

THE PRESS AND THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT  
OF THREE WOMEN'S INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC PROGRAMS  
IN THE UPPER MIDWEST, 1950-1980

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Title

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## ABSTRACT

Teigen, Danielle Ann, M.A., Department of Communication, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, North Dakota State University, April 2011. The Press and the Historical Development of Three Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Programs in the Upper Midwest, 1950-1980. Major Professor: Dr. Ross Collins.

From 1950-1980, women's intercollegiate athletic programs experienced exponential growth, with newspapers rarely detailing the journey until Title IX passed in 1972. This project examined how women's athletics developed at North Dakota State University, the University of North Dakota, and Minnesota State University Moorhead, as well as the correlating press coverage. Articles from two regional newspapers and three student newspapers from 1950-1980 illustrated the coverage women's athletics received, while women integrally involved in the three athletic programs from 1950-1980 supplemented the coverage and further explained the development. This thesis proposes a cohesive narrative of the press coverage associated with the development of three women's intercollegiate athletic programs in the Midwest from 1950-1980. The project also speculates on the reasons why different newspapers covered women's athletics in the area differently and why 1975 emerged as a watershed year for women's athletics at NDSU, UND, and MSUM.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	iv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND .....	7
Educational opportunities abound in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century .....	7
Critics of women and physical activity .....	9
The advent of basketball .....	11
Inequality in basketball .....	13
Differentiating from men’s programs .....	13
From golden age to old ways .....	14
Title IX .....	17
Governance of women’s athletics, 1890s-1980s .....	19
Women’s athletics and the role of newspapers .....	21
CHAPTER 3: HISTORY OF REGIONAL WOMEN’S ATHLETICS, 1890-1940 .....	29
In the beginning, 1890s-1920s .....	30
North Dakota State University .....	30
University of North Dakota .....	34
Minnesota State University Moorhead .....	40
Rise of recreational activities, 1930s-1950s .....	41
North Dakota State University .....	41
University of North Dakota .....	44
Minnesota State University Moorhead .....	45

CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL PROCESS .....	50
IRB approval .....	51
Participants .....	51
Interviews .....	52
Newspapers .....	53
Other materials .....	54
Interpretation of primary sources .....	54
Aim and scope .....	55
CHAPTER 5: REGIONAL WOMEN'S ATHLETICS AND PRESS COVERAGE, 1950-1980 .....	60
North Dakota State University .....	60
1950-1960 .....	60
1960-1970 .....	64
1970-1980 .....	69
University of North Dakota .....	84
1950-1960 .....	84
1960-1970 .....	85
1970-1980 .....	88
Minnesota State University Moorhead .....	98
1950-1960 .....	98
1960-1970 .....	101
1970-1980 .....	102
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS .....	121

BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	130
APPENDIX A .....	139
APPENDIX B .....	140
APPENDIX C .....	141

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*“Athletics both reflect(s) and perpetuate(s) the ideas people have about what is right for boys to do and what is right for girls to do. Sex stereotypes are often deeply ingrained and confronting them head-on can be difficult. Boys are supposed to be strong and aggressive, both physically and emotionally. Women, on the other hand, are supposed to be weak and passive, both physically and emotionally.*

*So the myth goes, and myths die hard.”<sup>4</sup>*



Sports mirror the values of the society in which they are developed, influencing language, clothing, and narratives about heroes and heroines. Pamela Creedon writes that “athletes and teams become our symbolic warriors defending the honor of our schools, towns or nation. Its games and contests become symbolic representations of personal and societal struggles for such things as property, fairness, honor, and economic gain.”<sup>2</sup> Athletic competition is captivating. From the first foot races in ancient cultures to the high-impact football games omnipresent on television today, athletics represent a treasured pastime enjoyed by many. Athletics represent a “microcosm of society in that many, if not all, of the attributes required to compete and be successful in the athletic area are prerequisites for basic survival.”<sup>3</sup>

But athletics has a darker side.

Sports embody a social force that not only reflects gender differences, but, unfortunately, often creates, amplifies, and even imposes them.<sup>4</sup> Since the first competitions took place, athletics have been associated with masculinity; physicality, speed, strength, and aggression are synonymous with sports and men. Because of that association, women have traditionally been deemed physically, emotionally, and mentally incapable of achieving the same athletic status as their male counterparts.

That does not mean that women have been absent from the athletic field; just the opposite, in fact. Women have been present in many different athletic realms throughout the years, though their inclusion was often met with hostility and resentment. Colleges and universities in the United States realized that they presented the perfect opportunity to develop athletes. Athletics could “address social and cultural problems,” providing a “real and legitimate social utility.”<sup>5</sup> Additionally, sports offered a new paradigm for social interaction and provided life lessons and leadership skills, developed self-control and discipline, and fostered a

sense of community.<sup>6</sup> Despite the emerging prominence of athletics holistically, women's athletic programs developed more slowly and for different reasons than did men's athletic programs. Whereas men's programs developed to channel natural aggression and improve physical strength, women's programs developed separately in the physical education departments as an opportunity for ladylike recreational activity.<sup>7</sup> The segregation of sports did not reflect actual sex differences but created and imposed the notion that women were inherently athletically inferior to men based on three false assumptions of inferiority, injury (susceptibility to and subsequent protection from), and immorality of female competition.<sup>8</sup> Critics quickly denounced physical activity as detrimental, not advantageous, to the delicate female reproduction system and thus, women's athletics were shunned.

Societal values continued to produce an ebb and flow of approval and disapproval of women's athletics until the civil rights movement in the 1960s and subsequent women's movement drew national support for women's equality. Athletics offered a venue for teaching and disseminating American values.<sup>9</sup> The milestone passage of Title IX legislation in 1972 that prohibited discrimination in educational programs and activities on the basis of sex advanced the women's equality movement and eventually led to increased female athletic participation, though total equality has yet to be achieved. While Title IX "leveled the playing field for women and girls, there still is much to be done to achieve equality."<sup>10</sup>

The college woman, who cannot practice in her university's multi-million-dollar gymnasium, has no offer of financial assistance, finds equipment scarce and elderly, and must sell raffle tickets to pay travel expenses, exemplifies current conditions. There has been a publicly announced, publicly supported notion that sport is good for people, that sports develop better citizens, build vigorous minds and bodies, and promotes a better society. Yet many females of this country's population find that this credo does not apply to them. Perhaps the real problem is that some in our society believe only men are people and women are something less.<sup>11</sup>

As sports took root in American culture, so did another social institution: the press.

The two developed simultaneously, feeding off one another and individually asserting

traditional sex roles that many women fought to change. Newspapers possess an innate power to perpetuate social norms and contextualize issues in a narrow or wide scope within public discourse.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, this power allows newspapers to greatly affect how the public thinks about and acts regarding any particular topic, such as women's athletics. In the traditionally male-dominated fields of newspapers and sports, women have suffered the marginalization and trivialization of what they love to do.<sup>13</sup> Even though participation in women's athletics has been growing steadily since the 1970s, coverage of the sport by news organizations remains meager, suggesting that women's athletics are unimportant compared to men's athletics or, worse yet, that women are nonexistent on the athletic field.<sup>14</sup>

While women's athletics arose on the East Coast and moved westward, the development of women's intercollegiate athletic programs at Midwestern universities presents an interesting case to study because of how quickly women's athletics appeared in the area after the initial birth halfway across the country. This project aims to rely on standard methods of historical method to examine the historical development of women's intercollegiate athletic programs at three public universities in the Upper Midwest through newspaper reporting from 1950 to 1980, a time period when these programs underwent drastic and significant changes. Preliminary national research demonstrated the importance of the 1950s and 1960s to establishing women's desire to participate in athletics while Title IX solidified the need for equality in athletics, giving rise to the modern women's athletic program. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, women's athletics emerged as an important venue that deserved equality and recognition. Even before Title IX was passed in 1972, physical educators and athletes had begun asserting their presence in the athletic arena. Title IX legally solidified the assertion and resulted in the formal establishment of women's athletic programs at many colleges and universities in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This evidence justifies the use of the 1950-1980

time frame as encompassing and inclusive. Furthermore, historical research will situate the subject in the appropriate national context so the researcher can fully understand how these programs developed and the movements leading up to that development, as well as contextualize the newspaper coverage afforded to this development.

To fully understand the importance of the subject, the development of these programs will also be compared to the national development of women's intercollegiate athletic programs to discover if and where any differences may exist, as well as speculate why those differences may have occurred. Academic research on the national development of women's athletic programs abounds, but virtually no research has been conducted on this specific topic despite its importance to the region and the athletes involved in these three programs. This project aims to fill the gaping hole that exists regarding women's athletics in the Upper Midwest.

Completing this project requires extensive knowledge on the subject of women's athletics, its development based on societal values, the historical context surrounding physical activity for women, as well as an appropriate understanding of the role newspapers played when women's athletics were developing. Newspapers — both student and regional — will provide an abundance of primary resources from which to draw, as well as school yearbooks, and meeting minutes from the Minn-Kota conference and each university's Women's Athletic Association. To detail the pivotal years of development for women's intercollegiate athletic programs from 1950-1980, women who played integral roles in the development will provide oral histories that offer insightful historical perspective and will ultimately supplement the critical information disseminated through newspapers.

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<sup>1</sup> Joann Rutherford, "Women's Intercollegiate Athletics in the United States: A Geographical Examination, 1973-1977," (PhD diss., Oklahoma State University, 1977), 2.

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- <sup>2</sup> Pamela Creedon, "Women, Media and Sport: Creating and Reflecting Gender Values," in *Women, Media and Sport: Challenging Gender Values* ed. Pamela J. Creedon (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 4.
- <sup>3</sup> David Salter, *Crashing the Old Boys' Network: The Tragedies and Triumphs of Girls and Women in Sports*. (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996), 9.
- <sup>4</sup> Eileen McDonagh and Laura Pappano, *Playing with the Boys: Why Separate is Not Equal in Sports*. (Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.
- <sup>6</sup> James L. Shulman and William G. Bowen, *The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 5.
- <sup>7</sup> Reet Howell, "American Women, 1800-1860: Recreational Pursuits & Exercise," in *Her Story in Sport: A Historical Anthology of Women in Sports*, ed. Reet Howell (New York: Leisure Press, 1982), 71.
- <sup>8</sup> McDonagh and Pappano, *Playing with the Boys*, 24.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.
- <sup>10</sup> Lisa Yonka Stevens, "The Sport of Numbers: Manipulating Title IX to Rationalize Discrimination Against Women," *Brigham Young University Education and Law Journal* (2004), 155.
- <sup>11</sup> Rutherford, "Women's Intercollegiate Athletics in the United States," 2.
- <sup>12</sup> David Welky, "Viking Girls, Mermaids, and Little Brown Men: U.S. Journalism and the 1932 Olympics" *The Journal of Sport History*, 24, no. 1, 30.
- <sup>13</sup> Judith Cramer, "Conversations with Women Sports Journalists," in *Women, Media and Sport: Challenging Gender Values* ed. Pamela J. Creedon (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 172.
- <sup>14</sup> Mary Jo Kane and Susan L. Greendorfer, "The Media's Role in Accommodating and Resisting Stereotypes Images of Women in Sport," in *Women, Media and Sport: Challenging Gender Values* ed. Pamela J. Creedon (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 34.

## CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The word *athletics* comes from the ancient Greek work *athlon*, which emphasizes competition and winning, because in athletics, only one is honored: the victor.<sup>1</sup> Contrary to popular belief, women have been participating in athletics since the ancient times. The Minoan culture and early competitions that inspired the Olympic games often featured female competitors who ran, swam, and hunted, as depicted on archeological artifacts.<sup>2</sup> While the Olympic Games originated to feature male competition, the Heraean Games — which celebrated the goddess Hera — showcased female competition, often in the form of foot races on a shortened course. Winners received the same prize given at the men's games: a crown of olives and a share of the cow sacrificed to Hera.<sup>3</sup> In Sparta, a civilization known for its militaristic lifestyle, girls received vigorous physical training to give birth to strong children and possibly defend the country if needed.<sup>4</sup>

In the United States, Native American women participated in various cultural ball games that were eventually adapted to the Anglo-Saxon version once settlers inhabited the area, while colonial women also enjoyed minimal recreational activity like dancing.<sup>5</sup> This idea continued into the Victorian era as women were expected “not to exert themselves and vigorous physical activity was unthinkable.”<sup>6</sup> Because of this mindset, strength and facial color were often associated with the lower class that had to work for a living, leaving dance as the only acceptable form of recreational activity for upper class women.

### **Educational opportunities abound in 19<sup>th</sup> century**

Higher education became increasingly important in the 1800s, especially for women; however, no one could have predicted how education would influence women's roles in society. The meteoric rise of universities in America was unpredicted and unexpected.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the 1800s, female seminaries were being established to educate women for

traditionally male-dominated professions, such as law, theology, and medicine. The establishment of educational institutions for women directly challenged the notion of women's traditional place in society and became a "crusade to prove that women possessed equal mental ability and deserved an education previously afforded only to men."<sup>8</sup> When the Morrill Federal Land Grant Act of 1862 passed, the legislation forever changed how the American people viewed college; it also extended women's educational opportunities because co-education became commonplace in the university setting, despite gender divisions within specific programs.<sup>9</sup> The educational system also moved away from liberal classics to a more purposeful education.<sup>10</sup>

An increase in educational opportunities prompted medical professionals to evaluate the significance of physical education for women as well, leading to the promotion of recreational activity during the mid to late 1800s.<sup>11</sup> In universities, a rigid curriculum forced undergraduate students to seek opportunities for organizational values, life lessons for success, fellowship, and well-roundedness.<sup>12</sup> During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most people believed that humans possessed a fixed amount of energy that, when expended simultaneously with intellectual tasks, could be harmful.<sup>13</sup>

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, physicians finally realized the health benefits of physical activity and promoted the idea of an active woman. Some doctors felt the overprotection of women in a traditional Victorian society caused decreased health because women were not allowed to strengthen muscles.<sup>14</sup> To combat this, women engaged in physical activities that produced more graceful movement, good posture, and corrected physical deficits.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, women who participated in sports not only developed physical strength but also engaged in respectable social encounters.<sup>16</sup> Edwin Flemming conducted a study in the 1930s that concluded that female athletes had more positive personal characteristics, leadership skills,

diverse interests, helpful inclinations and beauty than those who did not participate in athletics.<sup>17</sup>

Even though society was gradually learning to accept the idea of physical activity for women, the motivation behind the acceptance still stemmed from traditional values about the role of women in society. For example, *Sports Illustrated* writer Frederick Rand Rogers believed at the time that athletic involvement cultivated better wives and mothers; women involved in athletics participated “to attract the most worthy fathers for their children, provide the most healthful physiques for child bearing and build the most maternal emotional and social behavior patterns.”<sup>18</sup>

The idea of being physically fit overtook the dominating 19<sup>th</sup> century notion that a plump, non-athletic look indicated well-being.

Being physically fit meant being more beautiful, which served to convince many women that their participation in sport should be focused on a very acceptable purpose: to make them more physically attractive. The enhancement of women as objects of physical beauty and sexual attractiveness serves to reinforce the status of women in a capitalistic society. It could be argued that this is the basis of the perception of females as sexual objects and their continued portrayal as such, even in sport. The irony is that women, while being highly valued for their physical characteristics, are seen as incapable of participating skillfully in sport.<sup>19</sup>

### **Critics of women and physical activity**

The increase in attention to the health benefits of physical activity did not come without its critics. If a woman chose to participate in competitive sports, people doubted her morals, sanity, and womanhood.<sup>20</sup> As women increased the amount of exercise they received, many physicians contended that women inflicted irreparable damage on their reproductive systems through strenuous physical activity and thus destroyed the essence of her womanhood.

The debate over women’s health revealed a great deal about American thought and values. The idea that women’s health was both dominated and limited by her



reproductive system was, in fact, an ancient argument. Yet at no time were those beliefs more entrenched and prevalent than in nineteenth century America.<sup>21</sup>

The furor over whether physical activity damaged women's reproductive organs was polarized by the encouragement of young men who were believed to be reaching the onset of their masculine strength and vigor upon puberty, whereas women reaching puberty marked what was widely believed to be an extensive period of prolonged and sporadic weakness that diluted their strength and energy.<sup>22</sup> Men were not excited to have women invade what had traditionally been deemed their space. To curb the increase of women in the athletic sphere, men habitually denied women entrance to sports clubs and mocked women who were involved in athletics.<sup>23</sup>

An even more negative reaction to women participating in athletics emerged in the result of outright accusations of lesbianism charged at the athletes who decided to compete. Sports were accused of "masculinizing" women, who were depicted as mannish, failed heterosexuals.<sup>24</sup> Many feared women would adopt more masculine clothing, talk, and characteristics. Once the 1930s arrived, "female athletic mannishness began to connote heterosexual failure, usually couched in terms of unattractiveness to men, but also suggesting the possible absence of heterosexual interest. In the years following World War II, the stereotype of the lesbian athletes emerged full blown."<sup>25</sup>

Ruth Sparhawk's "Pre-Organizational Era" lasted from 1887-1916 and was characterized by a general disapproval of most types of athletic competition for women.<sup>26</sup> Almost exclusively, women's physical education facilities controlled women's athletics.<sup>27</sup> From 1891 to 1919, a frenzy of sport activity occurred, including the addition of sports to the physical education curriculum, the building of more athletic facilities, the hiring of more faculty members, and the increasing in numbers of participants.<sup>28</sup>

Despite the criticisms and uncertain future of female athletics, women persevered and participated in recreational activities. Following the initial first wave of feminism that ignited after the Civil War and led to increased advocacy for physical activity for women, the invention of basketball in 1892, which was adapted for female athletes, provided the impetus to spur a wave of competitive sports for women that continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>29</sup> Suddenly, “skilled female athletes became symbols of the broader march of womanhood out of the Victorian domestic sphere into once prohibited male realms.”<sup>30</sup>

### **The advent of basketball**

Before basketball became popular, recreational opportunities for women existed only as “informal, noncompetitive, ruleless activities.”<sup>31</sup> In college, athletics offered women a chance to compete in an acceptable manner, though intramural contests were the primary venue because physical educators feared the effects of intercollegiate games.<sup>32</sup> Playing sports in college provided a means of identifying with a specific institution and fostered an important sense of community and togetherness.<sup>33</sup> While many female physical educators ardently believed in the advantages of competition, a nagging fear remained about the disadvantages of “commercialized” competition between schools and the effects it would wreak on the female players.<sup>34</sup>

James Naismith invented basketball in December 1891 for the students at the YMCA in Springfield, Massachusetts. Within a month, a young instructor named Senda Berenson learned about the game and modified it for female players to make it a more acceptable form of athletics.<sup>35</sup> Berenson herself suffered from ill-health most of her life until she enrolled in the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics to improve her strength and vitality so she could then study at the Boston Conservatory of Music.<sup>36</sup> She was hired at Smith College in 1892 and

quickly introduced basketball to her students, never realizing the magnitude of her discovery in the realm of women's athletics.<sup>37</sup>

The game caught on quickly and by 1894, basketball was firmly rooted in New England and was rapidly spreading west.<sup>38</sup> In fact, less than a year after Berenson introduced the game, the first inter-institutional contest among women occurred on November 18, 1892, between the University of California-Berkeley and Miss Head's School.<sup>39</sup>

For Berenson, basketball presented women with an opportunity to gain equality both in and out of the athletic arena.

She asserted that the sport came on at the right moment in the history of the development of games for women. One of the strong arguments in the economic world against giving women as high salaries as men for similar work is that women are more prone to illness than men. They need, therefore, all the more to develop health and endurance if they desire to become candidates for equal wages... And how valuable a training it is which enables a woman to meet an unexpected situation, perhaps of danger, with alacrity and success.<sup>40</sup>

The taste of competition left women insatiable for more. Basketball offered women the first opportunity to experience team competition. In 1902, Alice Fallows praised basketball in a *Good Housekeeping* article that attributed healthier women to the sport. Basketball provided women with a "life-long legacy of health and served as an unequaled cure for the ill-health of women. It should be cherished, the author concluded, by American women who too often lapsed into the miseries of nervous prostration."<sup>41</sup>

As basketball quickly spread to other eastern colleges and throughout the rest of the country, the image of women changed. College women who embraced competitive sports enjoyed improved health, sensible dress, and less self-consciousness.<sup>42</sup>

Sports participation became part of women's culture that had been missing. Women were allowed to strive for excellence, to extend comradeship to other women, to be lauded for success, or to accept honorable defeat. They no longer merely cheered players, they could be players. Gender did not eliminate them from the contest. Woman was not freed from her appointed roles, but her sphere was wider than ever before.<sup>43</sup>

## **Inequality in basketball**

Despite the popularity of women's basketball, the sport suffered discrimination regarding the men's version of the game. Women's games were typically scheduled prior to men's games instead of on their own night, and the men's coach usually took on the coaching role of the women's team, despite "little interest in the team and no knowledge or only a limited knowledge of the rules."<sup>44</sup>

Additionally, if a school did not have a gym, women played basketball on adjoining outdoor courts, which meant that the season could only be in early fall or late spring.<sup>45</sup> In Iowa, women's basketball exploded in popularity despite shortcomings in the sport; it was not uncommon for players to compete in church basements.<sup>46</sup> Women also dealt with insufficient equipment inappropriate for the sport.

Critics also charged that basketball — despite its modified rules — was too rough and taxing a sport for women, who were physically more susceptible to suffer from injury or disease.<sup>47</sup> Because of the debate, many parents refused to let their daughters play basketball.

When they viewed women's basketball, critics of the game did not see hundreds of healthy girls having a wonderful time. Instead, they saw an intense, highly charged atmosphere inhabited by young women who had lost all dignity and refinement. Dressed sometimes in shiny satin shorts and sleeveless shirts, these girls, the critics argued, were in danger of being exploited commercially and sexually by the men who ran the show.<sup>48</sup>

## **Differentiating from men's programs**

Even after physical education departments began promoting athletics for women, many historians have failed to recognize the efforts because competition began between students rather than between institutions.<sup>49</sup> As soon as women's athletics gained popularity, female physical educators sought protection from the "abuses which had infected men's intercollegiate programs" under a mantra of "the greatest good for the greatest number."<sup>50</sup> In a 1909 survey, researchers found that many of the East Coast colleges promoted interclass

contests while intercollegiate competitions were more common in the Midwest and West colleges.<sup>51</sup> By the 1920s, female physical educators sought to minimize competition and the development of high skill levels.<sup>52</sup> One of the solutions to this problem was the promotion of the “play day.” Later, the event became a “sports day.”

Understanding the men’s intercollegiate athletic programs provides insight into why female physical educators sought to protect their female athletes. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, men’s intercollegiate athletic programs were intensely criticized for excesses, and many programs were too entrenched for administration to correct the problem.<sup>53</sup> Female physical educators did not want administrative politics for their newly emerging women’s athletic programs.

