

Their team was a little shorter than ours, but all of them looked physical. I felt a good kind of nervous, the way I did when I played against the good players in the Rucker Tournaments in Harlem. It was going to be a good game.

They got the tip and Brothers brought the ball down. He came down dribbling the pill between his legs like it was supposed to impress me. I knew as long as it was going between his legs he wasn't going anywhere with it. We got near the top of the key and I moved up on him.

"I'm going right, baby," he said.

"Come on," I answered him.

He dribbled low with his left hand, turned, and put an elbow in my side and ducked his head toward the left. I moved over to cut it off and he spun right and ran me into a pick. I fought through the pick but I was a step behind him. I went up with him, trying to keep my body off him so he wouldn't draw the foul. My eye was dead on the ball as he put it softly against the backboard. They were up by two.

Nick brought the ball down for us. They were slow in getting back and Nick went all the way to the foul line, pulled up, and threw up a jumper to tie the score.

They had two black guys on their team. One was tall and skinny and the other one was short and stocky. The short one, number 5, brought the ball down and passed it in to their center on a simple give-and-go. Number 5 got past Nick but Trip picked him up and partially blocked his shot. The

ball came off the boards and Brothers got past me and tapped it back in. Four to two.

Brothers was all over me. When I had the ball he was in my face, and when I didn't have it he kept his hands on me to know where I was and kept his eyes on the ball. Their number 5 could play, too. We started falling behind and the only one on the floor looking good was Brothers. I started thinking about Ice playing him, and figured that Carver would crush these guys.

Nick lost the ball twice bringing it down, and missed two easy jumpers. He wanted to look good but he was looking like nothing, and I wasn't even in the game. The first half went by fast and we were behind 28-16.

"We're doing lousy," Ducky said on the way to the locker room.

"You figure that out on your calculator?" I asked him.