

The Problems and Solutions for Chinese Basketball Association

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Abstract: Under the background of the slow and lack of development of Chinese basketball, Chinese basketball fans are so desperate to get better performances in national games like the Olympics. Now, the Chinese National Basketball Team (National Team in the later content) is only ranking 4th in Asia and 28th in the world. Almost all players in the National Team are selected by the league called Chinese Basketball Association (CBA), which is the finest and most well-known basketball league in China, and also is the first choice for most professional Chinese basketball players. Although it is the finest basketball league in China, there are still various problems existing. These problems have a strong and negative effect on the National Team. So this paper mainly points out three problems now existing in CBA: (1) the influx of talented players is not enough, (2) the problems of referees and players, and (3) lack of humanistic concerns. Then, give out the solutions of making policies, setting up players' associations, organizing more competitions, considering social problems, and helping more poor children with basketball dreams.

Keywords: Basketball, CBA, Referees, Humanistic care

1. Introduction

Due to the bad result happened in the pre-Olympic games and the Asian Olympic games of the national team, it is worth saying that almost all players have been selected in the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA), the CBA need to make some changes in order to cultivate more skillful players, also, for a brighter future development of Chinese basketball.

Chinese Basketball Association, the finest and most well-known basketball league in China now, has seemed successful in the past years. From its decades of development, it gains fame and popularity that allows it to provide a great stage of high-level competitions for talented players locally and abroad in China. Besides, a great number of fans have been attracted by the games and so much attributed to the development of basketball in China. For being the most well-known basketball league in China, lots of researchers or fans had investigated the CBA in wide aspects like referees, drafting, and analysis of current situation of CBA. However, there are lack of researchers by listing all the problems of the current CBA. By combining the ideas from other researchers, this paper mainly discusses the problems from three aspects, the influx of talented players is not enough; the problems of referees and players have; and the problems of lacking humanistic concerns. At the end, gives out the solutions in accordance to these problems.

2. Literature Review

Hundreds of researchers have made their own contributions to investigate the CBA from diverse aspects. All of these are valuable and significant to the development of the CBA.

Zhu, Yang, Wang, etc. put their focus on the drafts of the CBA. Zhu had reported the 2022 CBA draft and talked about the meaning of drafting for university students and for the whole league. He mentioned that drafting is not only pronouncing names and requiring players to go on stage, but when these selected players are becoming a strong force for each team, the original intention of establishing the CBA drafting is not being betrayed [1]. Yang studied the comparison of players' transfer from the Chinese University Basketball Association (CUBA) to the CBA before and after establishing drafting. Yang points out that the number of CUBA players who attended drafts is increasing over the years. He thinks that with the refinement of the policy of drafting, these young players' influx will bring positive effect to Chinese Basketball [2]. Wang illustrates the history of the NBA draft and the CBA draft, with comparing, he points out that the skills and talent of players participating in the CBA draft is insufficient; the salary of draft players is not high enough; the draft yielding rate is low; the training mode of reserve talents affects the draft development; and the communication between leagues is insufficient. According to that, he gives out his own opinion, the CBA draft should improve the draft system reasonably, solve the related problems mentioned above, and promote the healthy development of the draft [3].

Liu and Du investigated the alienation behaviors of CBA players due to the intention of maintaining a healthy development of CBA. The result of the investigation turns out that "there is no strong symbiosis between players and opponents, coaches, referees and fans; the alienation behavior of players occurs frequently in training competition and social life; there is a lack of continuous and reciprocal symbiosis between symbiotic units; the breeding conditions of players' alienation behavior need to be regulated". He also mentions several paths to govern alienation behaviors, "to coordinate multidimensionally to enhance the symbiotic association between players and opponents, coaches, referees and fans; to improve the quality and promote the harmonious development of players' training competition and social life; to make up the gap and cultivate the continuous and reciprocal symbiosis between symbiosis units; To make up the gap and cultivate the continuous and reciprocal symbiosis between symbiosis units; to strengthen governance to prevent the breeding of players' alienation behavior" [4].

According to the alienation behaviors that happened in CBA, punishment will definitely be combined with it. Gao uses case studies to investigate the disciplinary cases in CBA. He listed several problems and solutions or suggestions. For the problems, first, players, coaches, staffs, and fans are not satisfied or agreed with the referees' decision. Second, players are lacking in good manner. Third, disciplinary behavior often occurs with a lack of knowing rules or policies. Fourth, lax management induces disciplinary behaviors to happen. Last, CBA is not in time to punish the violation of discipline; the standards of punishment are inconsistent; and the content of punishment is not enough. With these problems, suggestions and solutions are: CBA may select referees to participate in training sessions with clubs; CBA should call on clubs, athletes, fans, etc., to strengthen ideological and moral construction; CBA can send staffs to each club to learn about the penalty rules before the start of the playing season; adding more penalties rules in order to decrease the disciplinary behaviors to happen, and to protect the reputation of CBA; last, to establish clear punishment standards, punish violations in a timely manner while enriching the content of punishments, and establish a sense of responsibility to maintain league's healthy development [5].