### **From golden age to old ways**

Persevering past criticism, physical educators and female athletes gained ground on the athletic field, especially basketball. Iowa held its first state high school tournament in 1920, and townspeople embraced athletes as heroines.<sup>54</sup> In 1909, the West and Midwest supported the greatest number of varsity programs, and the most popular sports were basketball, tennis, field hockey, and swimming.<sup>55</sup>

Girls who played basketball were often among the most popular in their classes. Yearbooks hailed them as conquering heroines playing for the sake of their school... The boys’ and girls’ team usually traveled together, and whole towns sometimes turned out to greet them when the train pulled into the station. Often, the teams played in dance halls with low ceilings because there was no gym in town. Local townspeople fed the visitors dinners and gave them beds for the night. If there was no train to take them home, they rode in horsedrawn[sic] wagons, sleighs, or bobsleds.<sup>56</sup>

Even though women’s basketball was becoming popular, physical educators still feared the negative effects of highly competitive sports, so they implemented play days as more acceptable forms of competition.<sup>57</sup> These programs focused on the spirit of play, fun, and fellowship rather than competition.<sup>58</sup> While the competition involved different schools, the

teams were interspersed with athletes from both schools.<sup>59</sup> As a way to avoid unladylike behavior, physical educators gathered female athletes from both teams to enjoy snacks after contests, which may have started because Berenson herself did the same or even planned dinners after games.<sup>60</sup>

Eventually, female athletes wanted more competition so educators redesigned the play day into a sports day. The newly designed competition brought colleges together “in friendly athletic competition... (to) provide wholesome recreational activities... prove the value of play for play’s sake alone... (and) promote friendly relations through playing *with* instead of *against* each other.”<sup>61</sup> Though some colleges and universities allowed varsity play, an anti-varsity mentality dominated women’s athletics as a program philosophy so intramural, rather than intercollegiate, competition was encouraged to avoid the abuses of varsity sports common on men’s programs.<sup>62</sup>

After experiencing a euphoric period of acceptance and pride in the 1920s, women’s athletics suffered a huge blow in the 1930s when a national depression shook the foundation sports had been built on. Competitors no longer had the time or money to spend on leisure activities, and even if they did, a cultural movement emerged that severely hindered the growth of women’s athletics. Suddenly, physicians rigorously advertised the ill effects of women engaging in physical activity, such as amenorrhea — the absence of a menstrual cycle — induced by athletics and potentially linked to decreased fertility.<sup>63</sup> Many mass media writers also denounced physical activity and published articles filled with stories of women who suffered terrible symptoms and maladies as a result of engaging in recreational sports.<sup>64</sup> Critics also harangued competitive sports as maligning the delicate female character, promoting immodesty, and possibly causing women to not want to bear children ever.<sup>65</sup> Additionally,

critics contended that participating in “masculine” sports would cause women to loosen their inhibitions toward men, igniting sexual deviance.<sup>66</sup>

The 1920s may well have been the golden age of sports, but the Great Depression brought an end to what some scholars have labeled “The first wave of athletic feminism.” Robbed of academic backing and advertising appeal, the sportswoman disappeared, lost in the feminine mystique of enforced motherhood and domesticity which so dominated the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.<sup>67</sup>

The emphasis on “family, domesticity, and ‘traditional’ femininity in the late 1940s and 1950s reflected postwar anxieties about the reconsolidation of a gender order shaken by two decades of depression and war.”<sup>68</sup> Physical educators implemented a new philosophy in their departments between the mid-1930s and mid-1950s that shifted the focus from exercise and health to a curriculum of beauty and social charm.<sup>69</sup> When schools held athletic competitions, they promoted the femininity of the players in beauty contests that served to counter the perceived manliness of female athletes and prove the attractiveness of the participants.<sup>70</sup> This mainstream advocacy of standards of beauty served to indoctrinate women with the idea that she must “tow the line of heterosexuality and femininity or risk falling into a despised category of mannish (not-women) women.”<sup>71</sup>

That did not stop all women. Having gone to work during World War II, women gained self-confidence and self-esteem during the 1950s that propelled them toward the realization that working successfully in men’s roles translated to playing successfully on the athletic field.<sup>72</sup> Many women decided to return to the workforce or delay child bearing, bringing women to the “edge of the modern feminist movement. In those decades the behavioral patterns, the opening of the job market, and the fitness surge all spoke to the emergence of a freer, more independent woman.”<sup>73</sup>

Because of society’s return to domesticity, women who decided to participate in athletics regardless faced a barrage of criticism that often labeled them “gender anomalies” or

“sexual aberrant.”<sup>74</sup> To battle this notion, female athletes and physical educators become apologetic about talent and involvement and made concerted effort to emphasize their own femininity with their dress and demeanor.<sup>75</sup> By the 1960s, change was finally underway as the women’s movement took off and the American Medical Association officially endorsed vigorous activity, including athletics.<sup>76</sup> In 1961 Eleanor Roosevelt chaired a commission on the status of women and helped create legislation that promoted equal opportunity.<sup>77</sup> By the beginning of the 1972-1973 school year, word was circulating about newly passed legislation known as Title IX and its potential impact on athletics.

## **Title IX**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any education programs or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”<sup>78</sup> Patsy Mink (R-HI), a legislator who encountered discrimination in education and the workplace, authored the main bill and worked tirelessly as a women’s right activist.<sup>79</sup> The House-Senate Conference Committee debated how to compromise on the different House and Senate education versions, addressing nearly a dozen bills that dealt with sex discrimination. Once the committee approved the final version, it went to the Senate and was approved on May, 22, 1972; on June 8, the House passed the bill and President Nixon signed it into law on June 23.<sup>80</sup>

Athletics represent only one area addressed by Title IX, but the law has been subject of more than 20 proposed amendments, reviews, Supreme Court cases and other action.<sup>81</sup> Compliance with Title IX was not required until 1978, and many colleges met the law’s regulations through the proportionality requirement that demanded a college provide varsity athletic sports for male and female students in proportion to enrollment numbers for the



undergraduate student body.<sup>82</sup> The advantages of the proportionality requirement meant young girls were encouraged to cultivate skills typically valued in boys and allowed them to visualize themselves as “agents in their social and physical world.”<sup>83</sup> Recently, the requirement endured criticism from male athletes who contend that Title IX resulted in cuts for men’s teams and academics who perceive the requirement as unfairly favoring females in the distribution of sparse athletic resources.<sup>84</sup>

Regardless of the criticism aimed at the law currently or in the past, the effect of Title IX’s passage was undeniable.<sup>85</sup> Once Title IX passed in 1972, its namesake era began and lasted until 1987; the period was marked by rapid growth of women’s competitive activities. In 1970, approximately 300,000 girls participated in high school sports; a decade later, the figure rose to 2 million, indicating the immense change underway within athletic programs that began drawing intense interest from female athletes.<sup>86</sup> A 1973-1974 survey showed that in North Dakota, the following women’s sports were ranked in order of participation: basketball, gymnastics, volleyball, track and field, and golf. In Minnesota, the ranking included tennis, volleyball, badminton, basketball, and track and field.<sup>87</sup> Basketball was ranked in the top five list for participation in all but five states and landed in the top spot in more than half of the United States.<sup>88</sup> The 1970s also saw a reinstatement of state tournaments after many had been abandoned in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>89</sup>

In the nearly 40 years since Congress passed Title IX, the legislation has endured criticism and praise. While athletic opportunities undoubtedly increased after the law went into effect, the playing field is not yet completely level. In 2004, “women represented 56 percent of the national collegiate study body but only 42 percent of intercollegiate athletics.”<sup>90</sup> Most universities comply with Title IX through the proportionality requirement, but those numbers do not indicate a well-matched proportion. In 2004, the Department of Education’s

Commission on Opportunity in Athletics proposed a set of reform recommendations for Title IX that were so contentiously debated by both advocates and critics that the commission decided not to change the law but instead “aggressively enforce the existing regulations.”<sup>91</sup>

Equal opportunity for girls and boys and women and men is crucial to our nation and Title IX promotes this equality in educational settings. The opportunity to participate in athletics reaches beyond the playing field into increased health, self-confidence, academic performance, and leadership skills. Thus, to further equality in the educational setting and to achieve such desirable attributes as mentioned above, Title IX must be preserved and enforced in its current form for school athletics to be truly “open to all.”<sup>92</sup>

Additionally, one of the ways a university can comply with Title IX is showing that “the athletic interests and abilities of women are being fully and effectively accommodated.”<sup>93</sup> Many schools interpreted the proportionality requirement as allowing them to disseminate surveys to female students about their interest in athletics and use the results to determine athletic offerings; in 2006, the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights affirmed that e-mail surveys of student interest satisfied the compliance requirement.<sup>94</sup> In the wake of criticism about schools that were avoiding the issue of providing gender equity in athletic programs, the U.S. Department of Education overturned the policy in May 2010.<sup>95</sup>

### **Governance of women’s athletics, 1890s-1980s**

When women finally entered the athletic arena, the leaders who blazed the trail came in the form of female physical educators who wanted their students to enjoy the benefits of physical activity. Once basketball inspired the wave of physical activity, more governance was needed. In 1899, Berenson founded the Women’s Basketball Rules Committee to set forth women’s basketball rules that each team would follow. The committee formed within the American Physical Education Association, which also created other groups to regulate newly formed sports.<sup>96</sup>

During what Ruth Sparhawk dubbed “the Organizational Period” from 1917-1956, many regulatory groups were established to govern women’s athletics, including the Committee on Women’s Athletics, the Athletic Conference of American College Women, and the Women’s Division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation.<sup>97</sup> In 1924, the Platform of the Women’s Division was adopted and set forth goals for women’s athletics that espoused the notion of “play for play’s sake” and operated under the motto of “every girl in a sport and a sport for every girl.”<sup>98</sup> Even though Sparhawk contends “the Organizational Period” lasted from 1917 to 1956, American ideology changed drastically after the nation endured a depression and world war, causing an intense decrease in athletic activity from 1930-1950; further research should revisit this classification of organizational time periods to provide a more accurate representation of the attitudes regarding women’s athletics during the 1917-1956 time frame. In 1931, the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation created the Division for Girls and Women’s Sports (DGWS), which became the “only organization in the United States concerned exclusively with sports programs for girls and women.”<sup>99</sup>

Because of the popularity of the play day and sport day, Sparhawk’s “Competitive Period” from 1957-1971 was also known as the “Milk-and-Cookies Era” because postgame refreshments were a consistent feature of women’s athletic contests.<sup>100</sup> Physical educators believed that having opposing players enjoy snacks following a competition reinforced the social and recreational benefits of physical activity. By the early 1960s, however, many colleges and universities had eliminated play days and sport days in favor of varsity teams.<sup>101</sup> The Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) replaced the Commission for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (CIAW) in 1971-1972 to control intercollegiate athletics for women.<sup>102</sup>

In addition to meteoric growth in participation and popularity, the 1970s and 1980s marked a sad ending for the governing body of women's athletics. Though the AIAW had evolved from the first governing bodies for women's athletics, the NCAA made a move following the passage of Title IX to control both men's and women's athletics. After several colleges removed their membership from the AIAW in favor of the NCAA, the AIAW initiated a lawsuit that brought about the organization's ultimate demise. The demise of the AIAW in 1982 "had devastating effect on the vast majority of individuals in the organization," and "the abrupt loss of leadership...was professionally mourned."<sup>103</sup> Because of languishing Title IX compliance and the loss of the AIAW, progress toward equality within women's athletics was slow.<sup>104</sup> Even though women's sports are supposed to be equal to men's sports, a discrepancy still exists regarding the amount of television coverage each division receives, the characteristics focused on during that coverage, and the sexist nature of sport language.<sup>105</sup> Additionally, after Congress passed Title IX, the number of women coaches, administrators, and officials severely diminished compared to the pre-Title IX era.<sup>106</sup>

### **Women's athletics and the role of newspapers**

The press and athletics represent two of the most prominent and authoritative social institutions and cultural practices in society and both have been traditionally male-dominated fields.<sup>107</sup> During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both the press and sports exploded as mass phenomena that developed parallel to one another, creating a mutual relationship between the two institutions.<sup>108</sup> Before the advent of television and radio as popular mass media tools, newspapers served as the primary source of news and, as such, became a "key molder of public opinion."<sup>109</sup> "Sports are a business – so is the mass media. Sports are social institutions – as are news and mass media. Sports and media institutions have a symbiotic and historical match."<sup>110</sup>

The close relationship shared by the press and athletics can be beneficial, but it can also produce detrimental effects, especially for women and female athletes. Females had to passively accept the status quo of the male-dominated fields, while males maintained power and control by denying access to women and marginalizing female participation; this systemic phenomenon is considered normal for both media and sports.<sup>111</sup> Once Title IX passed, sports information offices attempted to reduce the disparity in coverage by appointing employees who would concentrate solely on women's athletics; while the efforts have increased availability of information on women's athletics, they have not completely eradicated the problem of unequal coverage.

Newspapers played an important role in creating social norms and asserting traditional values.<sup>112</sup> Relying on values to determine what stories to cover, newspapers framed issues in a way that will foster public debate. As such, media frames can "narrow or define the discourse on a given public issue through the use of words or phrases, use of sources, and repetition of themes."<sup>113</sup> Newspaper reporters often identified their sources using racial, gender or occupational labels that, in turn, can affect how credible the public perceives those sources to be based on the connotation surrounding particular labels.<sup>114</sup> Not only could this identification affect perceived credibility, but how a newspaper presented a topic can greatly affect public perception. Reporting on Title IX deserves examination because influential news coverage shaped the attitudes and values of both the public and the policymakers, especially regarding controversial issues like feminism and feminist activities.<sup>115</sup> Essentially, how a newspaper framed and subsequently presented a news story impacted how the public thought and acted toward a particular topic.<sup>116</sup>

Because of the ability for journalism to frame public debate on issues, the profession offers itself as an "interpretive community, united through its shared discourse and collective

interpretations of key public events.”<sup>117</sup> Journalists derive this authority and influence from their position as eyewitnesses to public events, providing credibility and authenticity; when a journalist is unable to be present, he or she can position the event within a larger continuum, based on historical occurrence of the event.<sup>118</sup> A well-known mantra within the profession states that “journalism is but a rough draft of history.”<sup>119</sup>

Much of history has been retold through newspaper reporting. Sports coverage was not as prevalent in newspapers in the 1960s as it is today; sports reporting at that time often appeared in magazines rather than newspapers.<sup>120</sup> As sports coverage became more common, the increasing trend gave rise to the New Journalism era, where readers discovered “deeper lessons about sports, exploring the moral implications of sports as a cultural activity.”<sup>121</sup>

While sports may be of little social consequence...the stories told about them routinely give shape to deeply felt communal values, including the value of self-sacrifice, the possibilities of group achievement, the power of the individual will, and the capriciousness of social hierarchies. How such stories are told raises vital ethical questions. That they are told is vital to our shared experience of democratic culture.<sup>122</sup>

Despite the parallel development of the press and athletics as mass phenomenon, coverage of women’s athletics has been consistently inequitable and biased, despite the fact that participation rates have been steadily increasing since the 1970s.<sup>123</sup> In 1971 fewer than 300,000 girls or about 5% of high school athletes participated in school sports; by 2002, that figure rose to 2.8 million girls or 56% of U.S. high school athletes.<sup>124</sup> Regardless of this growth, women’s sports continue to be underrepresented in a newspaper’s sports page, which results in the implication that women are nonexistent in the athletic arena.<sup>125</sup> Even though fans have consistently expressed interest in women’s athletics, the coverage afforded to women’s athletics is significantly inferior to men’s athletic coverage across all media, including the Internet.<sup>126</sup> In the broadcast medium of ESPN’s quintessential sports program *SportsCenter*, women’s athletics were severely underrepresented compared to men’s athletics.<sup>127</sup>

The dearth of coverage of women's sports on *SportsCenter* reinforces the idea of male supremacy in athletics and signals that female athletes are simply not as deserving of regular coverage as are men in sports. Though implementation of Title IX has led to far greater participation in sports by women, the level of women's involvement in sports is not reflected in the amount of coverage ESPN *SportsCenter* devotes to it.<sup>128</sup>

The obvious "lack of equitable representation of women's sports on the sports page has suggested that athletic play among females is not as important or as newsworthy as the competition experienced by males."<sup>129</sup> The coverage afforded to women's sports can typically be categorized in one or all of the following three ways: less coverage than men's sports, greater coverage devoted to "feminine" sports like golf and tennis, and more coverage based on sex-role stereotypes instead of sports roles.<sup>130</sup>

For example, during times of societal disapproval for sports, the media typically downplayed the achievements of female athletes to discuss instead more acceptable, feminine characteristics.<sup>131</sup> When one of the greatest athletes, Mildred "Babe" Didrikson, began exemplifying extraordinary athletic ability in the 1930s, the media responded by de-emphasizing and trivializing her abilities to stress other, more "traditional" attributes and focused on the fact that she had a male superior.<sup>132</sup> The press also discovered Didrikson wanted to compete in golf — which was deemed appropriate for women — and noted how much more feminine Didrikson seemed as a golfer. "By focusing on her involvement in what was perceived to be a proper sport for women and by demonstrating her inferiority and subordination to men, the newspapers did their best to transform Didrikson into their ideal of what a woman should be."<sup>133</sup>

The implications of sports coverage (or lack thereof) mean that even if newspapers do not offer citizens crucial information, they can provide "cultural narratives that frame and shape (citizens') understandings of the group identities and relations of democratic society."<sup>134</sup> Some scholars accuse media of ambivalence, or the continued portrayal of female athletes

using mixed or contradictory messages.<sup>135</sup> Additionally, critics have argued that the media's continued construction of what male athleticism is compared to female athleticism posits a major obstacle to challenging the existing power relationships between men and women in sport.<sup>136</sup> However, changing the attitudes of dominant social institutions is difficult unless contradictory messages are allowed to enter the public discourse, and the media offer a channel through which those messages can be disseminated.<sup>137</sup>

Because of the complex relationship between women's athletics and newspapers, understanding how the press covered the development of the women's intercollegiate athletic programs at NDSU, UND, and MSUM from 1950-1980 requires knowing the state of women's athletics before 1950. The next chapter provides a detailed historical explanation of when athletics became available to women at each university and the accessibility of various sports leading up to 1950.

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Angela Cheska, "Ball Game Participation of North American Indian Women," in *Her Story in Sport: A Historical Anthology of Women in Sports*, ed. Reet Howell (New York: Leisure Press, 1982), 19.

<sup>6</sup> Howell, "American Women, 1800-1860," 75.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Ying Wushanley, *Playing Nice and Losing: The Struggle for Control of Women's Intercollegiate Athletics, 1960-2000*. (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2004), 75.

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<sup>10</sup> Gail Maloney, "The Impact of Title IX on Women's Intercollegiate Athletics," (PhD diss., State University of New York, 1995), 19.

<sup>11</sup> Roberta J. Park, "The Rise and Development of Women's Concern for the 'Physical Education' of American Women: 1776-1885: From Independence to the Foundation of the American Association for the Advancement of Physical Education," in *Her Story in Sport: A Historical Anthology of Women in Sports*, ed. Reet Howell, (New York: Leisure Press, 1982), 246.

<sup>12</sup> Rudolph, "The American College and University," 464.

<sup>13</sup> Roberta Park and Joan Hult, "Women as leaders in physical education and school-based sports, 1865 to the 1930s," *The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance* (1993), 34.

<sup>14</sup> George Kent Stanley, "The Rise and Fall of the Sportswoman: Women's Health, Fitness, and Athletics, 1860-1940," (American University Studies, 1996), 30.

<sup>15</sup> Laura Robicheaux, "An Analysis of Attitudes Toward Women's Athletics in the U.S. in the Early Twentieth Century," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport & Physical Education* 6, no. 1 (1975), 15.



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- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.
- <sup>19</sup> Jane Miner, "Women in sport—a reflection of the greater society?" *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance* 64, no.3 (1993), 45.
- <sup>20</sup> Rutherford, "Women's Intercollegiate Athletics in the United States," 1.
- <sup>21</sup> Stanley, "*The Rise and Fall of the Sportswoman*," 36.
- <sup>22</sup> Lissa Smith, *Nike is a Goddess: The History of Women in Sports* (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1999), 57.
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- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 368.
- <sup>26</sup> Barbara N. Woonkester, "The American Sportswoman from 1900-1920," in *Her Story in Sport: A Historical Anthology of Women in Sports*, ed. Reet Howell, (New York: Leisure Press, 1982), 145.
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- <sup>30</sup> Susan Cahn, "From the 'muscle moll' to the 'butch' ballplayer: Mannishness, lesbianism, and homophobia in sports," *Feminist Studies* 19, no.2 (1993), 350.
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- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.
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- <sup>56</sup> Lannin, *A History of Basketball for Girls and Women*, 98.

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- <sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 212.
- <sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.
- <sup>117</sup> Barbie Zelizer, "Journalists as Interpretive Communities," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 10 (1993), 219.
- <sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.
- <sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 235.
- <sup>120</sup> Thomas Oates, "Sports Journalism as Moral and Ethical Discourse," *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 23 (2007), 341.
- <sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 336.
- <sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 346.
- <sup>123</sup> Whisenant and Pedersen, "Analyzing Attitudes Regarding Quantity and Quality of Sports Page Coverage," 54.
- <sup>124</sup> Hardin, et. al., "The Gender War in U.S. Sport: Winners and Losers in News Coverage of Title IX," 212.
- <sup>125</sup> Kane and Greendorfer, "The Media's Role in Accommodating and Resisting Stereotypes Images of Women in Sport," 34.
- <sup>126</sup> Terry Adams and C.A. Tuggle, "ESPN's *SportsCenter* and Coverage of Women's Athletics: 'It's a Boys' Club,'" *Mass Communication Society* 7, no.2 (2004), 238.
- <sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.
- <sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>129</sup> Whisenant and Pedersen, "Analyzing Attitudes Regarding Quantity and Quality of Sports Page Coverage," 54.
- <sup>130</sup> Judith Cramer, "Conversations with Women Sports Journalists," in *Women, Media and Sport: Challenging Gender Values* ed. Pamela J. Creedon (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994), 172.
- <sup>131</sup> Welky, "Viking Girls, Mermaids, and Little Brown Men: U.S. Journalism and the 1932 Olympics," 26.
- <sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.
- <sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>134</sup> Oates, "Sports Journalism as Moral and Ethical Discourse," 336.
- <sup>135</sup> Kane and Greendorfer, "The Media's Role in Accommodating and Resisting Stereotypes Images of Women in Sport," 37.
- <sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.
- <sup>137</sup> Hardin and Whiteside, "Sports Reporters Divided Over Concerns about Title IX," 67.

### CHAPTER 3: HISTORY OF REGIONAL WOMEN'S ATHLETICS, 1890-1940

The women's athletic programs at North Dakota State University (NDSU), the University of North Dakota (UND), and Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) did not emerge overnight. Each university offered women athletic opportunities well before an official athletic program was established in the 1970s, though the consistency of the sports offered to women changed throughout the years. Identifying how women's athletics developed from the beginning is imperative to understanding how the modern athletic programs for women came to exist and offers insight on the emerging relationship between the press and women's athletics.

Studying these three universities offers an opportunity to examine not only how the women's athletic program developed, but also how the distinct character of each university may have played a role in how that development occurred. Additionally, the geographic location of the three universities offers potentially interesting insight based on the social norms of the area. The upper Midwest is known for its resilient, hard-working, and determined residents and all of those qualities pertain to athletes. Men and women alike are expected to work hard, without complaint, on whatever task is at hand. This shared attitude provides a perfect setting for athletes to flourish and succeed.

Before delving into the research, readers should be aware that name changes naturally occur in organizations throughout their history, whether to reflect a broader scope or new ownership. Regarding the three universities studied in this project, only one has not undergone a name change. To avoid confusion, the researcher will always refer to the university by its most recent name. Additionally, the NDSU yearbook began as the *Agassiz* but became the *Bison* in the 1920s; the student newspaper at MSUM also witnessed several name changes and is most recently known as *The Advocate*, though other names will be referenced. Finally, *The*

*Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* conveyed a relationship where one paper acquired another and a name was retained to reflect the new relationship; today the newspaper is known as *The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead*. Also, during the time frame examined, *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* and *The Grand Forks Herald* were owned by separate companies; today they are both owned by Forum Communications Company.

### **In the beginning: 1890s-1920s**

**North Dakota State University.** At North Dakota State University (NDSU), women's basketball was one of the first athletic opportunities offered to women, and the university already boasted a women's basketball team by the winter of 1897, just five years after the sport had been invented in Massachusetts.<sup>1</sup> Adele "Dell" Shepperd (wife of future university President John Shepperd) and Mrs. Bottenfield (wife of the English and modern languages professor) organized the team as well as a physical culture class and joined the Athletic Association that had formed in 1893; the women were granted use of the gymnasium for one hour each day.<sup>2</sup> In January 1900, the women's basketball team "created a local sensation by winning over the seniors and professors,"<sup>3</sup> and by the next year, the women's team enjoyed an undefeated season and numerous accolades because of it. "One thing our institution stands supreme in, and that is an undefeated ladies' basketball team. It has successfully met on the field of athletic honor every form and shape of feminine aspirants for athletic laurels and to them all has it left naught but defeat."<sup>4</sup> The team was hailed as the "Champions of North Dakota."<sup>5</sup>

A 1903 *Spectrum* editorial chastised the women's basketball coach for not ensuring his team had adequate time to practice in a new facility that was considerably different than the typical venue.

"Our girls are accustomed to play in a hall about 60x40<sup>6</sup> feet with 3 to 10 feet for outside floor space, and then for a man who considers himself a coach to object to

their practicing a short time in order to get accustomed to a hall somewhat smaller with no outside space under the baskets seems to be beyond the limit. The captain and manager of the [Valley City] Normal team took it upon themselves to see that our girls had the necessary practice.”<sup>7</sup>

By the next year, an editorial appeared in *The Spectrum* advocating the need for a women’s gymnasium, stating that the female athletes could not be expected to practice in a facility that offered no dressing rooms and was available only once a week, especially because physical culture classes were required and the university expected a women’s basketball team to be successful.<sup>8</sup> The editorial pointed out the university president’s support of athletics as advertising for the fledging program, and asked “since this is the case, is it any more than right that the girls of this institution should have a place where they may practice basketball, the only line of athletics in which they may engage?”<sup>9</sup>

In the December 1905 issue of *The Spectrum*, an article praised the progress of the athletic department, mentioning a higher ideal of sportsmanship and a strong desire to win, citing that “the spirit of our boys and girls to fight until the last and never give up has been admirable.”<sup>10</sup> By 1906, *The Spectrum* declared that “the basketball season is over and we are the champions of North Dakota.”<sup>11</sup> The women’s basketball team was “the strongest in the history of the institution” and “although the girls did not play as many games as the boys, they made an equally good showing.”<sup>12</sup>

Despite the success of the women’s basketball team, women’s athletics experienced a decline either in popularity or publicity, as no more articles appeared in *The Spectrum* or in the NDAC yearbook, *The Agassiz*, which began publishing in 1907. The 1917 *Agassiz*, reported that the women’s basketball team had an “enjoyable season” and a common occurrence after the games is “after-noon tea” that was recommended for the “regular college boys’ team.”<sup>13</sup> The 1917 yearbook article also stated that “girls’ athletics in our school, while still in its youth, has made rapid progress in the last two years. More interest is being displayed in the

gymnasium work as its importance in the life of healthy girls is recognized;" requirements for physical education classes had been enacted and a women's gymnasium made available in Ceres Hall.<sup>14</sup>

Interest in women's athletics grew under the leadership of Marie Kammeyer, an instructor in hygiene and physical training for women. Soccer football had been introduced that year, and women could also participate in gymnastics, aesthetic dancing, tennis, baseball, and hiking, as well as basketball, to the surprise of many.<sup>15</sup> The team only participated in three contests because women were "not allowed to play public games."<sup>16</sup> A scathing front-page article in a 1918 issue of *The Spectrum* questioned why the university was not doing more to promote women's athletics when women made up a large facet of the student body during wartime.

