

History of the Basketball Gymnasiums for Continental High School 1910 to Today

The first mention of a boys' basketball team at Continental High School was in 1910 and its games were not covered very well rarely reported in the newspaper until 1919. I was unable to determine exact years for the first two gymnasiums. The years listed are "educated guesses".

GYMNASIUM #1 1910 - 1919

An article in the Continental News Review in 1973 described the "first gym". "All the games were played in a 'makeshift' gym located between the Bowen Brothers pool room (Edgar and Merele Bowen) and an ice cream and confectionary store. There was an enclosed stairway that ran up between the two stores and over the top of these two stores was the homemade gymnasium!"

"The playing area was completely caged in with wire (sort of a 'see through' wired mesh which reached to the ceiling) to protect the bystanders who occupied the home built stair step fashioned seats surrounding the caged area. There were no showers or dressing rooms. Players went in the suits they wore during the game and wore them home."

GYMNASIUM #2 1920 - 1929

The first brick school in Continental was built in 1890, but a gymnasium was not added until the early 1920's. The high school boys and girls used this gym until a fire on Saturday, February 9, 1929, completely gutted the building. Continental played Glandorf on Friday, the night before the fire.

GYMNASIUM #3 1931 - 1973

After the fire destroyed the high school which was located in the southern part of Continental, the school board and members of

the community immediately started making plans on building a new school. 470 days later, the new high school was built on the north side of Continental. This new school, with a gymnasium, was dedicated on June 4, 1930.

The first game in this gym was played on December 12, 1930 with the locals hosting Crawfis College. Crawfis College won both games, the girls 50-14 and the boys 21-11. Bea Donaldson was the girls' coach and Ralph McKibben was the boys.

This gym was used as a basketball gymnasium for 43 school years, 1931-1973 and is still being used for theatre productions and a practice gym. The floor dimensions are 43.5 x 64. It has chair seats on one side of the gym and a stage with bleachers on the opposite side. The seating capacity was approximately 500.

CURRENT GYMNASIUM #4 1974 to Today

The current gym was added on to the high school and completed in the fall of 1973. The first game was on November 16, 1973 when the Continental boys defeated Tinora 81-64. Don Huber was starting his third season as varsity coach. Greg Spitnale led the Pirates with 30 points and Dave Chivington pulled down 27 rebounds.

The floor dimensions of this gym are 50 x 84. It has bleacher seats on both sides of the floor with a seating capacity of 1,700.

PRACTICE GYMS - In addition to the current gym, Continental has two available practice gyms.