3. Problems in CBA

3.1. Lack of Influx of Talented Players

For now, the main source of the league of players that will go into the CBA is called CUBA. Kind of like the National College Athletic Association (NCAA) in the USA. For these players, they have clear advantages like they are still at a young age, in other words, they have strong plasticity to allow them to change and improve their skills. Also, compared with players that are over 30 or more, their athletic ability is an absolute advantage. However, the problems outweigh the advantages. Firstly, these players who have been selected are not easy to get chances to play. Only a few of them can get a long time to play on court. For example, Yuezhuo Gu, once had been a star in CUBA and helped his team get the second place in CUBA, after he was been selected to play in CBA, his average time to play on the court was only about 10 minutes. Hong Wang, once had been the best point guard in CUBA, now in CBA, his average playing time is 9.3 mins, 11.3 mins, and 8.2 mins in seasons, and now, he can hardly go on the court to play. For the first top draft pick Junlei Fang, his whole career is in one game with only two minutes. In 2016, when the contract ended, he retired from basketball [6]. From these examples, this paper wants to mention that players from universities need their time to show their talent in CBA. They are still young and they need opportunities for them to improve. The club should provide them more time to play on the court, which will not cause any loss to the club, but if that phenomenon still happens, more and more potential star players will be hidden by strict time limitations.

Second, it is always risky to choose to play professional basketball. The first player who has been selected only has a basic salary of only half a million RMB. After the 15th pick, the basic salary is only 180 thousand RMB [6]. However, compared with the NBA, Orlando Magic made a contract with their first picked player of 49.4 million dollars for 4 years, an average of more than 12 million dollars per year. However, with the fast development of social media, talented players can choose to be online celebrities, which can have more income than being as professional basketball players [3]. Secondly, now in the CBA, there is no player association to manage and argue for the players' rights and incomes. Taking Qi Zhou as an example, Zhou is one of the most talented players in the whole Asia and has played in the NBA. However, about 3 years ago, Zhou was locked in his team called Xinjiang because of contract problems in the CBA. The CBA has 5 types of contracts, from A to E. A contract is a contract for rookies; B is called the protective contract; C is the regular contract; D is a maximum salary contract; E is a veteran contract [7]. Each contract is facing different players in different situations or conditions. The problem Zhou getting into is the D contract. Since the D contract policy in the CBA is that when the team already gave the D contract years back, after the contract expired, this team still has the priority to sign another contract with this player. In other words, the team is forcing the star players to stay and stopping them from leaving the team. This policy really damaged the fairness to compete in the market. But, in the NBA, with the development of players' association that helped the players to compete with the league to get more rights, the current NBA is a free market where trading always happening. Also, there are no limitations for players to be forced to stay in one team, but more of players' own willingness. The next problem is about the lack of guarantee after players' retirement. According to Cai etc. in the passage of "Realistic Dilemma and Optimization Path of Athlete Security in CBA League", "Although the government had already published laws and policies to protect professional basketball players' life after retirement, however, with the increasing number of basketball players in China and soaring prices, these guarantees cannot fully cover housing, medical care, employment and other issues. Moreover, the laws and policies have not been updated in time, and the interpretation and implementation of the laws and policies in some regions are not in place, resulting in the life of some players after retirement is still not guaranteed. Judging from a series of policies published, these policies are not

comprehensive enough, and there is a lack of strong and special protection law for retired basketball players” [8]. So it is hard to imagine when a talented player paid so much effort to make him or her into CBA, and they still need to face these limitations and unfairness. It’s so risky to go on a professional path, and that is the main reason why Chinese parents or children refuse to play professional basketball, but rather choose a more secure job and live in a more stable life.