If you do not want a large attendance of young women at this school just keep on; you are exactly on the right track to diminish their number. It is not in their nature to want to feel neglected. Why there is not so much as a Girl's Athletic Association at this institution, while the North Dakota University training much more the type of girl who fears to exert her physical self lest her hair be disarranged, has had a well-supported Athletic Association for years. And so have all schools, except this one...Not infrequently one hears the remark that basketball is absolutely ruinous to a girl's good health. And if you set out with that as a main purpose one can certainly accomplish it as readily along this line as any other. However, one might as well argue that girls should never be allowed to attend college; many a girl has absolutely ruined her health in an attempt to gain a college education.<sup>17</sup>

The aforementioned 1918 article also advocated for the immediate establishment of a Girls' Athletic Association that "would be instrumental in the production of more healthy, active, spirited, interested girls" and would improve the "college spirit which we so noticeably lack."<sup>18</sup> The article prompted girls to push for the establishment and that "with enough determination the faculty will have to relent" because "a woman with a will can do wonders."<sup>19</sup> A small write-up following the article explained the development of an athletic field in an unused lot behind Ceres Hall.<sup>20</sup> Women used this lot to play hockey, baseball, tennis, and even

regular gymnasium work when weather allowed for it.<sup>21</sup> The 1919 *Agassiz* write-up stated that interest and enthusiasm would continue to grow “with the realization of the importance of well-regulated athletics in the life of every healthy girl of today.”<sup>22</sup>

A women’s athletic director was also hired in 1919; instructor in hygiene and physical training for women Ruth Andrews “built the department to the extent that the girls’ athletic teams are now receiving a great deal of recognition.”<sup>23</sup> Because of the success and recognition women’s athletics experienced, female students embraced the requirements of physical education as a pleasurable “rather than compulsory part of the college course.”<sup>24</sup> Under Andrews’ direction, women’s athletics received “as much support...as the men’s athletics does among the men.”<sup>25</sup>

Athletics continued to be popular for women, and basketball, track, and tennis tournaments offered competitive play opportunities.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, someone took the 1918 *Spectrum* article seriously because by 1921 a women’s athletic club had been set up and was publicizing women’s athletic events; in the “thoroughly organized association points may be earned for sweaters, letters, pins, and other awards.”<sup>27</sup> The club quickly became known as the Women’s Athletic Association (WAA), though it was known informally by its members as “Nil Desperandum,” meaning “never despair” in Latin; the official charter members of the organization included members of the women’s varsity basketball team.<sup>28</sup> The organization’s purposes included stimulating interest in women’s athletics, advocating for sportsmanship and fairness in athletics, and promoting “the spirit of democracy among women of the college.”<sup>29</sup>

While basketball continued to be “a universally liked game among girls’ sports,” field hockey had been introduced in the fall of 1921 and was deemed to become a popular outdoor sport on campus despite its newness in the Midwest.<sup>30</sup> In February 1922, the WAA announced its decision to send representatives to the national Women’s Athletic Conference, indicating



that “the growing interest in women’s athletics here at the college during the past few years has advanced this department of training to the point where they now feel that their interests are no longer local.”<sup>31</sup>

The organization expanded its purpose to providing “an opportunity for the individual to act in situations that are physically wholesome, mentally stimulating and satisfying, and socially sound” and advocated a motto of “fun, fair play and health for all.”<sup>32</sup> A year later, the purpose changed back to promoting “athletics and good sportsmanship among the women of the college.”<sup>33</sup> Promoting women’s athletics proved successful, because *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* published an article about six female athletes receiving their letter sweaters for “excellency in sports work during the year.”<sup>34</sup> By 1926, involvement in the women’s athletic association and “dancing, tennis, hockey, soccer, riflery, basketball, and baseball” were “important features of the year’s training offered by the Women’s Athletic department.”<sup>35</sup> Though many activities were offered for women, basketball remained the premier sport for women.<sup>36</sup>

Dorothy Cole, a physical education instructor, took the reins of the women’s physical education department in 1925 and soccer, baseball, and track were now staples in the athletic agenda; basketball remained the most popular sport and activities extended to setting up a competitive campus league with independent and sorority teams.<sup>37</sup> The WAA also sponsored a team for the League of Women Bowlers, an “organization of the best women bowlers in Fargo and Moorhead.”<sup>38</sup> By 1928, the WAA became an open organization and welcomed more than 120 members into ranks that had previously included 30 women.<sup>39</sup>

**University of North Dakota.** At the University of North Dakota (UND) in Grand Forks, athletic opportunities for women were sought early, as editorials in *The Dakota Student* in March and April 1892 questioned the athletic opportunities available to women at the

university.<sup>40</sup> The author said the attic space in the Ladies' Hall would supply adequate space for athletic activities.<sup>41</sup> In 1893 the women's physical education department humbly started with one woman teaching calisthenics in a basement.<sup>42</sup> UND's second president Homer Sprague commissioned the use of the basement space for a gymnasium but the gym was moved to the attic of the main building at a later time; the gymnasium was equipped with dumbbells, bars, and other athletic apparatus.<sup>43</sup> While a newspaper reporter declared the gym as "one of the grandest gymnasium rooms to be found in any education institution in the Northwest," the second UND president Webster Merrifield did not agree.<sup>44</sup> He believed students deserved more than a dingy room with a low ceiling and a floor so thin exercise equipment often broke through it.<sup>45</sup> However, it would take years before a new gymnasium was built.

In the meantime, a member of the first graduating class at UND in 1889, Cora Smith assisted an instructor in the college department's course of science by conducting classes in calisthenics; Smith led the first classes of physical "drill" for women in 1888 and instigated the women's physical education program, despite its limited resources.<sup>46</sup> At the time, physical culture classes emerged at universities because of the "great interest of the time in keeping the body physically fit" because "it was thought that daily exercise periods for all students would mean less illness in the dormitories and generally improve the all-round health of the students."<sup>47</sup> The first basketball teams competed against local high school teams and were coached by the first director of athletics and physical training at UND, Walter Hempel, who arrived in 1903.<sup>48</sup>

A constant supporter of women's rights, Smith worked to advance women's role in society.<sup>49</sup> She delivered the graduation speech in 1889 that focused on women's suffrage.<sup>50</sup> After graduating from UND, Smith lobbied for women's suffrage in Bismarck where the new legislature was taking shape.<sup>51</sup> After graduating from the Boston University School of Medicine

in 1892, Smith returned to Grand Forks and became the “first woman licensed in the state of North Dakota to practice medicine.”<sup>52</sup> By 1893, Smith’s effort and hard work paid off when physical education became an organized department.<sup>53</sup> Smith was paid very little for her work but in 1894 Smith’s cousin was appointed to serve as her teaching assistant.

The 1903-1904 women’s basketball team played 11 games, five against high schools, and won nine of them.<sup>54</sup>

That record was made despite not having a suitable place to practice or play. The only space available was the Armory in the basement of the Budge Hall with its steel girders only eight feet above the floor which made for some ridiculous situations. Since it had beaten some of the best teams in the state it could easily call itself state champions without protest.<sup>55</sup>

Just a few years prior, the NDAC women’s basketball team had been hailed as “Champions of North Dakota.” Historian Louis Geiger wrote that the UND women competed against the NDAC women “during the University’s first Founder’s Day celebration” on Feb. 27, 1904, and that UND beat the Aggies, 15-4.<sup>56</sup> Geiger also wrote that a 1910 account of women’s basketball reported that a women’s extramural team existed before a men’s team did, but extramural basketball competition had dissolved by the 1920s.<sup>57</sup>

Because of the initial unavailability of a gymnasium, women exercised “in a large room in the Ladies’ Hall that doubled as a parlor and exercise room.”<sup>58</sup> The facility offered poor lighting and heating but, in 1900, a new heating system was installed.<sup>59</sup> By 1902, the President of the Board of Trustees David Bartlett appealed to the governor of North Dakota to provide funds for a new facility that would better serve the university.<sup>60</sup> Merrifield worked diligently to acquire an actual gymnasium, but it was not available to UND students until 1907; the facility served as both a gymnasium and assembly hall.<sup>61</sup> The new gymnasium offered showers, a track, locker rooms, and an office specifically for the men’s physical director, but no women’s director was mentioned as having an allotted space,<sup>62</sup> even though the women’s physical

education department hired a director for the program the same year the gymnasium became available to students.<sup>63</sup> During the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, UND female athletes saw success in basketball, with volleyball and tennis also available.<sup>64</sup>

By 1919, enrollment in the women's physical education department reached more than 350 students and the women were forced to move from their previous location in Woodworth Hall<sup>65</sup> to a new gymnasium in 1913 because of overcrowding; a new location was not specified.<sup>66</sup> Other sources indicate the women engaged in athletic activities in a building on campus known as the old west gymnasium, adjacent to which the armory was built in 1919, allowing the gymnasium to become solely available to female athletes.<sup>67</sup>

In 1917, Nell Martindale became the director of the women's physical education department and eventually redecorated the gymnasium in a more feminine style with "dainty white curtains" and polishing the floors.<sup>68</sup> While leading the physical education department, Martindale established a physical education minor in 1919,<sup>69</sup> added several theory courses as well as expanded the variety of sport classes offered, and instigated an annual event called the May Fete that showcased female athletes in various forms of competition such as dance, pageantry, and drama;<sup>70</sup> showcasing the femininity of the UND athletes correlated to the national movement at the time to illuminate traditional female qualities through an emphasis on grace and beauty.<sup>71</sup> The annual event continued for 20 years at UND until Martindale abruptly resigned before getting married and her successor "saw them as luxuries of little use for purposes of physical education."<sup>72</sup>

By the 1920s, track and field events such as sprints, hurdles, relays, jumps and throws were being taught to female athletes, as well as riflery; women could compete in both sports on both intramural and extramural levels.<sup>73</sup> Upon her resignation, Martindale remarked that "I have never seen such splendid varsity spirit displayed by a group of girls as had been shown by

the co-eds of the University of North Dakota in athletic activities.”<sup>74</sup> With a variety of athletics offered to UND women during the 1920s, some of the more popular ones included volleyball, baseball and hockey; basketball was beginning to gain prominence but volleyball remained most popular.<sup>75</sup>

In 1921, plans were finalized to create a Women’s Athletic Association (WAA), whose official colors were green and white, and the organization would award sweaters and pins based on a point system;<sup>76</sup> soon the WAA was viewed as “a worthwhile project” because of “the success of its first year.”<sup>77</sup> The purpose of the WAA included encouraging good sportsmanship, promoting women’s athletics, stimulating interest in women’s athletics, and awarding the highest honor — the UND sweater — to top female athletes.<sup>78</sup> By 1926, the WAA received recognition for bringing “prominence in women’s intercollegiate athletics” and for promoting athletics to increase “physical efficiency, good sportsmanship, and scholarship among the coeds of the campus.”<sup>79</sup>

Perhaps in a display of good sportsmanship, the women’s basketball team agreed to take on a group of male basketball players in a publicized mystery event, pitting the Mystery Co-Eds against the All-Mythical girls.<sup>80</sup> The yearbook write-up praises the men’s team and its coach, Hup Nilles, “who secured at great expense a team that could vanquish the haughty bloomerites tutored by Miss Nell Martindale.”<sup>81</sup> Though the audience did not know one team included male players, the spectacle drew a large number of supporters who “jammed the women’s gymnasium to overflowing.”<sup>82</sup>

In 1927, construction on UND’s Memorial Stadium was completed and the athletic facility became home to not only football but the track and field teams as well.<sup>83</sup> Alumni and friends of UND assisted in raising funds for the project, which was named in recognition of the UND community members who died in World War I, provided “the young men and

women at the University of North Dakota a very fine facility with which to work.”<sup>84</sup> Women’s athletics gained so much popularity at UND in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that the 1928 *Dacotah* yearbook entry declared the slogan touted by the men—“Athletics for All”—should also be applied to the department of physical education, which had realized the important role athletic played in the development of well-rounded individuals.<sup>85</sup>

The 1920s also saw the emergence of two of the best female athletes ever to compete for UND. Grace Osborne came to UND from Emerado, N.D., in 1923 and began competing in track, baseball, volleyball, basketball, and riflery; track and field provided Osborne with the most notoriety as *The Grand Forks Herald* quickly dubbed her the “Emerado Flash.”<sup>86</sup> In 1924, Osborne competed in a telegraphic track meet (where results from meets across the country were wired to a central location for tabulation) with Los Angeles, California, serving as the central hub; when the results were wired back to North Dakota two weeks later, UND found out it received 13<sup>th</sup> place among 75 competitors and that Osborne was the individual point winner of the meet.<sup>87</sup> During her time at UND, Osborne pledged membership to the WAA and served as the manager for the women’s baseball team; she also earned a UND sweater for her athletic accomplishments.<sup>88</sup> Because UND did not offer a degree in physical education, Osborne received her teaching certificate from Mayville Teachers College around 1926.<sup>89</sup>

Era Bell Thompson arrived in North Dakota with her family in 1914 and found herself the center of much teasing and staring as a black person in a predominantly white state; in 1925 she enrolled at UND at age 19 and began pursuing two passions: writing and running.<sup>90</sup> She worked for the student newspaper and excelled in track and field, setting five records and tying two national records.<sup>91</sup> After two years of writing and running for UND, Bell moved to Mandan to take over her father’s business after he died; she later attended Morningside College in Sioux City, Iowa, where she earned a journalism degree.<sup>92</sup> She later became an

international journalist, author of her autobiography *American Daughter*, and editor of *Libony* magazine; she died in 1987 at the age of 80.<sup>93</sup>

**Minnesota State University Moorhead.** Around the same time North Dakota's agricultural college was being established in North Dakota, a Minnesota senator named Solomon Comstock introduced a bill to legislature that would create a new normal<sup>94</sup> school in Moorhead and later donated six acres of land; the legislature approved \$60,000 for the construction of a building that would house classrooms, administration, and a library at the Moorhead Normal School (the school went through several name changes since its founding to reflect a wider scope of academic offerings; to eliminate confusion in this project, from now on, the school will be referred to as Minnesota State University Moorhead [MSUM] unless referenced with a direct quote).<sup>95</sup> The school opened in 1888 and offered free tuition to students who pledged to two years in Minnesota, and its first graduating class received degrees in 1890.<sup>96</sup> The main hall included a gymnasium and model school in 1908.<sup>97</sup>

Both men and women of the school put the gymnasium to use, but women's athletics did not find stable direction until Flora Frick and Jessie McKellar began developing the physical education program in the 1920s.<sup>98</sup> Frick had joined the faculty in 1919 while McKellar did not come to the Normal School until 1924; together the two women ushered in an era of great growth in the physical education department.<sup>99</sup> During the 1923-1924 academic year, the Women's Athletic League (WAL) was formed and nearly 50 women became its original members; by the end of the year an additional 74 women became members.<sup>100</sup> One of the primary functions of the WAL involved rewarding letters and sweaters for athletes who accumulated points for participation, and a Monogram Club was established the next year to recognize letter holders.<sup>101</sup> The WAL offered different sports each quarter, ranging from field

hockey and soccer in the fall to basketball and volleyball in the winter to baseball and track in the spring.<sup>102</sup>

Even with the broad range of athletics offered, female athletes gravitated toward basketball as the premier sport, as yearbooks indicate “that women’s basketball became a more important activity year by year” at MSUM.<sup>103</sup> Yearbooks indicated some competitions were held outside of the school but later intramural play was emphasized.<sup>104</sup>

Because of stringent requirements, the Monogram Club became one of the most exclusive organizations on campus, as very few female athletes were reported to have earned their crimson and white “M;” the 1929 yearbook entry reports that only one woman had received the honor.<sup>105</sup> Despite a small Monogram Club membership, the female athletes who competed for MSUM were among some of the most accomplished students at the school. For example, Irene Felde and Helen Bergquist received “Representative Student” honors in 1926; in addition to athletic accomplishments, Felde served as the first editor of the new college weekly newspaper called *MiSTiC* and and president of the WAI. board while Bergquist became well-known in Chapel Choir and served as president of three organizations, including the Athletic Board of Control.<sup>106</sup> During the 1920s, the women’s athletic program also fostered a relationship with local high schools to provide students an opportunity to coach while student teaching; Anne Amon coached “fine girls’ teams” during her student teaching stint.<sup>107</sup>

While women’s athletic activities found footing at the MSUM, they began losing ground at NDSU and UND and would eventually evolve into popular recreational activities that would one day give rise to organized, official women’s athletic programs.

### **Rise of recreational activities: 1930s-1950s**

**North Dakota State University.** Because women’s athletics was not regarded as a varsity sport or official program adjacent to the men’s athletics at the university, the physical



education department took great care to promote its activities as the athletic goings-on at the agricultural college. The 1930 *Bison* yearbook reported that the department was “working on a more progressive and extensive athletic campaign” that included “intramural, class and sorority games in the various sport; many new sports had been added to the schedule, including archery, swimming, and soccer.”<sup>108</sup> During the early years of the 1930s, many more activities were added until the total reached 15 in 1933; that same year the yearbook write-up touted the ideals of women’s athletics as promoting sportsmanship and character, placing “emphasis on sport and its values rather than upon the competitors, and the protecting of the welfare of women through a sane attitude towards their health.”<sup>109</sup>

Toward the end of the 1930s, *Bison* yearbooks contained less detailed information on all activities available to women and focused on the results of an annual intramural basketball tournament and if the Women’s Athletic Association (WAA) had inducted any new members; often the write-ups included long lists of current and new sports available to women without much more detail. Riflery was reported to be a popular sport in 1938 but was “not part of the Women’s Athletic Department,” which is interesting wording because women’s athletics were organized in the physical education department, not an official athletic department.<sup>110</sup>

In 1940s NDSU yearbooks, the language of the write-ups regarding women’s athletics changed slightly to match the societal value of femininity. For example, the 1940 write-up refers to “attic Amazons,” elucidating that “the feminine field of sport” found a home in the gymnasium on the fourth floor of Ceres Hall.<sup>111</sup> Additionally, the “women’s athletic department” was “entirely remodeled this year and in its new dress was hardly recognizable,”<sup>112</sup> equating the department to a woman with a new dress. The feminine language continued:

Beauty and the basketball is the tale enacted in the Ceres penthouse during the winter quarter. The girls engage in interclass competition. These games show that some beauties are good basketeers. With rights, girls can also hold their own.<sup>113</sup>

The 1941 *Bison* asserted the apparent invisibility of women's athletics despite their continued existence at the college.

Women's sports are heard of much more than seen. While the men cannot do anything in the line of sports without drawing a crowd, the women will not do anything in the line of sports that will draw a crowd. Most of the activity goes on in the secluded gym atop Ceres Hall or behind the vacant, grey walls of the stadium.<sup>114</sup>

The write-up also proclaimed "the gentler sex" participated in sports available during each season; for example, "the fall term allows the girls to get hardened in gradually on ping pong," and the winter term "finds the girls in excellent shape."<sup>115</sup> Surprisingly, the write-up also recognized that the women riflery participants "often approach records set up by our best men shots."<sup>116</sup> Increased involvement in the physical education classes in 1942 meant the women were allowed to use the field house for their activities.<sup>117</sup>

The 1944 *Bison* yearbook recognized the effect World War II could have on college students, reporting that

the women's athletic department faculty members have gone all out this year to enlarge their curriculum to fit wartime needs. The winning of the war may depend on the health of the nation, and with this realization Miss (Beatrice) Wartchow and her associates have developed the AC coeds into a very healthy looking lot. . . If a girls misses a day at her job in a war plant or a day teaching school, it may mean the boys will have to stay in the front battleline an extra day so healthy bodies are essential in the fight against the axis and the fight against germs.<sup>118</sup>

While the aim of the WAA in 1944 included developing a fine physique, promoting sportsmanship, a sense of fair play, clean-cut competition, cooperation, and leadership, by 1946 that purpose was simplified to providing "opportunities for the college women to participate in physical activities as a means of recreation."<sup>119</sup> Entries for women's athletics in the *Bison* yearbooks at the end of the 1940s continued to use the same feminine language

regarding “the fairer sex” but became less original, often regurgitating the same write-up the previous year’s annual contained.

**University of North Dakota.** At UND, women’s athletics grew under the guidance of the physical education department, which continued to aid in the “development of the physical fitness of the students who must go into later life to compete with harder knocks than they get in gym work.”<sup>120</sup> Bohnet contended that “interest in women’s competitive intercollegiate athletics declined in the depression 1930s, except for intramural and limited extramural activities sponsored by the University’s Women’s (Athletic) Association.”<sup>121</sup> Indeed, the Women’s Athletic Association (WAA) still rewarded athletic excellence with UND sweaters, though the point requirement was increased,<sup>122</sup> possibly to reflect improving athletic ability and increased athletic participation; the WAA also began sponsoring tournaments for various sports like basketball and golf and the number of activities available to women reached 15 by 1937.<sup>123</sup>

Similar to the NDSU yearbooks, the UND *Dacotah* annual entries began using overtly feminine language when discussing women’s athletics. For example, the 1940 entry explains that “keeping the University coeds in trim is the pleasurable task of Miss Della Marie Clark.”<sup>124</sup> War meant no yearbooks were produced in 1943 and 1944, so the 1945 yearbook provided an update about athletic activities at the time. Female athletes gave up their gym space to allow army trainees space, but the WAA picked up as soon as possible to provide women recreational opportunities.<sup>125</sup> The organization sponsored tournaments for various sports, including the “ever popular basketball” and offered swimming as a new activity for “land-locked mermaids.”<sup>126</sup>

By the end of the 1940s, the WAA again earned membership in the National Athletic Federation of College Women and continued to “provide a leisure time program” that

included “a wide variety of relaxation and amusement;” the entire recreational program also encouraged participants to choose activities that could be enjoyed later in life for a “well-balanced social life.”<sup>127</sup> A year later, that purpose was further extended to “maintain a higher standard of university life.”<sup>128</sup>

**Minnesota State University Moorhead.** Because women’s athletics at MSUM across the Red River emerged later than at its larger North Dakota colleagues, information about women’s sports became more scant throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Yearbook entries included brief information and a few pictures, though individual participants were not always named. Frick and McKellar continued to promote women’s athletics through the physical education department, though competition remained at a primarily intramural level.<sup>129</sup>

The Women’s Athletic Association (WAA), which was previously known as the Women’s Athletic League, sponsored a basketball team in the early 1940s that was known as the Dragonettes; the MSTC women competed against their neighbors from NDSU and Concordia College (in Moorhead) leading up to and after World War II.<sup>130</sup> The MSTC women won this competition several years in a row at the end of the decade.<sup>131</sup> The success of the Dragonettes basketball team “brought athletics to the fore and show promise of a thrilling season for next year.”<sup>132</sup>

In addition to basketball, female athletes participated in volleyball, archery, softball, tennis, badminton, and speedball (a sport combining basketball, football, and soccer).<sup>133</sup> In 1946 the volleyball team won the intramural championship.<sup>134</sup> The WAA continued to induct members into its ranks, as well as award sweaters for athletic excellence.<sup>135</sup>

Women’s athletics was not a new activity at NDSU, UND, or MSUM by the 1950s, though it was at this time that women sought more athletic opportunities and more competition. Women seeking those opportunities provided an impetus for progressive change

regarding women's athletics, ushering in an era of growth from 1950-1980. This project aims to establish a historical perspective surrounding the development of women's athletic programs at three universities in the Upper Midwest and the correlating press coverage.

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<sup>1</sup> "Basket Ball," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 12, 1898, 52.

<sup>2</sup> William C. Hunter, *Beacon Across the Prairie: North Dakota's Land-Grant College* (North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies, 1961), 72.

<sup>3</sup> "Athletics," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 15, 1900, 60.

<sup>4</sup> *The Spectrum*, April 15, 1901, 404.

<sup>5</sup> Hunter, *Beacon Across the Prairie*, 72.

<sup>6</sup> Today, a basketball court measures 84-94 feet in length by 50 feet in width.

