**NEWS RELEASE**



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**Every sports icon was once a kid!**

***Game Maker***

***A Creative Kid Becomes the Father of Basketball***

**By Brian Hanni, “Voice of the Jayhawks”**

Long before he invented one of the most popular sports of all-time, young James Naismith was an imaginative child. From an early age, James knew he wanted to do something big with his life. He wasn’t sure exactly how, but he wanted to give something to the world that would enrich countless lives. Learn how this creative little boy who dreamed big dreams, grew into an iconic innovator of sport and eventually did, indeed, wind up changing the world.

Brian Hanni is the “Voice of the Kansas Jayhawks.” He has long had a passion for inspiring youth and serves many youth-based charities including his own pediatric cancer organization. ***Game Maker, A Creative Kid Becomes the Father of Basketball***.” ***Game Maker***is the inspirational message based on historical insights that Hanni learned while interviewing Jim Naismith, the grandson of the Father of Basketball. With a young boy’s competitive spirit and enthusiasm for all sports, James Naismith made up games working on his family’s farm in Canada and mastered “Duck on a Rock” a popular schoolyard game. Believing that becoming a physical education teacher would be the way he could make a difference in people’s lives, after graduating from college, James Naismith moved to Springfield, Massachusetts. At his job at the YMCA, he was asked to create an indoor game because the winters were so cold. Naismith drew upon his childhood experiences and education – and basketball was born! Told in an appealing rhyme with a vocabulary for adults and children and colorfully illustrated by award-winning artist Rob Peters, *Game Maker* will delight every reader! Hanni hopes these true tales of young James’ ambition and creativity as a child inspire future generations to dream big just as Naismith did.

“***Game Maker*** is a wonderful tutorial for any young person about the birth of basketball and the inspiring story of the game’s inventor. I think young James Naismith would have been proud. I just wish this book was around when I was a kid!” – Jay Bilas, College Basketball Analyst for ESPN

**Author Bio:** Brian Hanni is a sportscaster in Lawrence, KS where he broadcasts for his alma mater, the University of Kansas, as the “Voice of the Jayhawks.” Hanni has long had a passion for inspiring youth and serves many youth-based charities including his own pediatric cancer organization. ***Game Maker*** is his first children’s book. Hanni hopes these true tales of young James’ ambition and creativity as a child inspire future generations to dream big just as Naismith did.

Illustrator Rob Peters is also a cartoonist and designer. He has illustrated over 30 children’s books including ***Go Chiefs Go! The Championship Season of the Kansas City Chiefs.***He has a degree in Visual Communications from Judson College in Illinois.

Title: *Game Maker, A Creative Kid Becomes the Father of Basketball*

Author: Brian Hanni Illustrator: Rob Peters

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For more information and to request a preview copy or an interview with Brian Hanni, contact mgore@ascendbooks.com or call (913) 948-7635.

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