3.2. Problems of Referees

Now in the CBA, conflicts of referees with coaches, players, staffs, and even fans seem like a common phenomenon since referees are so important to a game, it is not rare that they can change the whole competition. Although there are problems from these people they mistakenly blame referees, there are a great number of examples that referees making mistakes. To investigate what is causing this problem is crucial that it may contribute to fairer competition and fewer arguments or conflicts, in another perspective, to promote the positive development of the CBA. Getting know why referees make so many mistakes, people first need to see how are they learning the rules. For current referee cultivation, there are levels to judge a referee, from the 3rd level to the 2nd, the 1st, national, and international [9]. Referees need to participate in classes to learn rules and judge real games in order to get a higher level. However, there are problems appearing. First, about the classes, these classes are mostly based on words or theoretical knowledge, which lack experience for a referee to really judge a game since it is totally different for a referee to stay in the class and learn through cases than really feel a game. Also, since young referees do not have enough experience, they may make mistakes on the court. These mistakes they make may just let them lose one of only a few opportunities they can get. In fact, there aren’t many basketball competitions established in China, and these competitions are more likely to find elders with more experienced referees in order to avoid of less conflicts. Moreover, it is surprising that in whole China, there are only 5 full-time referees [10]. So the young referees can hardly go up in levels and judge higher-level games.

3.3. Humanistic Caring

Compared with other leagues like the NBA, the NBA really did a great model to other leagues. When some big events happen internationally, the NBA is always the first league to stand out and revolt for unfairness. For example, in 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man, was held down on the street by a white police officer and had his neck pinned to his knee. Meanwhile, he was begging the police and shouting out, “I can’t breathe” repeatedly. However, the police did not make any reactions, but still kept that posture for seven minutes. Finally, when George was sent to the hospital, he passed because of choking. This is only one of the lots of examples because of discrimination and racism. That white policeman was pretending that he was doing what a regular policeman should do in order to stop his knees on a dark skin man, and finally causing George’s death. This event was boomed only by one day in the world. Just after that, the NBA made an announcement and mourned George. Lots of star players like LeBron James, as being one of the most popular basketball players in history, also yelled for the social unfairness for black people. In the game after, players start to wear jerseys signed “Black Lives Matter”. Even the floors have signs revolting discrimination. When the National Anthem sang, everyone, including players, coaches, and staffs, all got down on one knee and had others’ hand held to stand for fairness for African Americans. What’s more, looking at the CBA. The CBA had once invited a one-armed teenager Jiacheng Zhang, a crazy basketball fan and player although he only has one arm, to be the opening jump ball guest of the game between the Shanxi team and the Guangdong team. When the basketball was thrown into the air by the teenager, the referee took the ball and did not start the game and let Zhang go out of court. Only a player hugged Zhang and encouraged him. The referee re-jumped the ball after that. This event is

showing that the form of this caring action was greater than the content in the CBA [11]. In fact, inviting Zhang is one of the few humanistic care the CBA does. Cultivating an image of humanistic caring is always important to a sports league because it can let fans or other people see great philanthropy from doing these acts. However, the CBA really needs to learn to cultivate a figure of being kind to others, especially the group of people that are vulnerable.

4. Solutions

In accordance with the problems mentioned above, finding solutions seems of great importance. First, due to the problem of lacking talented players, this paper advocates the CBA players should imitate the NBA and organize a players' association to fight for their rights and opportunities. The players' association will play an important role which they should avoid corruption happening, and every player should be united together. Also, due to the problem of limited time for rookies. CBA should make laws to make team regard their young players as important since they are the future of Chinese basketball.

Second, for the problems of referees, the CBA department should pay more attention to the education of referees, not only learning theoretical knowledge. Correspondingly, there needs to be more competition organizations setting up games for young referees to feel and judge. Only by that, in the future, when lots of the older, more experienced referees are retired, the job would be replaced reliably.

Last, humanistic caring should really be carefully considered. Since the CBA is the biggest and most well-known basketball league in China, it is their duty to consider social problems and react in time like the NBA. It is known that there are lots of children who love to play basketball and have some talents, however, they do not have enough money or opportunities to show their talents on stage. Helping these poor kids who have a basketball dream is an obligation CBA can follow. The next Yao Ming may be in these poor children, giving them enough money and paving their basketball dream path will give the CBA a better reputation and help these kids out.

5. Conclusion

It is needless to illustrate the importance of investigating CBA. CBA is directly related to the national team, in other words, CBA's condition really affects the Chinese national team's performance. If CBA's problem can be figured out and make changes just in time, then the rank of the 4th in Asia and 29th in the world can be changed. For being a fan of Chinese basketball, the author really does not want Chinese team to miss any Olympic games, World cups, and perform better and better, but not stuck in this situation now. Being stagnant without any great development will only make more fans leaving without supporting the games, and the league will face huge lost for being hopeless. However, it is always Chinese business to get Chinese team out of this mud. This paper hopes to give signs and suggestions to the CBA managers, willing that they could make a change to CBA, eliminating unfairness, getting know the importance of fans, and giving more humanistic caring to people, especially children who have a basketball dream. Dreams may not become true, but please help dreams become true. At last, hoping that Chinese Basketball Association can become better and wish Chinese national team get a better performance in every game.

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