<http://www.betterbasketball.com/miscellaneous/basketball-court-dimensions/>

<sup>7</sup> "Editorial," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 15, 1903, 82.

<sup>8</sup> "The need of a girls' gymnasium at the A.C.," *The Spectrum*, Dec. 15, 1903, 63.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> "Athletic department," *The Spectrum*, June 15, 1905, 187.

<sup>11</sup> "Athletics," *The Spectrum*, April 15, 1906, 106.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> "Girls' Athletics," *Agassiz*, 1917, n.p.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> "Girls' Basket Ball Team," *Agassiz*, 1918, n.p.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> "Why not girl's athletics?" *The Weekly Spectrum*, April 15, 1918, 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> "Women's Athletics," *Agassiz*, 1921, n.p.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> "Class Basketball," *Agassiz*, 1923, n.p.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> "Women students complete full athletic schedule," *College and State*, June 1922, 13.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> "Women's athletic association initiates new members," *The Weekly Spectrum*, Feb. 3, 1922, 1.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> "Class Basketball," *Agassiz*, 1923, n.p.

<sup>31</sup> "W.A.A. to be represented at national athletic conf.," *The Weekly Spectrum*, Feb. 17, 1922, 2. This issue of student newspaper also included an article explaining that the athletic teams would no longer be called the fighting Aggies but the Bisons, a "new and official name adopted by the N.D. club to be taken by our teams from now on." "A.C. athletics to be known as Bisons [sic]," *The Weekly Spectrum*, Feb. 17, 1922, 3. The article also ribbed UND for its mascot, stating "this week will prove conclusively to U.N.D. how big a flickertail looks under the foot of a bison."

<sup>32</sup> "Women's Athletics," *Bison*, 1924, n.p.

<sup>33</sup> "Women's Athletic Association," *Bison*, 1925, n.p.

<sup>34</sup> "Six college girls awarded sweaters," *The Fargo Forum*, March 2, 1923, 10.

<sup>35</sup> "College girls' athletics: Much interest is being shown in this department," *College and State*, July 1926, 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> "Women's Athletics," *Bison*, 1927, n.p.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> "The Women's Athletic Association," *Bison*, 1928, 169.

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- <sup>40</sup> Lee Bohnet, "A Century of UND Sports: An Athletic History of the University of North Dakota," University of North Dakota, 199, 3.
- <sup>41</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup> Margaret Milne, "A History of the Women's Physical Education Department at the University of North Dakota," Master of Science thesis, University of North Dakota, Aug. 1968, 2.
- <sup>43</sup> Ibid, 33.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid, 2.
- <sup>47</sup> Milne, "A History of the Women's Physical Education Department," 23.
- <sup>48</sup> Bohnet, 4.
- <sup>49</sup> Milne. In 1964, a women's dormitory at UND was dedicated to Cora Smith.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid, 25.
- <sup>51</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>52</sup> Ibid, 26. Smith's ambitions regarding women's rights came from her mother, Sara Barnes Smith, and, after she left Grand Forks, Smith became licensed and practiced medicine in Minneapolis, Seattle, Washington, D.C., and Hollywood, California, becoming a well-known suffragette in those communities as well. Later in life, Smith served as chairman of the Congressional committee of the National Council of Women Voters. Smith had one daughter, Sylvia, and died in 1939. In 1964, a women's dormitory on campus was dedicated in honor of Cora Smith, according to the "Cora E. Smith Papers" collection at the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, available at <http://library.und.edu/Collections/og706.html>.
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>54</sup> Bohnet, 19.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>56</sup> Louis Geiger, "University of the Northern Plains: A History of the University of North Dakota, 1883-1954," University of North Dakota Press, 1958; Milne, 123.
- <sup>57</sup> Ibid, 124.
- <sup>58</sup> Milne, 31.
- <sup>59</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid, 32.
- <sup>61</sup> "Student Files Reveal Records of Many Classic Basketball Battles," *Dakota Student*, Feb. 22, 1936, 14.
- <sup>62</sup> Milne, "A History of the Women's Physical Education Department," 35.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid, 47.
- <sup>64</sup> "Girls' Basket Ball," *Dacotah*, 1910, n.p.; "Women's Athletics," *Dacotah*, 1921, 125.
- <sup>65</sup> Built in 1910, Woodward Hall served as headquarters for the School of Education, the Model High School and associated work; the building contained an auditorium, gym, and classrooms. A fire in 1949 caused \$400,000 worth of damage to Woodward Hall, according to Milne's "A History of the Women's Physical Education Department," 41.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid, 40.
- <sup>67</sup> Chester Fritz Library Digital Collections, from E.F. Chandler's "University of North Dakota: History of the Buildings," 40.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid, 55.
- <sup>69</sup> The year 1919 also marked Martindale's promotion to Acting Dean of Women, according to Milne, 70.
- <sup>70</sup> Ibid, 57.
- <sup>71</sup> Susan Cahn, "From the 'muscle moll' to the 'butch' ballplayer: Mannishness, lesbianism, and homophobia in sports," *Feminist Studies* 19, no.2 (1993), 350.
- <sup>72</sup> Milne, 58.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid, 71.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid, 72.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid, 79.
- <sup>76</sup> "Women's Athletics," *Dacotah*, 1921, 125.
- <sup>77</sup> "Women's Athletic Association," *Dacotah*, 1924, 145
- <sup>78</sup> "Women's Athletic Association," *Dacotah*, 1925, 129
- <sup>79</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>80</sup> "Under Girls' Rules," *Dacotah*, 125, 126.

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- <sup>81</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>83</sup> *Dacotah*, 1928, 73.
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid, 74.
- <sup>85</sup> “‘Athletics for All’ is slogan,” *Dacotah*, 1928, 238.
- <sup>86</sup> “Grace Osborne Rhonemus Papers” in the Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, available at <http://library.und.edu/Collections/og1448.html>.
- <sup>87</sup> “Women’s Athletic Association,” *Dacotah*, 1925, 129
- <sup>88</sup> *Dacotah*, 1926, 229.
- <sup>89</sup> “Grace Osborne Rhonemus Papers.”
- <sup>90</sup> Matt Helm, “Era Bell Thompson,” on BlackPast.org, available at <http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aaw/thompson-era-bell-1906-1986>.
- <sup>91</sup> “Era Bell Thompson, 1905-1985” Mandan Historical Society, available at <http://www.mandanhistory.org/biographies/sz/erabellthompson.html>.
- <sup>92</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>93</sup> “Era Bell Thompson, 80, Dies; Novelist and Editor at Ebony,” *New York Times*, Jan. 3, 1987, available at <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DE0DA1130F930A35752C0A961948260>.
- <sup>94</sup> Normal was a name given to colleges specifically training future teachers. The word is derived from the first teach-training institution, the École Normale Supérieure (“Normal Superior School”), that was founded in Paris in 1794 and intended to serve an example for other similar institutions. In the United States, the first public normal school emerged in Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1839, according the Encyclopedia Britannica, available at <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/418257/normal-school>.
- <sup>95</sup> “History,” Minnesota State University Moorhead, available at <http://www.mnstate.edu/publications/history.html>.
- <sup>96</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>97</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>98</sup> Clarence Glasrud, “Moorhead State Teachers College: 1921-1957,” Moorhead State University, 1990, 181.
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid, 335.
- <sup>100</sup> Ibid, 181.
- <sup>101</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>102</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid, 182.
- <sup>104</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>105</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>106</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>107</sup> Ibid, 353.
- <sup>108</sup> “Physical Education Department,” *Bison*, 1930, 186.
- <sup>109</sup> “Women’s Athletic Association,” *Bison*, 1933, 210.
- <sup>110</sup> “Women’s Athletics,” *Bison*, 1938, 246. The author may have used the phrase “Women’s Athletic Department” and meant to indicate the physical education department. It could be speculated that because no official athletic department had been set up for the women, the campus community referred to the physical education department as the athletic department.
- <sup>111</sup> “Women’s Athletics – Attic Amazons,” *Bison*, 1940, 234.
- <sup>112</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>113</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>114</sup> “Women’s Athletic Association,” *Bison*, 1941, 186.
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>116</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>117</sup> “Women’s Sports,” *Bison*, 1942, 139.
- <sup>118</sup> “Women’s Sports,” *Bison*, 1944, 74.
- <sup>119</sup> “Women’s Sports,” *Bison*, 1944, 74; “Women’s Athletics,” *Bison*, 1946, 74.
- <sup>120</sup> “Women’s Physical Education Department,” *Dacotah*, 1931, 330.
- <sup>121</sup> Bohnet, 154.
- <sup>122</sup> “Women in Sports,” *Dacotah*, 1937, 144.
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>124</sup> “Women’s Athletic Association,” *Dacotah*, 1940, 102.

<sup>125</sup> “But WAA grows stronger,” *Dacotah*, 1945, 67.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> “W.A.A.,” *Dacotah*, 1947, 52.

<sup>128</sup> “Women’s Athletic Association,” *Dacotah*, 1948, 70.

<sup>129</sup> Glasrud, 398.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 397.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, 398.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*



## CHAPTER 4: HISTORICAL PROCESS

Because of the historical nature of this project, newspapers provided the information for understanding how the women's athletic programs developed at North Dakota State University, the University of North Dakota, and Minnesota State University Moorhead. However, because newspaper accounts cannot provide an overabundance of details by their very nature, oral histories from women intimately involved with these programs were collected to supplement the information gleaned from the newspaper articles. These primary sources yielded a wealth of relevant information to this research venture. However, other sources such as Minn-Kota conference or Women's Athletic Association (WAA) meeting minutes, personal correspondences of administrators and coaches, and university yearbooks were also perused for pertinent supplementary information that could also be used in the interpretation of information about the development of three women's intercollegiate athletic programs.

The primary sources the researcher included provided an array of information from which to draw and use to "provide an honest understanding of something in the past based on the best evidence available."<sup>1</sup> An important aspect of any historical writing is the interpretation of the available evidence that allows the researcher to probe deeper and provide a more comprehensive explanation of what happened and why.<sup>2</sup> Concrete information is integral to good historical writing, so the researcher used several guiding questions about historical ventures to decide when enough research had been procured to achieve clarity, depth and continuity of thought in the project.<sup>3</sup> While the researcher sought to discover and interpret the best evidence accessible, other important sources may not have been discovered that could affect the outcome of this historical research venture. Because so much information went unrecorded, no historical record is ever complete, though the surviving material was treated

carefully and insightfully,<sup>4</sup> and steps were taken to ensure the information was collected accurately and appropriately for historical standards.

### **IRB approval**

Because this project involves interviewing human subjects for their historical perspective, the researcher sought approval from the NDSU Institutional Review Board. The researcher retains IRB certification, but authorization for the specific project determined whether the research venture exposed participants to undue risk. Though the project aimed to uncover participants' knowledge of a historical nature to supplement information publicly disseminated through newspapers, participants could have been subject to undue stress and anxiety.

Unlike many other research projects that offer participants protection in the form of anonymity, the historical nature of this project required definitive identifying information be attached to each individual participant to lend credence and support to the evidence she provides. The nature of historical research mandates that the context of the event must be preserved to acquire an understanding of the historical time.<sup>5</sup> The informed consent document for this project described why maintaining individual identification was necessary for the importance of the project, and by providing consent, participants demonstrated their permission to use their names and role played (See Appendix A for the informed consent document).

### **Participants**

Potential interviewees were identified mainly using each university's athletic hall of fame inductee list and selecting women who played sports for the university from 1950-1980. After compiling a list of potential interviewees, the researcher contacted the alumni associations at each university to inquire about interest in participating in the research project.

Because the alumni associations do not provide contact information, the association contacted potential interviewees and requested the woman contact the researcher if she was interested in participating. Other potential interviewees were located through recommendations by other researchers, participants, or university faculty members, and if contact information was not immediately provided, the same steps were taken through alumni associations to solicit participation. The potential interviewees included administrators, coaches, and players who were involved with the programs at NDSU, UND, and MSUM during the time frame of this research venture.

**Interviews.** Interviews with participants were conducted face-to-face when possible and over the phone in all other circumstances. Once the participant provided informed consent, the researcher recorded each interview (See Appendix B for interview questions). The interviews were transferred from a digital voice recorder to a computer to ensure preservation. IRB approved a list of five tentative interview questions that each interviewee was asked to maintain consistency, but other follow-up questions were asked to provide background and context for each individual interviewee. The five questions solicited extensive responses from interviewees and allowed participants an opportunity to address personal experiences and observations. Adding questions to the list could have impeded the interviewees' ability to answer extensively or addressed issues the interviewee discussed voluntarily without specific questioning from the interviewer.

Oral history refers to recovering the remembered but unrecorded historical past,<sup>6</sup> and the women involved with these programs provided the best oral history available for supplementing the information available in written primary sources. While interviewing often indicates a qualitative project, the historical nature of this venture required the additional inclusion of oral histories to enhance the newspaper evidence and allow for better

interpretation of the information available. Conducting interviews only could have resulted in less historical information from which to interpret and draw conclusions. Capturing the remembered but unrecorded past of the press and women's athletics from 1950-1980 added a necessary and descriptive layer of rich information integral to the overall aim of this project.

## **Newspapers**

The newspapers examined for pertinent articles included two regional newspapers, *The Forum of Fargo-Moorhead* and *The Grand Forks Herald* (which were independently owned during the time frame included but are now both owned by Forum Communications Company), as well as student newspapers from each of the included schools: *The Spectrum* (NDSU), *The Dakota Student* (UND), and *The Advocate* (MSUM). Microfilm or hard copies of each of these newspapers was examined in the respective university's archives. Copies of important articles were collected and catalogued chronologically by newspaper. Because historical research methods require a researcher to interpret information within the pertinent context, the researcher concluded that a quantitative content analysis would not provide material rich enough to permit extended historical interpretation.

While examining every issue of all five newspapers would have yielded a vast array of information regarding the development of women's athletic programs, the researcher selected incremental publications in an organized manner as well as those based on important historical incidents related to the topic to yield enough examples of a representative body of primary sources. As such, the researcher narrowed the scope of the project by focusing on the months when basketball was played, November through February, because basketball marked an important initial opportunity for female athletes at the three universities. To focus the research even more, the weekend issues of the regional newspapers for the months included were examined, in five-year increments, beginning with 1950. Because student newspapers print

more sporadically than commercial publications, one issue for each week in the included time frame was also perused for significant information. The researcher focused on the sports sections of these newspapers to further narrow the focus of the research. In addition to the five-year increments, approximately 20 issues of each newspaper in 1972 (when Title IX was passed) were examined for pertinent information; the researcher examined about five issues in February, June, September, and December 1972 in an attempt to provide a representative sample from an important year in women's athletics. The broad range of years involved with this project required detailed and meticulous organization to maintain as accurate a historical perspective as possible.

**Other materials.** In anticipation of enriching the historical record of primary document beyond the newspaper accounts, the researcher also examined additional primary resources such as meeting minutes from athletic organizations and school yearbooks were examined for potentially useful information. Meeting minutes from the Minn-Kota conference and each university's Women's Athletic Association (WAA) provided specific details on the development of women's athletic conferences and activities, while yearbooks provided summaries of program activities and individual team rosters. Records from sports information offices were also examined where available.

### **Interpretation of primary sources**

Interpreting the primary sources for this project occurred once the historical newspaper accounts were collected and organized and the interviews were conducted. The evidence represents the history the researcher aims to scrutinize; it is "the record" or account of "what real people in the past did or failed to do."<sup>7</sup> After gathering the evidence, the researcher made a historical interpretation regarding press coverage and the development of the three women's intercollegiate athletic programs. Historical researchers must make

decisions about the information uncovered and provide meaning about that information.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, without interpretation, historical research remains shallow when a researcher does not dig deep into the reasons why certain events happened and why people acted like they did; good history provides an “understanding of change.”<sup>9</sup>

Information from newspaper articles within the time frame was interwoven with the oral histories to provide context and explain how the women’s athletic programs developed, as well as compare and contrast the newspaper coverage women involved in the program perceived with what was actually found in local newspapers. The evidence and interpretation was woven into a descriptive narrative that chronicles the development of these important programs and this crucial time period for women’s athletics and the press, as a historical researcher is obligated to “provide an honest understanding of something in the past based on the best evidence available.”<sup>10</sup>

### **Aim and scope**

The messages about women’s athletics in the time leading up to Title IX and after the legislation passed are woefully scant in the newspaper pages of the time. While historians have attempted to draw from the paltry offering to offer a comprehensive description of how women’s intercollegiate athletic programs developed during that crucial time, much of the information has to come directly from those who were involved in the program to supplement what little information is available through the mass media. Additionally, these accounts often offer too broad a look at the development without providing the specificity and scope smaller newspapers could provide on a narrowed topic regarding women’s athletics.

This project aims to establish historical perspective surrounding the development of women’s athletic programs at three universities in the Upper Midwest using newspaper accounts from the 1950-1980. The regional newspapers provided the area with its news and,

subsequently, provided a social barometer regarding societal values within the Upper Midwest through the news each decided to include or exclude within its pages. The coverage of how these programs developed offers insight into not only the founding of the programs themselves, but also indicates where the social barometer fell during a crucial time period for the development of women's athletics at Midwestern universities as seen through the agenda set by local newspapers. NDSU, UND, and MSUM are all public universities in the southeastern portion of North Dakota and the west central portion of Minnesota. Separated by 75 miles of interstate highway and a river, the three universities saw athletics develop parallel to each other because of proximity. The universities became each others' rivals yet remained staunch supporters of women's athletics off the field because opportunities at one university meant opportunities for women at the others.

The researcher narrowed the focus of the project even more by concentrating mostly on information about women's basketball, though other sports are mentioned when significant. Basketball offered women at each university the first opportunity to participate in organized athletics and appeared at both NDSU and UND shortly after it was invented on the East Coast. While each program offered other sports from 1950-1980, basketball received the most consistent participation from female athletes, as well as offered newspapers a sport to cover that was played in similar fashion and scheduling as a men's sport.

Because this project attempted to piece together the development of three women's intercollegiate athletic programs using newspaper articles, yearbook write-ups, archived documents, and personal interviews, the narrative of the development is not a step-by-step process. The changes these programs went through from 1950-1980 were often monumental in the wider scope of the modern program, but at the time, they may have been overlooked or underreported.

Some limitations in this project stem from the nature of historical research. This method relies on primary sources, newspaper articles, and oral histories from the women involved in the development of these programs. While newspapers strive to produce accurate accounts of the important events occurring on any given day, the reporters can only report on the information available or stories deemed worthy of receiving coverage at the time. For example, even though women's basketball was played in a similar way as men's basketball, providing sports reporters a basic understanding of the game, if editor or reporters did not believe the newspaper audience wanted to read about women's basketball despite the understanding, the events would simply not be covered.

Another limitation from examining newspaper articles emerges from the organization of the publication. The researcher focused on scrutinizing the sports section of the newspaper for evidence; however, a common feature of newspapers during the 1950s and 1960s was the Women's Section. While the researcher opted to narrow the focus of this project through the inclusion of information from sports pages, the Women's Section of the issues may have yielded additional information germane to this project.

Additionally, oral histories are sometimes inaccurate. Whether the interviewee forgets certain facts, misremembers events, or is simply unavailable or unwilling to share important information, relying on humans to provide explanations poses a potential threat to credibility and accuracy.<sup>11</sup> Even though the researcher tried to verify information from the oral histories using other primary sources, the lack of newspaper accounts from the time did not always allow for confirmation. Additionally, many of the potential participants did not respond to a request for participation, which means an important facet of the history may not have been available to the researcher. The women interviewed for this project all played significant roles in developing their respective programs, but many other women also contributed important



aspects to the development that were not captured in this particular project. While this project endeavored to piece together a cohesive narrative about the development, it may be missing important elements that were never documented, have been forgotten, or were lost when leaders died or moved away.

The researcher would be remiss to not discuss the limitations of examining only a few months worth of issues during a specific time frame in five-year increments. However, the national research about women's athletic provides a framework for situating the discoveries made during this project regarding press coverage, validating the project's methodology and findings. The researcher realizes that if more issues had been examined over a longer length of time or in more frequent time periods, the outcome of the regional press coverage may have changed, even though history on a national level tells a different story.

Finally, another limitation about this project lies in the abundance (or lack thereof) of information available through each university's archives. NDSU and UND boast impressive archives with ample information about women's athletics, while MSUM offered little more information than what was found in the scrapbooks.

The aim of this project to examine how three women's intercollegiate athletic programs in the Upper Midwest developed and the correlating press coverage from 1950-1980 lends itself to questions that will guide the research venture, as opposed to empirical questions that must be answered to validate the research. The following questions will guide the research conducted for this project:

1. What role did newspapers play in promoting or impeding the development of the women's athletic programs at NDSU, UND, and MSUM?
2. How did develop these programs develop prior to and following Title IX?
3. What challenges did women face from 1950-1980 in establishing these programs?

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<sup>1</sup> James D. Startt and Wm. David Sloan, *Historical Methods in Mass Communications*, (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers, 1989), 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 20.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 155.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 139.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 130.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 131.

## CHAPTER 5: REGIONAL WOMEN'S ATHLETICS AND PRESS COVERAGE, 1950-1980

Using the three aforementioned questions as a constant guide, the following research explains how the modern women's intercollegiate athletic programs at NDSU, UND, and MSUM developed using articles pertaining to women's athletics found in five different newspapers, with specific regard for women's basketball; additional resources and interviews supplement the newspaper coverage to help answer the guiding research questions.

By the 1950s, women across the nation rediscovered the value and necessity of equality and undertook new efforts to achieve it. The athletic field represented one of the areas where women sought equality, though the federal legislation that mandated equality at federally funded institutions regardless of sex did not become law until 1972. In the 22 years prior to the passing of Title IX examined in this research, a movement toward change and equality rumbled quietly throughout the nation. At NDSU, UND, and MSUM, women found themselves on the cusp of change and growth previously unseen.

### **North Dakota State University**

**1950-1960.** At NDSU, the athletic opportunities available to women during the early 1950s existed in the form of recreational activities sponsored by the Women's Athletic Association (WAA). Basketball continued to reign supreme as the most popular sport, though volleyball, riflery, softball, bowling, and table tennis attracted numerous participants.<sup>1</sup> Elsie Raer, who came to NDSU in 1945, served as the WAA advisor and played a major role in developing what became the modern women's athletic program. WAA members gathered once a month in the fieldhouse (currently the Bentson Bunker Fieldhouse), and the organization sent members to a national convention in Colorado in 1952.<sup>2</sup> The WAA remained active through the 1950s, awarding sweaters and letter to exceptional female athletes,

sponsoring intramural activities and competitions in a variety of sports, and hosting play days for other area schools, like Concordia College and MSUM. In an emphasis on friendship and sportsmanship instead of competition, women from the same university at these events did not play with their own teammates; instead players from each participating university formed one team.<sup>3</sup>

To investigate whether area newspapers reported on the WAA's various activities, the researcher examined the sports pages of 48 Friday and Saturday evening issues of *The Fargo Forum* and *The Grand Forks Herald* from November 1950 to February 1951, a time span that encompassed the beginning of the women's basketball season to near its end (typically in mid-March). The process was repeated for the November 1955 to February 1956 issues and every other year's set of issues. The researcher examined approximately 50 issues in the decade from 1950-1960 that included a variety of athletic stories but women's athletics at NDSU, UND, and MSUM were relatively absent from the pages of *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* and *The Grand Forks Herald*. Women bowlers were mentioned<sup>4</sup> with a passing paragraph as well as improvements being made to a basketball court though there was no mention of women playing on it.<sup>5</sup> The limited coverage of women's athletics directly correlates with the limited opportunities available to women at NDSU, UND, and MSUM.

The limited coverage in *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* continued through the middle of the decade, as the 1955-1956 issues contained only fleeting articles about women bowlers, nationally known athlete Babe Didrickson's battle with cancer, girls' tennis championship results from Chicago and an officials test available to women,<sup>6</sup> though none of the articles pertained to the three universities at the focus of this research.

