the game. That's why Melissa gets paid the big bucks.)

Isn't yelling to distract the other team when they try to make a foul shot bad sportsmanship?

No.

Why?

It's a tradition as old as the game itself.

Why do they dribble the ball between their legs?

The only time they are supposed to do it is if someone on the other team is trying to grab the ball.

So when they do it other times, are they just showing off?

Yes.