In *The Grand Forks Herald*, coverage of women's athletics mirrored that of *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* during this decade, with few articles appearing in the sports pages of

the weekend issues. Five articles reported local women's bowling activities,<sup>7</sup> with a smattering of national and women's wrestling articles.<sup>8</sup> The only articles semi-pertinent to this research reported on high school girls' basketball activities, but no articles mentioned women's athletics at NDSU, UND, or MSUM.<sup>9</sup>

In contrast to the lack of extensive coverage in regional newspapers, the student newspapers at NDSU, UND, and MSUM published a handful of articles about women's athletics. From November 1950 to February 1951, NDSU's student newspaper, *The Spectrum*, covered women's riflery, volleyball, and basketball in only four issues of the thirteen issues examined. In a December 1950 article about the women's riflery team besting the men's team, the author referred to the women as "Annie Oaklies,"<sup>10</sup> and in an article about the completion of the Women's Athletic Association's volleyball season ending and basketball beginning, the headline read "Fems Volley Ball Ends; Basketball Next on Schedule," pointing out to the reader that the sport was for the feminine.<sup>11</sup> A brief January 1951 article reported the WAA's organization of basketball teams,<sup>12</sup> while another reported a basketball clinic for women;<sup>13</sup> the latter article featured a headline that referred to the event as a "Valley Girl Cage Clinic."<sup>14</sup>

The 1955-1956 *Spectrum* articles included coverage of women's intramural activities, such as a squabble between teams (a situation the male writer felt was necessary to offer advice on),<sup>15</sup> the initiation of new WAA members and officers,<sup>16</sup> and the beginning of the intramural volleyball season.<sup>17</sup> A February 24, 1956, article was published about the annual athletic banquet, but women's athletics were not mentioned as being recognized or celebrated at the event.<sup>18</sup>

By the end of the 1950s, Collette Buhr Følstad graduated from high school in Ayr, North Dakota, where she played basketball and softball. In the 1930s, her mother had been a standout basketball player for Ayr who led her team to victory during the first state

championship for high school girls in 1937-1938.<sup>19</sup> The Ayr girls basketball team went on to win seven out of nine state championships from 1938-1947; after 1947, the girls' basketball program ceased to exist because of lack of interest. In 1952 Folstad entered high school and many parents, including Folstad's, sought reinstatement of the basketball by petitioning the school board.<sup>20</sup> By the time she graduated from Ayr in 1956, Folstad had played in 104 high school basketball games.<sup>21</sup>

When she enrolled at NDSU and looked to continue her basketball career, Folstad was "devastated" to discover NDSU only offered Women's Recreation Association, or WRA (previously known as the Women's Athletic Association), activities once a week, on Tuesday nights, in a tiny gymnasium on the fourth floor of Ceres Hall.<sup>22</sup> Suddenly, Folstad's career was over but she realized it did not have to be that way for other girls.<sup>23</sup> Through her involvement with WRA, Folstad befriended other area women involved with promoting women's athletics, like Joan Hult from Concordia, Mary Montgomery from MSUM, Elsie Raer from NDSU, and Beulah Gregoire from the physical education department at NDSU.

While intramural athletics offered some reprieve for female athletes, many of the talented young women like Folstad wanted more.

Women were saying we need to compete, we need to provide an opportunity for women and girls who need that extra challenge ...Some play for intramurals, some need that higher level of competition to satisfy their innate needs...to be totally fulfilled as an individual. It's like an artist who needs to take that next step. That's what competition is; it's an art form, to me. It's an art form. If you have a passion, you don't want to play little piddly game; you want to test your ability against others... We could see what men were doing – why couldn't we do it? If (athletics) was so good for 50 percent of the population...why was it so bad for women? We did have a brain, we did have muscles, we do have needs to be fully fulfilled as individuals – we couldn't figure this out....That's why we all got restless. How come all these opportunities are there for men and it's men telling us we shouldn't be doing this?<sup>24</sup>

In 1959, Folstad represented NDSU in the creation of an intercollegiate sports agreement with MSUM and Concordia.<sup>25</sup> The agreement dictated that different activities be

played at each school during specific times of the year, like volleyball at MSUM in the fall, basketball at Concordia in the winter, and bowling at NDSU in the spring.<sup>26</sup>

We thought it was just wonderful; today I'm still excited about it,' (Folstad) said. 'We thought we were handed the world; we could finally play.' The league provided an outlet for women's competition, but nothing more formal was created before Folstad graduated in 1962 with a degree in physical education.<sup>27</sup>

Folstad recalled forming the tri-college program — the first of its kind in the area — and that while it offered competition with other schools, the mentality of the playday persisted and players intermingled with each other rather than play on their own university team.<sup>28</sup>

**1960-1970.** The absence of information about women's athletics at NDSU, UNID, and MSUM in *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* continued into the next decade, with fewer articles about any women's athletics available than the previous decade. The only articles from the November-December 1960 and January-February 1961 weekend issues centered on Wilma Rudolph, the world's fastest woman runner, and her accomplishments.<sup>29</sup> Two issues contained only photographs of female bowlers or figure skaters, while two others depicted women in more feminine roles, like the Cotton Bowl queen and an Indiana cheerleader.<sup>30</sup> In *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* weekend issues examined from 1965-1966, no women's athletics articles were present. *The Grand Forks Herald* again mirrored its southern counterpart by covering women's bowling activities<sup>31</sup> and Wilma Rudolph.<sup>32</sup> The weekend issues examined from 1965-1966 contained no articles about women's athletics.

Even though regional newspapers did not report women's athletic activities, they existed at the three universities, especially NDSU. In November 1961, NDSU hosted the annual North Dakota College Playday, and a *Spectrum* article quoted Marjean Tehven, the president of WRA, who explained that "playday is a good way of getting acquainted with girls from other colleges, because we play together rather than on separate teams."<sup>33</sup> Folstad also explained that many still believed that "it was not right that women should be exerting

themselves emotionally and physically in competition because it was too strenuous and might affect child-bearing.”<sup>34</sup> Hult recalled in a 1976 women’s athletics history project by then-assistant sports information director Helen Gunderson that the philosophies of the Division for Girl’s and Women’s Sports (DGWS) created unwritten rules about behavior, like nice girls not being interested in competitive activities or nice ladies not wanting to coach.<sup>35</sup>

Folstad recalled that WRA activities rarely received coverage in local newspapers. Unfortunately for women’s athletics, Folstad’s observation was correct. The November 1960 to February 1961 *Spectrum* issues contained no pertinent articles, save for one at the end of the time frame about women’s bowling.<sup>36</sup> The 1965-1966 *Spectrum* issues did not produce much more than that; the time frame yielded articles about intramural volleyball, the Physical Education Club, and women’s riflery.<sup>37</sup>

The *Bison* yearbook included information about the year’s activities, and *The Spectrum* would occasionally write a small article about intramurals, but the coverage was minimal and sporadic.<sup>38</sup> By the 1960s, Folstad and the WRA were busy with intramural activities like basketball, softball, riflery, volleyball, and bowling.<sup>39</sup> Bowling became a popular game for men and women, and eventually NDSU students from both genders formed a co-ed bowling league.<sup>40</sup> Folstad graduated in 1962 and worked for Agassiz Junior High for three years before Gregoire from the physical education department sought her out for a new job: head coach of the first women’s official intercollegiate basketball team at NDSU. Folstad explained that:

1965 was the first year that NDSU hired their first basketball coach, which was myself. We played three<sup>41</sup> games; we played UND, Moorhead, and Concordia. But WRA was still sponsoring badminton, bowling, etc...that was the beginning of when we all started...and this was under the auspices of Division of Girls and Women’s Sports with the tagline, “Every girl in a sport and a sport for every girl.”... (The DGWS) developed the guidelines for the intercollegiate women’s sports program for the U.S. They also printed the rule book, which said scheduling must be done so as to allow opportunities for participants to meet on an informal social basis.<sup>42</sup>



Folstad recruited athletes from the WRA to play on her intercollegiate basketball teams, and the team did not have official uniforms. To outfit her team those first years, Folstad asked her athletes to wear the uniform worn for physical education classes “that consisted of a white blouse, aqua-colored shorts, and gold pinnies that didn’t even have NDSU printed on them.”<sup>43</sup> The next year Folstad founded the volleyball program, and its athletes borrowed the basketball team’s uniforms. Folstad ordered official uniforms in January 1968, though they did not arrive until May and did not fit well because they were oversized and awkward.<sup>44</sup>

Folstad realized that all uniform sizes were measured for men, resulting in wider arms and longer jerseys. Folstad found a company willing to measure her team, thus developing small, medium, and large in women’s terms.<sup>45</sup>

Because of minimal funding available to outfit the women’s teams, the uniforms Folstad ordered were shared by the basketball, volleyball, track, and softball teams throughout the late 1960s.<sup>46</sup>

While women’s intercollegiate athletics had finally been established at NDSU, Folstad and her athletes were not treated as well as the men’s teams. At the time, the women’s intercollegiate athletic teams were directed by the women’s physical education department, not the athletic department.<sup>47</sup> The Bentson Bunker Fieldhouse gymnasium was only available to the women on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, but on Sundays, the team had to clean up the gym from the previous night’s men’s game.<sup>48</sup> The volleyball team often practiced on the stage of the fieldhouse and was wary of breaking overhead lights if the ball was set too high.<sup>49</sup>

In October 1966 Folstad and other women’s athletics pioneers discussed the competition available throughout the state and region that could be utilized for what was now being called “extramural” activity.<sup>50</sup> Two months later, the notion of physical activity being detrimental to a girl’s health was finally debunked. In December 1966, the 4th National

Institution for Sports was held in Indiana to increase “the depth and breadth of women’s sports throughout the nation,”<sup>51</sup> and Folstad attended as an NDSU representative.

They revealed at this conference, the report from the American Medical Association that physical exertion was good for women and would not affect child bearing. It would be beneficial because it would strengthen your muscles in your back and abs so therefore you would be able to carry the baby better. That was the big thing. The other reason that was held was to give women across the United States an equal opportunity to learn drills and skills and techniques for coaching (basketball and volleyball).<sup>52</sup>

By the end of the 1960s, the WRA promoted its tri-college relationship, as evidenced in the 1969 *Bison* yearbook; the article also stated that Judy Ray had taken over the WRA advisor position.<sup>53</sup> *The Spectrum* also covered some of the first games the official women’s intercollegiate basketball team played, though the articles were very brief and sporadic.<sup>54</sup> An undated newspaper article from Folstad’s files could be the first coverage of the women’s basketball team; the article reads:

NDSU Women’s Intercollegiate Basketball Team suffered its first loss of the season at the hands of Moorhead State last Thursday evening. The score 36-28 does not reveal the total story though...NDSU’s record now stands at 1-1. The team played Concordia last Monday. The next home game is Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m. when NDSU will get a second chance at MSC.<sup>55</sup>

During the first few years NDSU had a women’s intercollegiate basketball team, the only extensive articles published in *The Spectrum* were written by one of Folstad’s standout players: Carolyn Schmidt.<sup>56</sup> Following a victory in the first game of her senior season, Schmidt wrote “The NDSU girls have not conceded defeat since last Jan. 19, 1968, against Concordia (College in Moorhead). They then proceeded to reel off eight straight wins and finished 8-2 overall...With the able coaching of Mrs. Collette Folstad and her assistants, Miss Judy Ray and Peggy Karpenko, the girls are anticipating another successful season.”<sup>57</sup> Later Schmidt wrote in a February 1969 article “victory followed victory for the Women’s Basketball Team this past week. They scored conclusive wins over (MSUM) and archrival UND.”<sup>58</sup> Today, journalistic

standards dictate avoiding conflicts of interest, and having a member of the basketball team write about the team's games would typically not be allowed; however, because women's athletics was not often deemed important enough for paid *Spectrum* staffers to cover themselves, perhaps the conflict of interest was not viewed as significant enough to not print Schmidt's articles.

During her time as coach, Folstad does not recall being interviewed by any newspaper or television station about a game. She said the minimal information that did appear in the newspaper did so because she (or other women's coaches) called the information in to the newspaper or television station. While the discussion about forming what would eventually become the Minn-Kota Conference was ongoing, coaches were encouraged to report activities but refrain from mentioning the conference.<sup>59</sup>

The local media did not cover women's sports. Any scores and stories of our games were called in to the *Forum* by the coach. Occasionally, the NDSU newspaper, *The Spectrum*, would take pictures and write a story.<sup>60</sup>

Folstad's personal observation about the lack of media coverage correlates to what the researcher found in the regional newspapers: virtually nothing. Even though Folstad and her fellow athletes or student-athletes participated in several athletic events and founded an intercollegiate basketball team, the regional newspapers paid little attention.

In 1969, Folstad's basketball team earned a spot as first alternate in the First National Intercollegiate Basketball Tournament headed by famed women's athletic pioneer Carol Eckman<sup>61</sup> but did not compete because no other team dropped out.<sup>62</sup> In an undated letter to Folstad, Eckman reported that "the teams involved felt that the tournament provided a wholesome and worthwhile opportunity for competition in women's basketball" and that "it is our hope that the undertaking at West Chester will give impetus to the establishment of national collegiate competition in women's basketball."<sup>63</sup>

Eckman's hope came true. In 1966, the DGWS had established the Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (CIAW),<sup>64</sup> which was given the responsibility in 1969 of overseeing an "annual schedule of national intercollegiate championships in athletics for college women" in an effort to "give more college women opportunity for competition at the national level."<sup>65</sup> At the local level, Folstad left NDSU to pursue other opportunities but saw the tri-college arrangement between NDSU, MSUM and Concordia evolve into the unofficial Minn-Kota Conference; other area schools like UND and Bemidji soon joined the conference.<sup>66</sup> Joan Hult, who had played semi-pro basketball and softball on the East Coast before coming to Minnesota and establishing women's intercollegiate athletics at Concordia, played a pivotal role in formalizing the Minn-Kota Conference, which turned out to be one of the first five women's athletic conferences in the nation.<sup>67</sup>

An early 1970s history of the Minn-Kota Conference recognizes the formation of the tri-college competition league in 1959 as the impetus for the official conference, though formalization would not be realized for another 13 years. In 1965-66 representatives from potential charter member schools Bemidji State, Concordia, MSUM, NDSU, and UND held the first formal meeting to discuss forming an intercollegiate sport conference for women.<sup>68</sup>

In 1968, NDSU athletics held the first annual Awards Recognition Night, recognizing the men's intercollegiate athletic program and the Women's Recreation Association; individual WRA sports that received notoriety included badminton, golf, riflery, and bowling; no mention is made of recognizing women's intercollegiate athletic teams.<sup>69</sup>

**1970-1980.** Coverage of women's sports in *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* during final decade covered by this research venture emerged slowly, with brief articles about a Fargo high school girls' swim team and a Red River Valley Women's Bowling Tournament,<sup>70</sup> even though the local women's athletic programs were growing. Similarly, the November 1970

to February 1971 *Grand Forks Herald* weekend issues frequently contained a “bowling honor roll” that featured both local men’s and women’s bowling scores,<sup>71</sup> but little information about the emerging women’s athletic program at UND.

The November 1970 to February 1971 *Spectrum* time frame yielded few articles about women’s athletics, though the articles that were published reported on intramural volleyball, not basketball; a December 1970 article about NDSU placing first in a volleyball tournament was placed at the top of a secondary page in the sports section and featured several paragraphs of information.<sup>72</sup> The most important article during this time frame was written by the same woman who wrote the volleyball article and discussed the availability of athletics for women.<sup>73</sup>

Women’s sports are seldom spoken of on the NDSU campus, except in the phy-ed office and among enthusiasts of the various activities. It is a little known fact that there are highly skilled girls working in divisions similar to the male conferences, and working just as hard. These women are classified as an intercollegiate division called a ‘proposed’ conference. This adjective cannot be dropped until a constitution has been approved by the director of women’s athletics, the Student Senate and the President of all the colleges in the conference. This constitution is expected to be passed by January of next year. . . For women without the time for varsity sports there is the Women’s Intramural Association (WIA). WIA has sports similar to the intercollegiate program, but the competition is between dorms, sororities and other groups on campus.<sup>74</sup>

Even so, by 1970, the NDSU women’s athletic program was growing. Its teams played in a conference that would soon become official and national tournaments were available through the CIAW. The *Bison* yearbook acknowledged this growth in its annual write-up.<sup>75</sup>

The Women’s Intercollegiate Program at NDSU is in the building stages. . . The NDSU women compete in a variety of sports with basketball and volleyball being the main intercollegiate sports. . . There is one conference type meet in the following sports: archery, badminton, bowling, golf, and tennis. Since women’s intercollegiate activities are so new, some of the schools do not have rifle, gymnastic, and track teams. Those that do, usually compete in dual or triangular meets. This year’s women’s basketball team had a season record of nine wins and one loss. Losing only one player, the returning squad has an excellent chance of having a good season and being invited to the National Women’s Intercollegiate Tournament next year.<sup>76</sup>

NDSU dedicated a new athletic facility (Bison Sports Arena) on campus in 1970 that was primarily available to men's athletics, leaving the old fieldhouse accessible for women's athletics; it took Ade Sponberg becoming athletic director in 1973 for the new building to be made available to the female athletes on campus.<sup>77</sup>

A February 1971 *Spectrum* article provided the women's intercollegiate basketball schedule, which included nine games.<sup>78</sup> Even though coverage of women's athletics increased during this time frame, it should be noted that *The Spectrum* had begun publishing twice a week, doubling the number of issues examined from November to February. However, despite the increase in issues, coverage of women's athletics was still largely absent from the majority of the issues examined, save for the aforementioned articles.

Regardless of a lack of coverage from even the campus newspaper, the Minn-Kota Conference was formalized in the spring of 1972 with the adoption of its constitution after six years of discussions about "guidelines, standards, philosophies, and a constitution."<sup>79</sup> In an email to a Minn-Kota Conference researcher, UND women's athletic pioneer Patricia Warcup wrote that back in April 1968, a group of women from the five founding colleges

set out to form 'a league of their own' for the purpose of establishing, promoting, and fostering the fledgling women's intercollegiate sport programs in their institutions. This alliance helped build the strong foundation and traditions upon which their modern women's sport programs stand. These pioneer women met diligently and argued furiously over each building block of the Conference. They were dedicated, determined, often obstinate but always united in purpose—the formation of the Minn-Kota Women's Intercollegiate Sports Conference.<sup>80</sup>

By April, the Minn-Kota Conference had expanded its membership to Mayville State, Valley City State, and Minnesota-Morris.<sup>81</sup> At a celebratory luncheon that spring announcing the creation of the conference, guest speaker Carole Oglesby, AIAW Commissioner for National Championships from Purdue University, spoke about the influence of women's

athletics at a higher level and exuberantly congratulated the conference for its accomplishment.

We must see local, regional, and national women's collegiate athletics as a subset of all collegiate athletics, which is in turn a subset of all competitive athletics in our country. And our athletics become, in many ways, a [microcosm] of total society. Its problems and excitements are mirrored in our arenas... this is a special time; the laying of a foundation for large-scale national structure for women's collegiate athletics. I believe you have already made the commitment to be an important part of the building of this structure and 30 years from now (in the year 2000), you will be one of the fortunate few who can say (as in a TV commercial way back in the '70s), 'I can't believe we built the whole thing!!!'<sup>82</sup>

On June 23, 1972, Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendments. It reads: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."<sup>83</sup> After President Richard Nixon signed the legislation into law in July 1972, secondary schools, colleges, and universities had until July 21, 1978, to comply with the law or risk discontinuation of federal funding.<sup>84</sup> The Minn-Kota Conference adjusted its rules to accommodate the new legislation even before the compliance date, and deleted prohibitions about men competing on women's teams and vice versa.<sup>85</sup>

After Title IX was passed, few articles were published about the issue in any of the five newspapers examined, save for one article reporting the debate about the North Dakota Equal Rights Amendment.<sup>86</sup> The 1972 *Grand Forks Herald* and *Forum* issues did not yield many women's athletics articles either, possibly due to spring flooding and a presidential campaign taking up space in the pages. The only items related to women's athletics included a picture of a professional female golfer called "Pretty Jane Blalock" and pictures of female tennis players.<sup>87</sup>

*The Spectrum* published articles in 1972 pertaining to women, though none specifically reported on Title IX. An October 1972 *Spectrum* article reported on the equal rights

amendment and what the NDSU dean of women thought of the amendment and its possible advantages for college women. The article received top billing on an inside news page, and included a picture of the female dean.<sup>88</sup> Two more articles about the issue appeared in later issues of the student newspaper.<sup>89</sup> A month later, a small article with two large pictures appeared in *The Spectrum* under the headline “Feminists frolic in Union.”<sup>90</sup> The article reported that 75 girls showed up to bowl but no reason for the event was provided, offering no explanation why the author chose to refer to the women participants as “feminists.”<sup>91</sup> An article about competitive sports for women appeared in *The Spectrum* in February 1973 with Beulah Gregoire, the women’s physical education department chair, as the primary source.<sup>92</sup>

Femininity directly relates to the individual’s attitude toward herself. If she has a good self-image than she’ll know how to be aggressive and still retain her femininity,” Gregoire said (in the article). “Intercollegiate competitive sports for women play a major role in development mature mental attitudes along with better physical abilities,” Gregoire contended. SU is one of eight members of Minn-Kota Women’s Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.<sup>93</sup>

When Title IX was passed, Judy Ray was serving as NDSU’s women’s athletic director. She recognized that while the legislation was important, it alone was not solely responsible for advancing women’s athletics.<sup>94</sup> Assistant sports information director Helen Gunderson’s history of women’s athletics includes a quotation from Ray that reads:

Women’s liberation created the beginning of social acceptance of women in sports...even though sometimes we don’t identify with women’s organizations...A lot of people on campus and across the country feel women’s athletics will duplicate men’s...they say the opening up of scholarships is what did it.<sup>95</sup>

The associate dean of students and equal opportunity office at the time, Ellie Kilander, also identified with the contribution of the women’s movement to the advancing of women’s athletics in Gunderson’s history:

Women weren’t coming to college to ‘learn to cook and find a husband.’ Among other things, they were demanding better athletic programs. Title IX’s effect was to ensure that progress in the area of equality for women was speedy and effective rather than



haphazard and delayed...it was reinforcement, but sooner or later the growth would have occurred...the law simply served as a catalyst.<sup>96</sup>

Regardless of the impetus behind Title IX, the law may have been the impetus behind more university-sanctioned promotion of women's athletics. In the fall of 1975, Helen Gunderson arrived at NDSU to serve as the assistant sports information director, with a prominent focus on the burgeoning women's athletic program. The year before Gunderson arrived saw what was likely first university publication specifically promoting women's athletics – a small gold, tri-fold 1974-1975 Intercollegiate Women's Sports Schedule — disseminated, and the trend continued after Gunderson's arrival. The 1975-1976 Women's Intercollegiate Sports Bulletin consisted of at least 10 pages stapled together in a booklet that reported successful growth within the women's athletic organization and promoted eight intercollegiate sports: golf, tennis, basketball, softball, volleyball, gymnastics, track, and badminton.<sup>97</sup>

Perhaps Gunderson's work paid off, because by 1975, women's athletics finally appeared in *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News* on a more regular basis than the previous 25 years. Not all of the articles revolved around NDSU, UND or MSUM, but the presence of women's athletics was apparent. Many of the articles in the time frame reported on high school girls' basketball events and national athletic events, with the majority of articles about NDSU, UND or MSUM women's athletics appearing in the February weekend issues examined.<sup>98</sup> The Minn-Kota basketball tournament received coverage before and during the event.<sup>99</sup>

At the national level, the CIAW's successor, the AIAW, discouraged offering scholarships for female athletes out of fear of corruption many AIAW believed existed in men's athletics.<sup>100</sup> Despite this mandate, the Minn-Kota Conference eliminated its rule refusing scholarships to female athletes.<sup>101</sup> During the 1975-1976 school year, NDSU offered its first athletic scholarships to women.<sup>102</sup>

The 1976 booklet promoting the women's sports program at NDSU consisted of photographs, extensive writing about the different sports offered, facilities, scholarships, athletes, and coaches.<sup>103</sup> At the time, the Intercollegiate Sports Council acted as the governing body for women's athletics and had been doing so for three years; the council set "rules and guidelines governing women's sports at NDSU."<sup>104</sup> The booklet also explained each available sport in detail to provide a potential "recruit" with information for making a decision on whether to attend NDSU.

The growth of women's sports at North Dakota State University parallels the trend found across the country. The roots of today's modern athletic program were established in the late 1960's when the University implemented women's interscholastic sports to go a step further than the traditional playdays and extramural events. But that was just a beginning and who could have imagined the progress that would be made in just a few short years. . . The program has come a long way in the last decade with expanded schedules, an increased coaching staff, greater access to facilities, ample funding, and the provision of scholarships.<sup>105</sup>

In her history project, Gunderson recognized the contribution women's athletics made to the university setting.

The young ladies have great enthusiasm, desire, dedication, and cooperation as well as a love of sport and competition. They have a high level of athletic skill and provide excellent athletic entertainment that Bison fans should take the time to experience.<sup>106</sup>

Gunderson herself may have worked on the 1976 booklet as she said she wrote press releases, created brochures, and called in stats and scores after women's games.<sup>107</sup> At the time, the sports information office was located in the same building as the general university communications office, not with the athletic program offices in the new fieldhouse (what is currently known as the Bison Sports Arena).<sup>108</sup> Gunderson recalled the women's and men's athletic offices were originally separated and that the physical separate symbolized a philosophical separation as well.

There were two different athletic conferences and two different national organizations – the women were in the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics and the [men were in the NCAA]. . . I think, at universities at the time, there was a lot of resistance within the

universities to the growth of women's athletics. And the NCAA did not give an credence or any support to women's athletics, and so a lot of women who had been active in physical education and wanted to build something from there built the AIAW and their conference on, I think, basically, volunteer effort... [AIAW had] a different philosophy than the NCAA. They did not approve of off-campus recruiting [and] scholarships.<sup>109</sup>

Gunderson admitted she faced many challenges covering women's athletics and met resistance along the way from other NDSU employees who did not see the value of women's athletics; she recognized that she would have had even more challenges had she been located in the athletic offices rather than just the university communication offices.<sup>110</sup> Even with the different location, Gunderson experienced roadblocks at several turns. She explained that she often paid her own way to events that would endow her with knowledge on how to better promote women's athletics, whereas the sports information director for men's athletics, George Ellis, received reimbursement.<sup>111</sup> Ellis often expected Gunderson to prioritize men's athletic events over women's, causing tension between the two SIDs.<sup>112</sup>

Despite the tension, Gunderson sought to promote women's athletics in new and creative ways. She conducted and taped interviews with female student-athletes, edited the tape into a reel, contacted the student-athlete's hometown radio station, and offered to send them the pre-recorded interview to play over the airwaves; she also initiated a competition amongst another area sports information directors to select the best women's athletic promotional items produced by different SIDs. Guided by a love of photography and images, Gunderson also produced small promotional videos with action from women's athletic competitions that Ray could use to demonstrate the activities of the women's athletic program as a public relations tool.<sup>113</sup>

I just thought people have to see women being graceful and competitive and athletic, and they need to see the beauty of that and the skill of that. If they don't see it, they won't begin to identify with it.<sup>114</sup>

Even though Gunderson promoted women's athletics with a variety of materials and provided local media with information, it often fell on deaf ears.

I know there were nights when I could call WDAY and I would call with results from men's sports and women's sports, and the men's sports would be carried and the women's sports wouldn't be.<sup>115</sup>

At a regional meeting of SIDs, Gunderson also pointed out the language still being used by media when referring to female athletes.

My comment...had to do with how women's sports was covered and reported, like whether they should refer to the "tall, blonde, beautiful woman that sank the basket" or whether they should just treat the coverage like they would men's basketball [because] you wouldn't put in the article that a "real studly athlete made the basket," pointing out that for men's sports, they wouldn't...refer to their physical beauty or their physical looks, and that it should be the same way for women's athletics.<sup>116</sup>

After Gunderson filed an internal grievance against Ellis for his treatment of her around 1977, a resolution was reached that dissolved the title of assistant sports information director and instead created a men's sports information director and a women's sports information director.<sup>117</sup> While Gunderson considered applying for the newly titled position, she ultimately opted to accept a new position in the summer of 1978 outside of the sports information realm.

Throughout Gunderson's time as the assistant sports information director, coverage of women's athletics increased slightly. The November 1975 to February 1976 *Spectrum* issues yielded at least eight stories about women's athletics at NDSU. Not only did the appearance of articles increase, the amount of information also increased from previous years. The volleyball team received coverage in the first two months of the time frame, including pictures and a lengthy article about qualifying for a national tournament,<sup>118</sup> as well as a female track star.<sup>119</sup> Basketball began receiving coverage in January 1976 with a small write-up about the team's recent loss to UND,<sup>120</sup> with coverage varying between small write-ups accompanied by other recaps or multiple-paragraph articles.<sup>121</sup> NDSU hosting the Association for Intercollegiate

Athletics for Women (AIAW) regional championships received its own write-up in *The Spectrum*.<sup>122</sup>

While she could not definitively address the increase in coverage, Folstad explained that *The Forum* paid more attention to women's athletics once the Minn-Kota Conference was formalized, and both Folstad and Gunderson said Ed Kolpack, the sports editor at the time for *The Forum*, covered several women's athletic events.<sup>123</sup>

In the fall of 1978, NDSU hired its first official full-time women's sports information director, Lani Jacobsen.<sup>124</sup> The *Spectrum* article about Jacobsen's appointment alludes to Gunderson's inadequate role as the assistant SID by reporting the "job rose out of the needs of SU's developing women's sports program. In the past, there had only been an assistant to deal with the happenings of SU's women's sports."<sup>125</sup> The growing women's athletic program had also hired Lynn Dorn in 1977 to serve as the women's athletic director, a position she still holds today. Ray left the position as women's athletic director to complete work on her doctorate degree.<sup>126</sup> Originally hired to be the head coach for women's basketball, Dorn took over the administrative position when Ray decided not to return to NDSU, and was happy to do so.<sup>127</sup>

At that time, the Minn-Kota Conference was one of the first premier conferences for women within the nation, believe it or not. That history, I think, speaks volumes to the quality of experiences that the women got at the time. It was very definitely led by women for women, and so I think...the goals weren't to beat Mayville, to beat Moorhead State, to beat Bemidji; the goals included Minot State. It was a very different era of time where athletes were coming together for the sake of play. It was really on the forefront of women's sports at the time.<sup>128</sup>

Dorn and other athletic administrators fostered growth for the program immediately, though there was some resistance from the physical education department who had nurtured women's athletic for so long.

Beulah Gregoire, Elsie Raer...were tremendous educators and physical educator leaders for the athletics program. Perhaps they were a bit more conservative about the

role of intercollegiate athletics. We came in with a real aggressiveness that we wanted to establish a very successful athletic program. I think there were some rocky times where we probably bounced around a bit trying to find level ground for both sides to be very successful, and all the coaches did value the physical education because our background was in teaching. ....sure, there were bumpy times but they were just great people; they had a purpose, they had a cause and they believed in it.<sup>129</sup>

Despite the hesitation about intercollegiate athletics from the physical education department, women's athletics retained its close ties with the physical education department until the mid to late eighties when the women's athletics program split off into its own entity dedicated solely to intercollegiate athletics.<sup>130</sup>

Before that split occurred, other events happened throughout women's athletics that would leave lasting impressions. The women's athletic program was steadily increasing in success and exposure, due to the accomplishments of its more established teams like basketball and volleyball. The 1977-1978 women's basketball team played more games than any previous team and shared second place in the Minn-Kota Conference.<sup>131</sup>

The next year Dorn predicted great success for the women's athletic program in a *Spectrum* article: "This year should be one of continued growth and an increased level of competition in women's athletics. This is because of the new era in women's sports. Most of the freshmen have a lot more experience because they've played for three or four years in high school."<sup>132</sup> Additionally, the women's track team was slated to host the Minn-Kota Conference indoor and outdoor track meet, and the basketball team was scheduled to host the AIAW National Small College Basketball Tournament in March 1979;<sup>133</sup> the event marked the first time a national women's collegiate championship in any sport was held in North Dakota.<sup>134</sup> In recognition of the event, Gov. Arthur Link declared the week of the event "National Women's Basketball Week" in North Dakota and encouraged residents to attend the tournament to "watch the finest women's basketball in the United States."<sup>135</sup> Amy Ruley had recently joined the NDSU athletic staff as head coach of the women's basketball team and guided her team

through a successful season that brought a fourth-place finish in the first North Central Conference women's championship and a first state title, the first of many Ruley's teams earned during her tenure as head coach.<sup>136</sup>

Unfortunately for the Minn-Kota Conference, rapid growth and expansion in women's intercollegiate athletics at the state, regional, and national level and a new NIAW divisional structure to be implemented in 1980 forced conference officials to examine the feasibility of continuing the organization.<sup>137</sup> The difficult decision to disband the conference was made on April 11, 1979.

Since five of the eight schools indicated other league pursuits, the decision was made to officially disband the Minn-Kota Intercollegiate Sports Conference. The Athletic Directors felt that a fitting way to close our seven years of affiliation would be to have a banquet in honor of the conference and the prestige it has provided for Women's Sports...It's been a beautiful affiliation and one which we regret to see end, but it has served its purpose beautifully. It will now lead on to even better avenues of competition for all.<sup>138</sup>

Joan Hult, the former Concordia College instructor who played a pivotal role in the development of the conference, came back to Fargo from the University of Maryland to serve as guest speaker at the recognition banquet.<sup>139</sup> NDSU moved into the North Central Conference once the Minn-Kota Conference ceased to exist.

Throughout this time of progress in strength and visibility, Dorn recognized the contributions certain men's coaches made in advancing the women's program, like sharing recruiting letters and teaching the women's coaches to foster a climate of success within their teams.<sup>140</sup> Dorn also credited *The Spectrum* and more specifically Kolpack from *The Forum* with providing women's athletics with a good amount of coverage.

Ed Kolpack, for whatever reason, really became a champion for the women's program...I don't believe that Ed is given enough credit for what he did for us. He covered us, he gave us fair press, [and] he worked very hard on our behalf to make certain we were included in his newspaper stories...He just did such a good job of reporting the successes, and what he didn't do was use gender specific language – he

was very gender neutral. He really was a man ahead of his time...Ed Kolpack has not received the due credit he had in advancing our program.<sup>141</sup>

By the end of the 1970s a majority of colleges and universities opted for membership in the NCAA, so the AIAW decided to disband in 1982.<sup>142</sup> While many women's physical educators felt moving to the NCAA would diminish the integrity of women's athletics, Dorn disagreed.

Physical educators, really, at times, struggled with the notion of intercollegiate athletics...they weren't very attuned to women actually competing; they didn't see that as a value. They were concerned about the impact of the lack of sportsmanship, or the impact of cheating or the impact of corruption in women's sports if we were to follow the same model [as men's]...they were completely dedicated to the pedagogy of physical education...and we owe them a lot.<sup>143</sup>

The November 1980 to February 1981 *Forum* issues seemed to regress in coverage of women's athletics slightly, as fewer issues contained stories and instead published schedules or box scores of women's basketball games.<sup>144</sup> The one impressive feature of the issues examined within the time frame is that when a high school girls' basketball team won the state title, the story received top billing in the sports section; two other women's athletics articles were also included within the issue's sports pages.<sup>145</sup>

Even though regional coverage did not improve, campus coverage did. The November 1980 to February 1981 *Spectrum* issues contained the most articles about women's athletics of any time frame examined, with only two issues of the set not publishing an article about women's athletics. The coverage extended to not only volleyball and basketball, but gymnastics, cross country, flag football, and scholarships. The December 5, 1980, *Spectrum* front page included a photo from a women's basketball game with a jump that directed readers to the full story in the sports section.<sup>146</sup> The jump page included another picture and a full article about the game.<sup>147</sup> Eight articles within the time frame included full articles and at least



one photo.<sup>148</sup> The student newspaper also published an mid-season update on the women's basketball team with a feature on the head basketball coach, Amy Ruley.<sup>149</sup>

In 1982, Gregoire retired from NDSU after 25 years of teaching in the women's physical education department.<sup>150</sup> Gregoire joined the NDSU faculty in 1957 as chair of the department, and in 1973 she moved to full professor and coordinator of the physical education undergraduate curriculum.<sup>151</sup> An advocate for women's athletics, Gregoire coached women's tennis, supervised the renovation of the old fieldhouse and supported passage of Title IX.<sup>152</sup>

While the women's athletic program at NDSU can trace its humble beginnings to the physical education department, today it exists as an efficient, established program with a history of success. Ruley coached for nearly 30 years and led five basketball teams to national championships; she was inducted in the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 2004 and currently serves as the associate athletic director of development at NDSU.<sup>153</sup> NDSU athletics moved to Division I in 2004 and the women's teams quickly found success there as well, with the volleyball, soccer, and softball teams making appearances in national tournaments; the women's track and field team continues to send athletes to national tournaments as well. Fortunately, coverage of women's athletics exists in a larger capacity than ever before, with news broadcast in newspapers, on television, and on the Internet.

Today, Dorn can look back and examine why the battle between AIAW and NCAA occurred, but in her opinion, NDSU is better off being associated with the NCAA.

It was very, very contentious, but I disagree with what the battlefield was about. I think that if we wanted to grow and mature to really give women their due, then we had to go with opportunities that would be created at a much larger scale. You look at the likes of an Amy Ruley winning five national championships when we would have 6,700-7,000 people in our stands, we probably couldn't have done that with AIAW but we did it with the NCAA...AIAW and the NCAA is clearly a philosophical difference in the direction of the sport. That's where women really felt that there would be a high level of corruption into their game and their value system. The values, for them,

weren't the money, the value wasn't the exposure. Many of the pioneers had enough foresight to say 'let's ride the crest and see where this comes.' And today you've got the likes of Robin Roberts who started her career at ESPN and just had her jersey retired. You have Pat Head Summit who has a million dollar contract. The list goes on and on... Not to have been able to move in that direction would have been so *sad*. I suspect that some of us might be rolling over in our grave to think that we gave up physical education and the AIAW for a better day, but we really did. It really is a better day.<sup>154</sup>

Looking back at her time at NDSU, Gunderson can clearly see the contributions of other women's athletic pioneers and hopes her own role played a small part in founding the modern NDSU women's athletic program.

I never felt like I was a great athlete or really that good but certainly people that were achievers in sports like Collette and were there when the rubber met the road in terms of being coaches and knowing other sports, but we all have our own gifts and we provide in ways we can.<sup>155</sup>

Folstad has no reservations when talking about how athletics affected her life. After founding the modern women's athletic program at NDSU, she went on to a successful coaching career at Concordia and West Fargo High School that spanned almost 40 years. Women's athletics became her life. At the bottom of an undated letter to a fellow women's athletic advocate, Folstad scrawled:

I was truly a model introvert – no confidence, you name it. But let me cross the black line to the [basketball] court or the white chalk line in softball, and I became a truly confident person. Thank God for sport opportunities. I had a chance to become who I am today.<sup>156</sup>

Folstad cannot pinpoint how or why she became a pioneer for women's athletics, and she is okay with that.

I think I had such a passion... I just enjoyed it so much, I was just totally immersed in it. I believed so much in the value of lessons that these kids could learn from competition because it changed my whole life around, and I thought how lucky I was to have grown up in a family where my mother was an all-star basketball player and dad kept telling us stories, worked with us, and gave me these opportunities... I think that you're put on earth and without knowing it, you are an instrument to facilitate. I think back and I don't know how it all evolved... I don't know why I did what I did or how come I had such a passion... but each door that was opened seemed to be what it was supposed to be... Did I do this so one day I'd be sitting here with you? No. I think

people who do that never become very successful...I learned so much from [athletics] I think I wanted every kid in the country to have the same opportunity to learn about themselves. And it was *fun*. It was a super high...And why did it all happen? How did it all go together? It just all fit together. Why did I come along at this time in this culture at the time for women's sports?...Everything had to fall into place...I never wanted the boys to have less. I just thought we should have a chance. It was just something I loved to do.<sup>157</sup>

## University of North Dakota

**1950-1960.** At the end of the 1940s, one of UND's greatest athletes — Grace Osbourne Rhonemus — joined the physical education faculty.<sup>158</sup> In 1951, construction on a men's fieldhouse was completed and the building included a basketball court, swimming pool, running track, two smaller gymnasiums, classrooms, and a dance studio.<sup>159</sup>

“The women used the dance studio, the swimming pool, the gymnasiums, and the fieldhouse floor for teaching stations. Swimming, diving, and lifesaving were taught at the pool. Tumbling and apparatus were taught in the gymnastics room and basketball, volleyball, and badminton have been taught in the gymnasium. The fieldhouse floor has been used for track and field, golf, and softball. The women taught fencing in the fieldhouse concourse and in the dance studio. Modern, social, folk, and square dancing were taught in the dance studio. It is also used for slimnastics instruction.”<sup>160</sup>

With a new facility in which to practice and conduct classes, the physical education department expanded its offerings, teaching its first graduate course in 1952.<sup>161</sup> Two years later a trampoline was added to the gymnasium, so the department offered a new class to accommodate the new equipment.<sup>162</sup> In 1955, Dr. Phebe Scott joined the physical education department as the chairperson to develop the women's graduate program.<sup>163</sup> Scott did not stay long, and by the end of the 1950s, UND alumna Patricia Warcup was named director of women's physical education; Warcup enacted countless changes in the department that opened the door for a formal athletic department to emerge.<sup>164</sup>

Even with the changes to the physical education program, not a single article about women's athletics could be found in *The Dakota Student*. The *Dacotah* annuals also did not extensively cover women's athletics during the 1950s, with the most substantial write-up

occurring in the 1950 edition. It reported that female athletes mingled “in a decrepit Women’s Gym to exercise unused muscles” and “graceful are the dancers, daring are the girls who tumble and brave are the hardy who participate in field hockey battles.”<sup>165</sup> The page also featured a photo with an accompanying caption that read: “Robin Hood probably shot straighter but he didn’t look as attractive doing so as this trio of archers,” as well as information about the Women’s Recreation Association (WRA), known before 1949 as the Women’s Athletic Association, being “an organization of the hale and hearty, the wholesome and the energetic of the fair sex.”<sup>166</sup>

In the 1955-56 *Dakota Student* articles, the only information about women’s athletics pertained to a volleyball tournament and the WRA basketball tournament, though the stories were not within the sports pages but elsewhere in *The Dakota Student*.<sup>167</sup>

**1960-1970.** At UND, the only article published in *The Dakota Student* about women’s athletics from November 1960 to February 1961 reported on the WRA volleyball tournament;<sup>168</sup> even the articles about the success of the gymnastics team were about men, not women.<sup>169</sup> In yearbooks, coverage did not change much. In the 1964 *Dacotah*, an article about WRA activities reported that UND’s chapter hosted a statewide playday as the main event of the year, with women from colleges across the state participating.<sup>170</sup> The 1965 *Dacotah* went a step further in describing the statewide event as an “opportunity to participate in athletics and a chance to meet other girls,”<sup>171</sup> perpetuating the need for friendly, social competition that characterized women’s athletics at the time.

Regardless of how little the UND student newspaper or annuals covered women’s athletic activities, Warcup pressed on with the development of the program through her department and position as coordinator of women’s athletics. Warcup oversaw the combination of the men’s and women’s departments of physical education in 1965 to

emphasize efficiency of staff, facilities, and equipment; she also enacted an extramural program in 1964-1965 for women as “there had not been any organized, formal extramural program since the early 1920s.”<sup>172</sup> The yearbook staff recognized Warcup’s effort by explaining that the “WRA...expanded to extramural competition with other schools” and played different sports at different area colleges throughout the year.<sup>173</sup> In the extramural program, “individual and team sports were stressed,” and it “grew each successive year. It provided an excellent opportunity for the highly skilled girl to compete and the lesser skilled girl to learn.”<sup>174</sup>

The 1965-1966 season marked the first official women’s athletic budget when athletic director Leonard Marti approved a budget of \$1,000 for extramural expenses.<sup>175</sup> Volleyball was the first intercollegiate sport for women in 1965 and was coached by Patricia Mauch.<sup>176</sup> The next year, Warcup initiated an intercollegiate basketball team and coached it to an undefeated record. Field hockey was established at UND as an intercollegiate sport in 1966 and became a popular sport in the 1970s.<sup>177</sup> Other intercollegiate athletics included track and field, badminton, and gymnastics.<sup>178</sup>

Even though the first intercollegiate women’s sports teams did not experience outstanding success, the fact that intercollegiate teams existed was the important aspect.

[Warcup] had minimal success without the aid of scholarship assistance to attract top players; however, she should be remembered for the long hours she coached the players without regard to her own remuneration or the time involved. To her belongs the mantle of getting this popular program solidly established to where today [in 1994] it ranks among the best in NCAA Division II...Money was scarce and seasons were short, but the program was underway...It was a modest beginning for women’s athletics, bankrolled by \$1,000, but it got the program moving and it has been growing with success ever since.<sup>179</sup>

During the 1965-1966 time frame, women’s athletics received coverage in *The Dakota Student* due to columnist Kay Christianson, who wrote about the topic five different times. Her column was slated to appear “week after week with the sports angle from a woman’s point of

view.”<sup>180</sup> She wrote that girls “are finally getting our say, even on the sports page. There has been some rumor that Miss Mauch is trying to organize a varsity squad for girls to compete with other schools. More will appear on this subject in later issues.”<sup>181</sup> The same issue featured a brief write-up about the UND volleyball team capturing the championship volleyball trophy at the annual WRA Sports Day.<sup>182</sup> In the next issue, “Kay’s Kapers” appeared again, praising the efforts of the UND female athletes and that “last year saw the very mere beginnings of a long range program to promote extramural activities for women, according to Miss Mauch, advisor for extramurals. This year the program is being greatly extended through the Physical Education Department.”<sup>183</sup> Sadly, “Kay’s Kapers” did not appear again until January 1966, when it reported recent women’s basketball activity and that the coach of the traveling team, Miss (Patricia) Warcup was “optimistic that many of the area colleges will start traveling teams and the program will broaden into a better organized one.”<sup>184</sup> Her next two articles provided more updates about the women’s basketball team, as well as other athletic activities for women.<sup>185</sup> The last article of the time frame pertaining to women’s athletics speculated on whether the successful growth of the women’s extramural program at UND meant women wrestlers would emerge in the future.<sup>186</sup>

When women’s athletics were first established at UND, eligibility was not a pressing matter, but as the programs grew, so did the necessity for documented rules and policies to guide athletic activities. When women’s athletics became intercollegiate again in the mid-1960s, administrators outlined eligibility rules similar to a version used in 1945.<sup>187</sup> The regulations stipulated that athletes begin practicing three weeks before the first game, remained punctual for practices and games, and what an acceptable uniform consisted of;<sup>188</sup> additionally, female athletes could not wear shorts or pants, must travel together to competitions, and should “give

each game and each practice their very best,” leaving “the floor or field as friends of their competitors regardless of the outcome.”<sup>189</sup>

**1970-1980.** By the 1970's, women's athletics at UND was steadily growing, but coverage was not. From November 1970 to February 1971 *The Dakota Student* published one lone picture of a basketball practice with a caption explaining that the team had been competing for five years and had qualified for a national tournament in 1969 but could not participate because of insufficient funding;<sup>190</sup> the only other article mentioned the successful women's basketball team and that a male spectator acknowledged that “those girls play good basketball.”<sup>191</sup>

The passage of Title IX in 1972 prompted UND and many other universities to recognize women's athletics in more substantial ways; at UND, Marti and his successor, Carl Miller, achieved compliance by overseeing the conversion of specific areas in the fieldhouse to women's locker rooms and “making its training room accessible to women.”<sup>192</sup> Marti and Miller also found themselves at the center of a discrimination case because a 1972 *Dakota Student* article reported that four female students had filed a complaint against the UND athletic department about sex discrimination and presented it to the student senate. The four students contended that women should not have been required to enter the men's locker room to check out equipment, men should not take a woman's identification into the locker room when checking out equipment, that the women's locker room was often locked and unavailable to women, and that the swimming pool was not available to all students as advertised.<sup>193</sup> No other information about the complaint was available.

In 1973, Helen Smiley joined the physical education department faculty as coordinator of women's athletics, a sector overseen by the athletic director.<sup>194</sup> Smiley made great efforts to establish the women's athletic program on more solid footing, and, fortunately, the sports

information director, Lee Bohnet, helped increase awareness of the women's athletic program by disseminating information on and off campus; Smiley and the coaches often provided Bohnet with information, but he also wrote information himself.<sup>195</sup> Even with all of effort from administrators and the sports information office, a general awareness about women's athletics did not exist at UND during the early 1970s. Smiley commented that:

I don't think there was any negative feelings. I think people really didn't know and they didn't really care because women's athletics wasn't anywhere near the same level as men's athletics. It wasn't that they didn't care; it was that they didn't know to ask.<sup>196</sup>

One of the major hurdles Smiley and the women's athletic program faced in the early 1970s was a lack of funding. Nine years after intercollegiate athletics re-emerged at UND in 1964, the women's athletic program only received funding from the athletic budget.<sup>197</sup>

Familiar scenes at UND during athletic seasons are the women's basketball team piling into cars for a road trip and the volleyball team practicing two hours in a gym they share with recreational basketball players. With the increase in activities, however, there has not been an increase in financial support....The budget, said Athletic Director Leonard R. Marti 'is primarily for men's athletics' and will be unable to meet increasing financial demands of women's athletics.<sup>198</sup>

In 1973, the women's athletic program received \$2,800 from the \$480,950 UND athletic budget.<sup>199</sup> Administrators for both men's and women's athletics recognized that increasing funding for women's athletics translated to less money available to men's athletics, but that it was a necessary step toward equality and Title IX compliance.<sup>200</sup> Despite the challenges Smiley faced, she embraced them all as part of her job.

That was my job. That's what I worked for...that's all I did was work to develop...anything we were able to do in the way of development and growth of women's sports was totally exciting. It was hard work; we met and we met through association after association. We met through the AIAW; everywhere we went we worked on the development of women's sports. To me, it was exciting, demanding, challenging, but we knew that's where we wanted to be...These [were] talented young women who really had a desire to play in sports like their brothers were doing and they just needed the opportunity and the avenue. Their reaction was more and more women coming out and they trained and developed into athletes. They gained all the benefits of athletic competition.<sup>201</sup>



At the end of the 1972-1973 season, the women's basketball team found itself on the front page of *The Dakota Student* after beating regional rival Concordia in February and later secured the Minn-Kota Championship.<sup>202</sup> Regionally, the November and December 1975 *Grand Forks Herald* weekend issues yielded articles related to high school girls' basketball, and in January 1976, coverage of UND women's basketball expanded, though articles consistently appeared as small write-ups featuring a few paragraphs of information about recent games.<sup>203</sup> The articles were often located in the middle or near the bottom of page in the sports section. When the articles revolved around the Minn-Kota tournament, the write-up expanded to several paragraphs and often included photographs of players or action.<sup>204</sup>

*The Dakota Student* published at least eight articles about women's athletics from November 1975 to February 1976. An important article actually appeared in September 1975 and reported that Valbourg Oslund had been elected as the first woman to serve as president of the UND Athletic Board.<sup>205</sup> A November 1975 *Dakota Student* article by Dale McCabe reported the ongoing discussions between the NCAA (the governing body for men's collegiate athletics) and the AIAW (the governing body for women's collegiate athletics) about a possible merger.<sup>206</sup>

Smiley, who served as the women's athletic director at the time, said in the November 1975 article that "the AIAW still feels there are differences in the needs and philosophies between our organization and the NCAA."<sup>207</sup> She went on to explain that the AIAW was only four years old at the time (of publication) so the organization should be allowed to decide on its own what was right and wrong for its participants; she also said scholarships for female athletes would be beneficial, but the AIAW did not wish to follow in the NCAA's example because "the men have gotten into this deeper than they wanted. Recruiting has turned into a business."<sup>208</sup> The articles about women's basketball (a majority of which were written by Dale

McCabe) included a story that spanned multiple paragraphs and at least one picture of women's basketball action; coverage of the Minn-Kota Conference tournament received a full-page spread with three pictures.<sup>209</sup>

In 1975, longtime educator and women's athletic advocate, Grace Osborne Rhonemus, retired from teaching at UND. LaVernia Jorgensen issued a commemorative issue of the newsletter, "Pin Feathers," Rhonemus established for the women's physical education department and included many tributes to the accomplished educator.

It seems appropriate to revive an edition of "Pinfeathers" in Grace's honor...not only because she initiated the newsletter, but—more importantly—because *she* is the common bond among countless numbers who share memories of UND. When Grace Osborne, as an undergraduate at the University of North Dakota, was elected by her classmates as the "Most Athletic Woman" they were honoring her for her excellence in individual and team competitive events. The "Emerado Flash," as they affectionately titled her, set records then that still measure up to today's standards. Although they recognized her capabilities and leadership quality, perhaps only a few envisioned the contributions she would make in a life-time dedicated to the profession of Physical Education.<sup>210</sup>

In the fall of 1975, the UND women's athletic program achieved a major milestone when it offered scholarships to women in varsity intercollegiate sports.<sup>211</sup> Smiley was quoted in a *Dakota Student* article as explaining that women's athletics received \$4,000 for scholarships and would distribute the money all nine women's varsity sports.<sup>212</sup> At the time, men's athletics received \$160,000 in scholarship money.<sup>213</sup> Smiley also explained in the article that Minn-Kota schools were not allowed to actively recruit and that possibility of a women's North Central Conference would end UND's affiliation with the AIAW, which did not recognize incorporated men's and women's programs at the time.<sup>214</sup>

The steps the women's athletic program made in the early 1970s attracted the attention of those responsible for encapsulating yearly activities. The 1976-1977 *Dacotah* yearbook recognized that "although the women's sports number half as many as men's, their spirit and enthusiasm is great. They put forth a huge effort to bring pride to UND. Women athletes have

come a long way since the beginning of the women's lib movement and they will probably continue to increase their involvement in sports as years go by."<sup>215</sup>

During this time of growth and change in the UND women's athletic program, three athletes experienced firsthand what was happening within the program. Nancy Anderson Johnson, Margaret Peterson, and Connie Gebhardt Courtney were active, multi-sport athletes at different time periods at UND from 1969-1977.

Johnson attended UND from 1969-1973 and played basketball, volleyball, softball, and field hockey even though she had only competed in track at Valley City High School.<sup>216</sup> When she arrived in Grand Forks, Johnson found out about athletics through friends who were involved with sports and the experience was "interesting."<sup>217</sup> She recalled being allowed to practice and play in a separate gym than the men's athletic teams and could only get time in the main facility early in the morning or late at night because of conflicts with other athletic teams or intramural activities.<sup>218</sup> During basketball season, the team played games early Saturday morning because the gym was available then.<sup>219</sup>

When Johnson played for UND, the women's athletic program was run out of the physical education department with a small budget, though funding gradually increased as the program grew.<sup>220</sup>

[Men's athletics] had an athletic director and a bid budget. The fear was that the women were going to take money from the budget when this Title IX thing came in. There was a lot of talk about that and how it was maybe going to ruin the men's program.<sup>221</sup>

Throughout her athletic career, Johnson found *The Grand Forks Herald* and *The Dakota Student* sporadically covered women's athletic events. Johnson recalled specific instances when one of her athletic teams experienced distinct success or earned specific titles, and local media would report it; she recalled that *The Grand Forks Herald* did not often include pictures with articles, though *The Dakota Student* did more frequently.<sup>222</sup> When her teams did receive

coverage, Johnson said everyone was excited about it because they were all used to not being covered, and that the brief paragraph or box score was “better than nothing.”<sup>223</sup>

Shortly after Johnson arrived at UND, Margaret Peterson enrolled in 1972 and became active in field hockey, basketball, and track. Peterson had played intramural basketball and ran interscholastic track in high school, so she brought some experience with her.<sup>224</sup> Peterson recalled that she was one of the first female athletes to receive an athletic scholarship after it began offering them in 1975; Peterson received a stipend to play field hockey. Peterson opted to end her own basketball career when she recognized that scholarship money could be better used to bring in more talented players than she, and because she wanted to devote more time to field hockey.<sup>225</sup>

Looking back, Peterson appreciates that female athletes like herself were able to play three different sports throughout the year but that more specialization helped “bring women’s sports to the forefront.”<sup>226</sup> After playing as a premier field hockey athlete, Peterson took on the role of coach as she earned her master’s degree at UND; throughout all of her time as a UND athlete, Peterson recalled receiving very little press coverage from local media.

There was so little information that was being published. There were articles, eventually, in the student newspapers. I actually got to serve as a sports writer for the UND *Dakota Student* when I was there. Obviously, women’s sports got a little more coverage at that point. But we would really be frustrated. ...if there was coverage, it was usually buried on the third or fourth page of the sports [section]. Even when women’s basketball became much more successful than the men’s program, it didn’t matter because it was often hidden back on the second or third page of the sports page.<sup>227</sup>

Like Johnson and many other female athletes, Peterson rejoiced whenever a women’s sports team received coverage, no matter how minimal it often was.

People loved it. It was absolutely great. Just like any athlete, any person, you really like to be recognized for your accomplishments. I think it helped the team gel; I think it did a lot for upping the ability of players because once you start recognizing that you’re playing for an institution and you’re playing for more than just yourself, I think you start noticing that it’s important to be at a higher caliber. Also, it just put more recognition on the fact that we were playing.<sup>228</sup>

Because there was so little coverage of women's athletics, Peterson said most of the student body was not cognizant of who the UND female athletes were. She did not experience any negativity because of the ignorance, but Peterson was acutely aware of what other, more vocal advocates for women's athletics endured.

I do think there was definitely a bias against women who were kind of stepping forward and speaking out for women and women's sports. There was sort of discrimination if you weren't the pro-type female of the time where you were supposed to come to school, find a person to marry, and graduate and have kids. I think there was still that pressure on women to conform, especially in North Dakota. And I do think there was bias against women who were in sports... I think there were a lot of people who just assumed it was just a group of misfits who were more or less doing their own thing and weren't really mainstream... Patricia Warcup, LaVernia Jorgensen, Dee Watson – they were highly discriminated against, I think, because they spoke out. They knew about Title IX. They educated us as athletes. We actually signed a petition... to our athletic director, Carl Miller. We brought this petition to him that we wanted equal opportunity. Those women, in my view, were harassed and seen as trouble makers... They took a personal hit for that. I do think that I probably didn't notice the discrimination as much but I think that they probably did. I wish younger women now would realize how much time and energy those kinds of women had to put in to ensure people had the opportunities that they have today.<sup>229</sup>

Two years after Title IX was passed, Connie Gebhardt Courtney came to UND and knew the school offered some athletic opportunities for women. Even though the program did not offer athletic scholarships to female athletes when Courtney enrolled, she still played basketball, track, field hockey, and softball.<sup>230</sup> Even though her athletic teams did not receive much support from the student body, Courtney said she did not recognize the lack of support because she had nothing to compare it to.<sup>231</sup> She did recognize the lack of media coverage her athletic teams endured, especially considering that Courtney lettered in 11 seasons of varsity sports over four years of her life and has only a meager scrapbook filled with sporadic, brief articles.<sup>232</sup>

We didn't know any better. If we got headlines, that was a pretty big deal for us... It meant a lot because at that time I didn't think I was breaking ground or anything; I was just excited to have the opportunity to be a college athlete... I think we were just happy

for what we got because it was so new to us... We were just excited that it was covered... we were just happy to be there.<sup>233</sup>

The only specific coverage Courtney recalled was a feature *The Grand Forks Herald* wrote about her and her twin sister who also played basketball and ran track.<sup>234</sup>

As the women's athletic program funding grew, so did the opportunities available to athletes like Gebhardt. She had the distinction of being the first female athlete the women's athletic program flew to an athletic competition when she qualified for a regional track meet in Wichita, Kansas, but could not leave early because she had to take a final exam.<sup>235</sup> While the program supplied uniforms for the teams, extra amenities like shoes and other fringe benefits were not standard.<sup>236</sup>

By 1978, the women's athletic budget had grown to \$86,000 out of the \$687,000 total athletic budget; the budget covered 10 intercollegiate women's teams.<sup>237</sup> Athletic director Carl Miller stated in a *Dakota Student* article that the athletic program was committed to the advancement of women's athletics, while Smiley asserted the program had already made great strides and was in store for a bright future.<sup>238</sup> In the same issue, however, an article reported that Miller had recently held a closed-door meeting regarding grievances brought against the athletic department by many women active in athletics.<sup>239</sup>

Brought before Miller by an ad hoc committee, the charges ranged from inadequate funding to poor publicity of women's athletic events. The charges were in no way the 'internal problems' Miller claimed they were when he closed the meeting to a *Dakota Student* staff reporter. Either through active involvement in UND athletics or through University Fee support, the committee's list of concerns touched every student at UND, and Miller's ill-advised decision to close the meeting served only to hinder student understanding of the conflict between the athletic and the women... Miller's decision severely limited the potential exchange of information between students and those who must address the issues raised by the women's committee. It also left students in the dark on Miller's feelings about the changes.<sup>240</sup>

After the Minn-Kota Conference disbanded in 1979, the UND women's athletic program sought a new conference in which to compete. In 1980, the growing program

boasted a budget of \$150,000 and 12 varsity sports for women; the program also offered 12 full scholarships to volleyball, basketball, track and field hockey participants.<sup>241</sup> In September 1980, UND had not yet joined the North Central Conference but was considering the move.<sup>242</sup> After the AIAW disbanded in 1982 and UND joined the NCAA, field hockey was discontinued because the NCAA did not embrace it as a major sport for its participants; Peterson said she and other UND representatives phased out the field hockey program with dignity and respect.<sup>243</sup>

Coverage of UND women's basketball grew slightly in *The Grand Forks Herald* in the November 1980 to February 1981 weekend issues, with four articles<sup>244</sup> printed within the sports pages, as well as many box scores where more detailed articles were not present. The articles focused on game recaps and did not provide details about the women's athletic program.

From November 1980 to February 1981, *The Dakota Student* published a preview of the women's basketball season, a dozen articles (many with pictures), and box scores when a full article was not published.<sup>245</sup> What is interesting about the articles published during this time frame is the fact that the stories had diminished in size but overall coverage of women's basketball increased. Fewer pictures and smaller articles were published when compared to the previous set, but the amount of smaller articles or box scores of game results increased and appeared in almost every issue, reflecting the broader scope of sports coverage *The Dakota Student* provided.

During the next 30 years, the UND women's athletic program built a tradition of success. Its basketball team secured three national championships in the 1990s and has had only five head coaches since Dee Watson took over the team in 1974; the women's basketball team also earned the school's first Division I Great West Conference title in 2010. The

women's athletic program offers six intercollegiate sports and is currently in its third year of a four-year transition from Division II to Division I. In 2004 athletes moved from their previous home in the Hyslop Sports Center to the Betty Engelstad Sioux Center.<sup>246</sup>

In 1981, UND inducted its first women — Grace Osborne Rhonemus and Era Bell Thompson — into the Athletic Hall of Fame.<sup>247</sup> Three years later, longtime women's athletic advocate and recent retiree Patricia Warcup joined them.<sup>248</sup> In 1985, Smiley — who Connie Gebhardt Courtney described as a “woman ahead of her time” — left UND to lead the women's athletic program at Western Illinois, where she was recently inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame.<sup>249</sup> Looking back, Smiley said she did not realize how influential she was in developing women's athletics at UND.

You never really think that; you just get in there and do your job. You just hope for equality and equity but it doesn't come easy. And, it's just neat for the women because a lot of women now have no idea what we went through...it was a battle...When I go out and talk to people, and I still do at conferences and things, I say there is nothing more exciting for me than to turn on my television that to see women's sports at the level it is now because that's what I've worked my whole life for. My whole life. And it's beautiful.<sup>250</sup>

In 2002, Rhonemus died at the age of 96. An award given to the top UND female athlete is named for her. In 2009, Patricia Warcup also passed away. But their contributions and memories live on in the program on which each left such an indelible impression. In a speech given at the banquet for the July 2000 Sioux Rendezvous, Warcup recalled the humble beginnings of the UND women's athletic program with pride.

And so was born a program started on the funds squeezed from a laundry budget and from the pockets of coaches, with used equipment from the physical education program, by coaches who taught full-time and coached in their spare time, paid their own expenses, furnished their own cars and gas, for the women who made their own first uniforms, were so hungry for competition and so eager to succeed that they didn't mind 6:30 a.m. conditioning and 10 p.m. practices (Well, yes, they minded but did it anyway). It was those women athletes and coaches of the 1960's and 1970's who created and nurtured the UND Women's Athletic Program. They didn't hurdle the road blocks (and believe me they were many and tough) — they ran right through them.<sup>251</sup>



When reminiscing about their experiences, the UNID athletes interviewed attested to their own naiveté when it came to their role in the foundation of modern women's athletics. For Johnson, the motivation to compete and succeed came not from a desire to make history but instead, a simple desire to play.

We just loved competition and playing – that's what really motivated us... I think anybody that went through all that back then had to love to play or they just wouldn't have done it, wouldn't have put up with what we did. We were happy. We thought it was just great that we had a coach and a gym to play in.<sup>252</sup>

Courtney said she did not realize the gravity of her contribution until years later.

I just never really thought about it at the time. I just thought this was awesome that I got to do this. I guess I didn't really consider myself a pioneer until later, like 20 years later, I said 'Oh my gosh, we really did make a little bit of history there.' But you never really thought about it because it was what it was. A moment in time I guess.<sup>253</sup>

### **Minnesota State University Moorhead**

**1950-1960.** From November 1950 to February 1951, MSUM's student newspaper *The Western MiSTiC*, covered women's intramural basketball, in the "feminine style," according to one article, though the story was placed very low on the page.<sup>254</sup> Another article talked about the Dragonettes, a women's basketball squad that competed within the city and against the Bison.<sup>255</sup> The basketball ("female style," again according to the article) team received coverage again in February with a five-paragraph story at the top of the page about the last few games of the season and its upcoming tournament.<sup>256</sup>

Fortunately, thanks to scrapbooks created through the Women's Athletic Association, information about women's sports at MSUM has been preserved in orderly fashion. The earliest book cataloged articles beginning in 1955, though the newspaper from which the articles were taken was not specified for many items; it can be assumed the articles were extracted from the student newspaper or the regional newspaper. Even though a specific

source was not provided, the presence of so many articles is important to note. For example, the WAA was so active at MSUM in the 1950s that a 1955 *Western MiSTiC* article explained that participants would partake of an annual college playday where they could “engage in a full day of sport activities” as well as a celebratory banquet.<sup>257</sup>

The article also explained that each quarter the WAA selected activities and elected captains who were tasked with “teaching the skills and techniques involved in the activity.”<sup>258</sup> At the time, volleyball, aerial darts, outdoor tennis, and intramural softball were offered as spring athletics available to MSUM women.<sup>259</sup> By the end of 1955, the WAA had formulated plans to host its own sports day for high schools in the area, to be held in conjunction with the high school track meet MSUM hosted.<sup>260</sup> The end of the 1954-1955 academic year also brought more accolades to Jessie McKellar, the longtime women’s physical education instructor and WAA advisor, who was named the chairperson for the basketball officials committee in the Red River Valley.<sup>261</sup>

The numerous athletic activities at MSUM in the early part of the decade received coverage, because during the next set of issues from November 1955 to February 1956, *The Western MiSTiC* published seven articles about the WAA and intramural athletics, as well as a couple of pictures.<sup>262</sup> The articles about WAA activities contained several paragraphs of information about a variety of activities, and often provided information for how women could become involved with a particular activity or the WAA in general.<sup>263</sup> In a rare showing, a January 1956 *Western MiSTiC* article featured a headline that contained a women’s basketball player’s name and accomplishment in a recent victory; the article described the game and upcoming contests as well.<sup>264</sup>

By 1956, the WAA added speedball to its list of available activities and organized activities for participants and non-participants like soda pop parties and fun nights; the

organization offered volleyball, tumbling, trampoline, and archery in the fall while basketball was the main activity during the winter quarter.<sup>265</sup> WAA members and their advisor again attended the annual college playday and hosted its high school sports day in an effort to provide high school female athletes with “the opportunity for interscholastic competition, an opportunity to become acquainted through sports with other high school girls and an opportunity to become acquainted with our campus. This type of activity also gave college women, who were interested, an “opportunity to gain experience in organizing sports events for girls.”<sup>266</sup>

In 1957 in true playday tradition, the WAA offered lunch to Michigan and Canadian basketball teams who had competed in Moorhead and could not return home until the next day;<sup>267</sup> that year, MSUM also allowed the WAA to take a bus to its annual playday.<sup>268</sup> In early spring 1957, longtime women’s physical education instructor and women’s athletic advocate Flora Frick announced her retirement; however, Frick died in April before the school year ended.<sup>269</sup> Classes were dismissed the day of her funeral to allow students, faculty, and staff to attend the event; Frick had worked for MSUM for 38 years at the time of her death.<sup>270</sup>

A tribute to Frick read: The years take us all, but they never take all of us. This can be said of only a few people and Miss Frick is one of those few. Some will measure her service to others in terms of years, but we prefer to measure all that was Flora in terms of deeds done. This leaves unmeasured the many accomplishments that this great teacher brought to all who passed. Indeed, we are all richer because Flora Frick lived, loved, and labored.<sup>271</sup>

In honor of its longtime supporter, the WAA established an award in Frick’s honor “to be given to the outstanding senior or seniors who have contributed time and effort to building the organization.”<sup>272</sup> The end of the 1950s saw the Women’s Athletic Association renamed the Women’s Recreation Association (which had also happened at NDSU) to recognize the broad spectrum of activities it offered women beyond sports and games,<sup>273</sup> and the creation of a tri-college sports agreement between NDSU, Concordia, and MSUM.<sup>274</sup>

**1960-1970.** While *The Spectrum* rarely, if ever, covered women's athletics at NDSU and Kay Christianson wrote about UND female athletes, *The Western MISTIC* published three articles in the November and December 1960 issues, though the January and February 1961 issues were devoid of articles about women's athletics. One article reported that MSC would host the annual WRA sports day for volleyball, with WRA chapters from Concordia, NDSU, and Concordia attending.<sup>275</sup> Another article reported the WRA would sponsor a volleyball clinic,<sup>276</sup> while the only article about women's basketball appeared in a December issue and provided results of a recent game.<sup>277</sup>

Other important events at MSUM during this time occurred but did not receive coverage in the student newspaper. In 1960, Alex Nemzek Hall was unveiled as the MSUM "athletic showplace."<sup>278</sup> Two years later MSUM authorized the renaming of the women's physical education building to Flora Frick Hall.<sup>279</sup> Since the creation of the tri-college sports agreement in 1959, the MSUM WRA chapter added hosting tri-college sports nights to its list of activities, which already included state playdays, women's intramural activities, and high school playdays for its approximately 25 active members.<sup>280</sup> In 1964, Jessie McKellar, another longtime advocate for women's athletics at MSUM, retired from teaching after a 40-year career with the health, physical education and recreation department at Moorhead State.<sup>281</sup>

She came to Moorhead in 1924 to join Miss Flora Frick as the only other woman in the department. . . . Miss Frick was the head of the department and the two women—short, peppery Miss Frick and tall, gracious Miss McKellar—worked together until 1957 when Miss Frick died shortly before she was to retire.<sup>282</sup>

In 1959, McKellar had taken the reins as head of the department and added another staff member to the roster; she was also noted for "the cooperation she has given in working with the women in the physical education departments of Concordia College and NDSU so that a rapport has been established among the women students of the two Moorhead colleges

and NDSU to the extent that several cooperative events are held each year.”<sup>283</sup> After McKellar’s departure, Mary Montgomery took over the role of nurturing women’s athletics.<sup>284</sup>

In the November 1965 to February 1966 *Western MiSTiC* issues, a lone December article reported the WRA’s intention to offer gymnastics for women and a solitary February article provided the names of the newest WRA members.<sup>285</sup> Otherwise, no articles about women’s athletics were found, despite the fact that during the 1965-1966 academic year, the tri-college sports agreement extended beyond friendly social events to real competitive intercollegiate activities when the three area colleges and UND organized basketball teams, marking MSUM’s first formal women’s basketball team.<sup>286</sup>

**1970-1980.** By 1970, the student newspaper was on hiatus so *The Moorhead Independent News* was printed in its stead by students off campus.<sup>287</sup> Two articles from the new newspaper about women’s athletics appeared: one in November about the WRA “fun night” for participants and another in February 1971 about MSC hosting the regional basketball tournament.<sup>288</sup> The researcher would be remiss not to mention that men’s sports did not garner much coverage in *The Moorhead Independent News* during this time frame either, as the focus of most of the stories within the newspaper revolved around political and social issues, such as racism, equality, and university cheating.

Even though women’s athletics was not deemed an important enough issue for the new student newspaper to cover, MSUM was one of the original schools included in the Minn-Kota Conference, and the school also enlisted its teams as members of the Minnesota Women’s Intercollegiate Athletic Association so they could participate in state tournaments for volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, swimming, softball, and track and field;<sup>289</sup> Moorhead State was represented in all but swimming and was slated to host the state basketball tournament in 1974.<sup>290</sup>

In 1972, an on-campus student newspaper, *The Moorhead State Advocate*, was reinstated and published six articles about women's rights and women's basketball. Jackie Grove wrote a February 1972 article detailing the history of the women's basketball team at MSC and providing the rules of the game. She wrote:

Basketball began as an outgrowth of the tri-college Women's Recreation Associations during the 1959-60 school year under the leadership of WRA advisors and the WRA presidents: Janet Champlin, from Dent, Minn. for MSC; Sonja Korup, from Hillsboro, N.D. for Concordia College; and Mrs. Collette Folstad, from Buffalo, N.D., for North Dakota State University. Concordia and NDSU were the only opponents for MSC at that time. The competition now includes the University of North Dakota, Bemidji State, Mayville State, and Valley City State in conference play. The coaching responsibilities for the teams were originally assumed by the WRA advisors who were Miss Mary Montgomery for MSC, Miss Joan Hult for Concordia, and Miss Elsie Raer for NDSU.<sup>291</sup>

An October 1972 *Advocate* article touted the headline "Women's athletic department hosts intramural convention," though the article does not refer to any department other than the women's physical education department, indicating that people referred to them synonymously.<sup>292</sup>

The topic of women's rights surfaced early in 1972 in *The Advocate*, as a January 1972 article reported the creation of an "(MSUM) Subcommittee on the Status of Women;"<sup>293</sup> however, a May 1972 article blasted the school for not following through on its promise to "investigate women's rights and discrimination" on campus.<sup>294</sup> Three MSUM faculty members were named to the statewide commission on the status of women, and the chairperson of that organization, Bella Kranz, organized the subcommittee at MSUM.<sup>295</sup> When the commission members realized they had no actual power, a handful resigned, including Kranz, who said in the article that she felt she had been discriminated against while seeking a new job at the university and did not want to "represent the college who was involved in examining the status of women while its own representative in the matter was being treated insensitively."<sup>296</sup> The article's author also explained that information was collected during Phase I but that the report

of findings was not published for the campus community as promised; a questionnaire was distributed during Phase II but was also not published.<sup>297</sup> The article ended “to this date, people to replace Ms. Kranz and Ms. Brustad have not been named. The final report to the Chancellor is due the end of this month.”<sup>298</sup>

The passing of Title IX initiated small changes in the MSU<sup>1</sup>M women’s athletic program, though it took several years for the changes to occur. Despite slow-moving progress, women’s athletic soldiered on to create opportunities for female athletes on campus.

Longtime MSUM sports information director Larry Scott chronicled athletics at MSUM, noting about women’s athletics that “In the beginning, hardly anyone noticed. When the Title IX decree took effect in 1972, women were at last welcomed to join the society of intercollegiate athletics. It should have been a time of great rejoicing, but with so much to do and so little startup time, the women at Moorhead State College were just grateful to hit the field.”<sup>299</sup>

During the first four years of the 1970s, Diane Krogh was a student-athlete at MSUM. Having played sports in junior high and high school on the east coast, Krogh wrote a letter to Moorhead State after her family relocated to the area to inquire whether the school offered scholarships for female athletes; Krogh never got a response.<sup>300</sup>

She played field hockey throughout her collegiate career, badminton before it was dropped due to lack of interest, and basketball until she realized that playing the 6-on-6 Minnesota style was too difficult to adjust to; she became the basketball team manager instead.<sup>301</sup> During her time as an athlete, Krogh said she and her teammates did not experience much attention from the campus or general public.

We just did our thing. We knew we weren’t going to be heroes on campus. We just wanted to do our thing. . . We played because we got joy out of playing. We never played because we thought we needed an audience. There were many years that we didn’t even charge admission.<sup>302</sup>

Krogh recalled that most of the attendees for games were parents who lived in the area or friends of the players, though the crowd was never substantial.<sup>303</sup> During that time, the

women's teams played in small, old gyms, not the main athletic facilities at area schools like NDSU and UND.<sup>304</sup> In addition to playing and managing different athletic teams, Krogh also worked in the sports information office on a work-study arrangement. Even though she was an athlete in 1972, Krogh said Title IX did not affect her much.

Being a physical education major and interested in sports, sports was my life so we talked about it in classes. Probably just became of me transitioning into the sports administration area, I don't feel we were benefitted or hurt by it.<sup>305</sup>

After Krogh graduated in 1975, she convinced administrators to hire her as the women's sports information director, and she began disseminating information about the MSUM women's athletic teams to local news organizations to increase coverage.<sup>306</sup> Krogh said she did what she was able, but little to no funding meant the women's athletic program could not advertise much or pay for special posters announcing events that exist today.<sup>307</sup>

In the old days, we sent out press releases to hometown newspapers about the athlete, so we tried to do our best to get the word out to the hometown newspaper. We did as much as we could with a zero-line budget.<sup>308</sup>

Even though Krogh sent information relentlessly to news organizations, they rarely included in the information in a publication or on a broadcast unless a record was broken or a player did something fantastic.<sup>309</sup>

Apparently, many records were being broken or players were doing fantastic things, because from November 1975 to February 1976, *The Advocate* broadened its scope of coverage for women's athletics to encompass women's field hockey, volleyball, gymnastics, and basketball. Each of the weekly issues examined during this time frame contained at least one article pertaining to women's athletics, and some contained more than one story. When the MSUM women's basketball team took second place in a Canadian tournament, the article included more than 10 paragraphs of information and was placed at the top of the page in the sports section (though not on the first page of the sports section).<sup>310</sup> Another issue reported



the team's participation in an NDSU tournament while another women's basketball update received prime placement at the top of the first page of the sports section.<sup>311</sup> An article appearing in the next week's issue received prime placement again and included a photo of the women's basketball action.<sup>312</sup> The team continued to receive weekly coverage, especially when it hosted the Minnesota AIAW tournament.<sup>313</sup>

A specific player who often did fantastic things for MSUM was Lisa Olsgaard Erickson, who had played high school sports at Moorhead High School under women's athletics pioneer Paula Bauck. After experiencing success in high school track, Erickson went to MSUM in 1974 to continue her career even though she did not receive an athletic scholarship.<sup>314</sup> Congress had passed Title IX two years before Erickson arrived on campus, and she said that many women's sports received new uniforms and better practice times in the new gym as a result; however, several newspapers predicted the demise of men's sports and referred to Title IX legislation as "horrible."<sup>315</sup> Erickson acknowledged that "Title IX has some faults but I appreciate what it has done."<sup>316</sup>

While Erickson competed for MSUM, the student newspaper covered her and other women's sports quite frequently, and Erickson recalled being interviewed for specific stories, possibly because *The Advocate* employed a female student as sports editor;<sup>317</sup> other area newspapers provided coverage less frequently, but still covered some events nonetheless.<sup>318</sup> After graduating from MSUM, Erickson worked for NDSU as an athletic trainer for the next 18 years, watching as the women's athletic program there and at other area universities grew bigger and better than what she had experienced. Looking back on her experiences as a student-athlete in the emerging MSUM women's athletic program, Erickson does not consider herself a trailblazer.

I never once thought I am this pioneer. I just thought, 'How cool, I get to do something I like doing.' I thought someone else broke the ground for me to do it...I

just did my thing; I was not aware of things around me... I just believe that... other people were making these landmark advances that allowed me to do my thing. I really wanted to do well but you look back and you go, "Wow, I guess I was a little ahead of the time."<sup>319</sup>

Two other student-athletes ahead of the curve at MSUM were Karin Schumacher and Mary Ann Donnay. Schumacher played basketball and volleyball and majored in physical education (she would later add math education), explaining that at the time, most of the female athletes were physical education majors.<sup>320</sup> Because of the close-knit atmosphere within women's athletics, teams worked hard to support each other because attendees were in short supply; for example, the volleyball team often showed up at field hockey games and vice versa.<sup>321</sup> She also recalled the basketball teams from MSUM, NDSU, and Concordia traveling together or having pizza parties together.<sup>322</sup>

At the time, women's athletics was housed within the confines of the physical education department while men's athletics was housed separately, in its own department.<sup>323</sup> Facilities were also separated.

There was a back gym for physical education. The women's gym was separate; that's where games and practices were played. We had no worries about sharing, but the bad part is we didn't get the prime area. No one came to watch us play... the men never really had a reason to be envious; we were out of their way. They weren't hindered by anything we were doing.<sup>324</sup>

Schumacher recalled Scott's efforts in the sports information office, as well as the other employees who worked to publicize the events of the women's athletic program, but coverage was still minimal. A tight budget also meant different sports shared uniforms but some money was available to pay for meals when a team traveled; Schumacher also mentioned a small weight room was available to athletes but that women were not usually comfortable working out in there.<sup>325</sup> Fortunately, Schumacher did not experience negativity because she was associated with athletics.

I don't know if I saw the bitterness side. They [Donella Palmer, Margaret Moore, Viola Powell, Judy Bowers] were seeing more of it. They were around it for longer and fighting for it longer. I noticed it more when I started coaching in the late '70s than as a player.<sup>326</sup>

Another player from that time period, Donnay, became involved with athletics because some of her friends talked her into going out; there was no recruiting or scholarships for female athletes at the time.<sup>327</sup> Despite the shortcomings of the program, Donnay played basketball, volleyball, and ran track for MSUM. Donnay agreed with Erickson when she recalled that the student newspaper covered many women's athletic activities but if *The Forum* included information, it was placed toward the back of the sports section and included only a brief write-up.<sup>328</sup>

While the program lacked ample funding, it received support from the university president's wife, Donnay recalled, though that fact did not bring more attendees to events.<sup>329</sup> Different sets of uniforms were not available to different teams, and often the manager or a work-study student would be tasked with laundering them after a competition; also, meager funding was available for meals on the road.<sup>330</sup>

During her senior year, MSUM finally offered scholarships to female student-athletes but Donnay preferred that they went to younger players. Additionally, Donnay recognized that the coaches who led her teams were not always the most knowledgeable women—they were all physical education instructors—but they were there for the right reason. “They wanted to give us the opportunity to play.”<sup>331</sup>

Donnay appreciated that she had the opportunity to play three sports in college instead of having to specialize in just one, like student-athletes do now.

It was so new and so exciting. I just wanted to go from sport to sport because every sport taught you something different and it was a new group of friends. It was a great way to travel and meet new people. I'm so glad I was born when I was because I had the opportunity to do three sports in college. Each sport was so unique and taught me so many things.<sup>332</sup>

Both Schumacher and Donnay continued their athletic careers after graduating from MSUM albeit in a different capacity; Schumacher is a math teacher and coach at Moorhead High School and Donnay is the physical education coordinator at Discovery Elementary in Fargo. Their contributions to the women's athletic program have been far from forgotten.

Donnay and Schumacher were on the ground floor of the Dragon program and reached a high level of success in a variety of sports. Both were later enshrined in the Dragon Hall of Fame, and remain today among the certified legends of women's sports at Moorhead State.<sup>333</sup>

Schumacher has never considered herself a pioneer of women's athletics; she believes women like Moore, Bowers, and Palmer were the true trailblazers.

They put in a lot of time up there and...they were great pioneers. They were the reason we got opportunities...and I have nothing but [gratitude] for the time they put in and opportunities they fought for.<sup>334</sup>

In the latter part of the 1970s, a track program had begun building itself, as well as a softball program. In 1976, the women's athletic department received \$10,000 from student activity fees, a \$2,000 increase from the previous year.<sup>335</sup> The program also received more than \$35,000 from the state through "legislative appropriation aimed at bringing the funding of women's intercollegiate athletics close to a par with that of the men's program."<sup>336</sup> After accounting for other appropriations, the women's athletic program received just over \$49,000 for the year, while the men's program received just over \$51,000, bringing MSUM much closer to Title IX compliance.<sup>337</sup> After the Minn-Kota Conference dissolved in 1979, MSUM joined the Northern Sun Conference for athletic competition.<sup>338</sup>

At the end of the 1970s, MSUM had taken major steps to bring the university in compliance with Title IX by hiring Joan Hult as a consultant to assess the compliance issues and make recommendations about necessary changes.<sup>339</sup> The changes included more equitable funding, better pay for female coaches, a more structured organization, and equal scholarship

funds.<sup>340</sup> Another important compliance issue surfaced in the November 1980 to February 1981 *Advocate* issues, even though most did not contain as many articles about women's athletics as the previous issues. The only 1975-1976 article appearing in the two fall months was published in December; columnist Bob Roth reported that a:

12-member sports council to support women's athletics at MSU has been appointed by Roland Dille, MSU president. The council was created to help provide recognition and community support for women athletes and develop a stable scholarship base for them. A record 200 women this year are competing in intercollegiate sports here, four times as many as a decade ago. . . . The council will work in cooperation with the MSU Foundation, a non-profit corporation primarily aimed at raising scholarship money for students.<sup>341</sup>

*The Advocate* continued to examine compliance issues by publishing an article in January 1981 about Title IX compliance in a series about the university athletic budget; the article detailed the discrepancies in funding men's and women's athletics and how the university was attempting to bring the budget within Title IX compliance rules.<sup>342</sup> The federal law required colleges and universities that received federal funding had to comply with the equity funding requirements by July 1978, a deadline MSUM had missed.<sup>343</sup>

In funding, (MSUM) is edging closer to equity, but still isn't right on target. Equity is measured by comparing the ratio of men and women athletes to the ration of the total budget given to each sex. Male athletes made up 63 percent of (MSUM's) sports participants last year, women 37 percent. Men got 69 percent of the money going to intercollegiate athletics and women got 31 percent.<sup>344</sup>

The article went on to report that critics believed funding based on number of participants unfairly reduced the budget of more expensive sports; if MSUM was discovered to be violating Title IX, federal funding could be revoked.<sup>345</sup> A February 1981 article reported a new basketball recruit was playing well for the improving team.<sup>346</sup>

In 1982, Jessie McKellar became the first woman inducted into the Dragon Hall of Fame for her contribution to women's athletics.<sup>347</sup>

As one of two in the department's early years, McKellar taught the gamut of physical education classes, from ballroom dance (called modern dance then) and basketball to golf and health. For 33 of her 40 years here she was advisor to the Women's Recreation Association, a student group she founded. "She was always a lady," [Phyllis Melvey recalls. "Even in her tennis and gym shorts. Tall and graceful, extremely modest and always a high caliber professional. I remember her often saying, 'Don't call it phy ed or P.E. It's physical education.' Keeping the body in good physical condition was very serious to her."<sup>348</sup>

In the next 30 years, the MSUM women's athletic program fostered successful teams in basketball, volleyball, track and cross country. Many different teams and individual athletes earned regional and national titles.<sup>349</sup> Soccer became an official varsity sport in 1995, and the team quickly found success; throughout the 1990s, many basketball players also earned All-American honors, while many former athletes were inducted into the hall of fame.<sup>350</sup> Success became more elusive when the conference expanded the number of teams included and the NCAA Division II landscape became stronger; however, MSUM's program sought optimism in a renovation of Alex Nemzek Hall and the leadership of a new athletic director in 2007.<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Women's Athletics," *Bison*, 1950, 268.

<sup>2</sup> "WAA," *Bison*, 1952, 198.

<sup>3</sup> "WAA," *Bison*, 1956, 194; "Women's Athletic Association," *Bison* annual, 1958, 228; "Women's Athletic Association," *Bison*, 1959, 232.

<sup>4</sup> "Bismarck Men, Women Teams Win State Bowling Crowns," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Dec. 11, 1950, 17.

<sup>5</sup> "NDAC Unveils "New" Cage Court Tonight," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Dec. 15, 1950, 11.

<sup>6</sup> "Moorhead Woman Tops Pin Event," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Nov. 26, 1955, 7; "Family Affair," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Dec. 11, 1955, D-3; "Babe May Quit Golf In Fight Against Cancer," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Dec. 25, 1955, 23; "Chicago Youth Wins Four Girls' Tennis Crowns," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Dec. 31, 1955, 6; "Babe Zaharias Released From Galveston Hospital," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Jan. 29, 1956, D3.

<sup>7</sup> "33 Teams Enter Women's Pin Meet," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Nov. 18, 1950, 10; "Minnesota Pin Meet Ends Today," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Nov. 26, 1950, 19.

<sup>8</sup> "Zaharias, Bauer share golf lead," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Jan. 6, 1951, 9; "Babe Leads Marlene by 4 Strokes," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Jan. 7, 1951, 22; "Babe Awaits Treatment For Pains," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Dec. 4, 1955, 26; "Girls appear on mat show," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Dec. 4, 1955, 27; "Girls on mat card Jan. 24<sup>th</sup>," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Jan. 14, 1951, 19.

<sup>9</sup> "Bathgate wins girls' tourney," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Feb. 24, 1951, 8; "Starkweather wins girls district title," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Feb. 12, 1956, 20; "Logan center wins girls tournament," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Feb. 19, 1956, 20.

<sup>10</sup> "Women Beat Men in Match," *The Spectrum*, Dec. 1, 1950, 5.

<sup>11</sup> "Fems Volley Ball Ends; Basketball Next on Schedule," *The Spectrum*, Dec. 1, 1950, 7.

<sup>12</sup> "WAA Organizes Basketball Teams," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 12, 1951, 7.

<sup>13</sup> "NDAC Hosts Valley Girl Cage Clinic," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 19, 1951, 6.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> "Reporter Comes Up with Sound Advice on I-M Squabble," *The Spectrum*, Nov. 4, 1955, 6.

<sup>16</sup> "Athletic Association Names Haga Prexy; Eleven Initiated," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 12, 1956, 7.

<sup>17</sup> "IM Volleyball Opens; Basketball Holds Main Interest," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 3, 1956, 7.

<sup>18</sup> "Blue Key Sets Athletic Banquet Tuesday," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 24, 1956, 2.

<sup>19</sup> Collette Folstad, interview with researcher, Folstad home, Jan. 28, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Jennifer Gayvert, "Women athletes fight for equality," *The Forum*, Jan. 3, 1999. Accessed March 10, 2010 <http://legacy.inforum.com/specials/century/jan3/week40.html>.

<sup>21</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher. Folstad also explained that in 1957 there weren't enough interested girls to form a basketball, so the school dropped the basketball program.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Gayvert, "Women athletes fight for equality."

<sup>24</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.

<sup>25</sup> "Sports program is started by girls of three colleges," *The Sunday Forum*, Nov. 15, 1959.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Danielle Teigen, "Collette Folstad: A Destiny Fulfilled," *Bison Illustrated*, April 2011, 19.

<sup>28</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.

<sup>29</sup> "Wilma Rudolph Resolves to Extend Victory String," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Jan. 15,

1961, D3; "Wilma Rudolph Breaks Record," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Jan. 22, 1961, D1;

"Wilma Rudolph Named Female Athlete of the Year," *the Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Jan. 29, 1961, D1.

<sup>30</sup> "Hard Worker," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Dec. 11, 1960, D1; "Royalty," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Feb. 12, 1961, D1; "All Champions," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Dec. 4, 1960, D1; "Wondering," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Feb. 26, 1961, D1.

<sup>31</sup> *The Grand Forks Herald*, Dec. 4, 1960; Jan. 8, 1961.

<sup>32</sup> "Wilma Rudolph named athlete of the year," *The Grand Forks Herald*, Jan. 29, 1961.

<sup>33</sup> "WRA hosts college playday, eight schools to attend," *The Spectrum*, Nov. 3, 1961, 4.

<sup>34</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.

<sup>35</sup> Helen Gunderson, "Athletics for women at North Dakota State University," Nov. 1, 1976, 2.

<sup>36</sup> "SU Student Bowlers Take Part in Tourney," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 24, 1961, 10.

<sup>37</sup> "Volleyball moves Into Final Week," *The Spectrum*, Nov. 10, 1965, 9; "PE Club honored," *The Spectrum*,

Nov. 17, 1965, 10; "Co-eds Prepare for Riflery Competition," *The Spectrum*, Nov. 24, 1965, 8; "Women's Rifle Team Wins Two," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 12, 1966, 6.

<sup>38</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid; "Women's Athletic Association," *Bison annual*, 1960, 226; "Women's Recreation Association," *Bison annual*, 1961, 246.

<sup>40</sup> "Bowling league ends in upset," *The Spectrum*, March 24, 1961; "200 participants in bowling tourney," *The Spectrum*, May 12, 1961; "Coed bowlers form league," *The Spectrum*, March 3, 1966, 6.

<sup>41</sup> The team actually played four games that year because NDSU competed against Moorhead State twice. Teigen, "A Destiny."

<sup>42</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.

<sup>43</sup> Teigen, "A Destiny."

<sup>44</sup> Gayvert, "Women athletes fight for equality."

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Teigen, "A Destiny."

<sup>47</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.

<sup>48</sup> Gayvert, "Women athletes fight for equality."

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> "WRA Promotes Tri-College Relations. P.E. Club Travels Out-of-State," *Bison annual*, 1969, 162.

<sup>54</sup> "Bison women beat Cobbers," *The Spectrum*, 1968, n.p.; "NDSU women cagers win," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 3, 1969, n.p.; "NDSU girls beat Valley City," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 16, 1969, n.p.; "Cobber women edge NDSU 40-38," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 17, 1969, n.p.; "Bison girls top MSC," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 19, 1969, n.p.

- <sup>55</sup> "Women's team loses first game." Publication unknown.
- <sup>56</sup> Carolyn Schmidt was inducted in the Bison Athletic Hall of Fame in 1993.
- <sup>57</sup> Carolyn Schmidt, "Bison girls captured Valley City State," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 23, 1969, 15; Carolyn Schmidt, "Women's Team Wins," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 13, 1969, 16.
- <sup>58</sup> Carolyn Schmidt, "Women easy victors," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 20, 1969, 15.
- <sup>59</sup> Collette Folstad, "NDSU Women's Basketball: The beginning of the modern era (1965-1969), 4.
- <sup>60</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>61</sup> Carol Eckman is often referred to as the "Mother of National Collegiate Championships" for establishing the first national basketball tournament for women. Sixteen teams participated in the tournament, which provided an impetus for the creation of the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW). Eckman was inducted in the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in 1999. Retrieved from <http://www.wbhof.com/eckman.html> (accessed March 12, 2011).
- <sup>62</sup> Letter from Collette Folstad to Miss Carol Eckman, March 26, 1969.
- <sup>63</sup> Letter from Carol Eckman to Collette Folstad, undated.
- <sup>64</sup> The formation of the CIAW created a unified governing body for women's athletics at the college level, a task previously undertaken by no one. High school athletes could rely on state associations to oversee athletic programs but colleges had lacked the united organization that CIAW became. "DGWS National Intercollegiate Athletic Championships for Women," *Journal of Health, Physical Education, Recreation*, February 1969, 24.
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid
- <sup>66</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher; Carolyn Schmidt, "Bison girls captured Valley City State," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 23, 1969, 15.
- <sup>67</sup> "25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's athletics profiles: Joan Hult, Concordia, "The Official Website of Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference," Jan. 22, 2008, retrieved from <http://www.miac-online.org/news/2008/1/22/hult25thanniversary.aspx> (accessed March 12, 2011).
- <sup>68</sup> Betsy McDowell and Mary Montgomery, "History of Minn-Kota Conference," circa 1972, 1.
- <sup>69</sup> "Minn-Kota Conference," Sports Information Office Records, 1931-1994, Box 35, 44.
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- <sup>72</sup> Paige Laskey, "SU Places First in Women's Volleyball Tournament," *The Spectrum*, Dec. 8, 1970, 6.
- <sup>73</sup> Paige Laskey, "Women's Sports Are Not Dead at NDSU," *The Spectrum*, Nov. 10, 1970, 7.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>75</sup> "Women's athletic program in building stages," *Bison* annual, 1970-1971, 124.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>77</sup> Gunderson, "Athletics for women at North Dakota State University," 4.
- <sup>78</sup> Lucy Maluski, "Women's Lib," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 2, 1971, 3.
- <sup>79</sup> McDowell and Montgomery, "History of Minn-Kota Conference," 1.
- <sup>80</sup> Patricia Warcup, email correspondence to Kathleen Ridder, May 21, 2000, 3.
- <sup>81</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>82</sup> Carole Oglesby, "April 22 Speech," Inauguration of Minn-Kota Conference," April 22, 1972., 1, 6.
- <sup>83</sup> "The Living Law," Title IX, retrieved from <http://www.titleix.info/History/The-Living-Law.aspx>. (Accessed March 12, 2011).
- <sup>84</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>85</sup> Gunderson, "Athletics for women at North Dakota State University," 4.
- <sup>86</sup> Nancy Edmonds, "Choosing sides of ERA," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Jan. 14, 1973, B1.



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- <sup>88</sup> "Women seek equal rights," *The Spectrum*, Oct. 20, 1972, 3.
- <sup>89</sup> Lucy Maluski, "Women's Lib," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 2, 1973, 6; "Equal Rights Amendment," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 8, 1973, 4.
- <sup>90</sup> "Feminists frolic in Union," *The Spectrum*, Nov. 14, 1972, 9.
- <sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>92</sup> "Girls femininity not lost in competitive sports," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 2, 1973, 6.
- <sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*
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- <sup>97</sup> "Women's intercollegiate sports bulletin," *North Dakota State University*, 1975-1976, 2. Gunderson noted in her history of women's athletics that golf was dropped at the beginning of the 1976-1977 academic year due to lack of interest.
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- <sup>100</sup> Bonnie Hultstrand, "The growth of collegiate women's sports: the 1960s," *The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance* 64, no. 3, (1993), 41.
- <sup>101</sup> Gunderson, "Athletics for women at North Dakota State University," 4.
- <sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>103</sup> "The women's sports program North Dakota State University," North Dakota State University, 1976.
- <sup>104</sup> Judy Ray, women's athletic director, "A message from Judy Ray," The women's sports program North Dakota State University, *North Dakota State University*, 1976, 2.
- <sup>105</sup> "The women's sports program at NDSU," The women's sports program North Dakota State University," *North Dakota State University*, 1976.
- <sup>106</sup> Gunderson, "Athletics for women at North Dakota State University," 4.
- <sup>107</sup> Helen Gunderson, telephone interview with researcher. Feb. 2, 2011.
- <sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>117</sup> *Ibid.* The separate men's and women's sports information director positions were dissolved in 2004 following reorganization of the sports information office.
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- <sup>119</sup> "Eight-mile run part of Eash's daily routine," *The Spectrum*, Dec. 9, 1975, 11.
- <sup>120</sup> "Jock Jive," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 13, 1976, 7.

- <sup>121</sup> "Women pick up first varsity victories in weekend action," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 3, 1976, 10; "Jock Jive," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 17, 1976, 10.
- <sup>122</sup> "Jock Jive," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 6, 1976, 2.
- <sup>123</sup> Folstad and Gunderson, interviews with researcher. Ed Kolpack's son, Jeff, now writes for *The Forum's* sports pages, frequently covering women's athletics.
- <sup>124</sup> Kim Keacher, "Jacobsen named women's sports info director," *The Spectrum*, Oct. 10, 1978, 15.
- <sup>125</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>126</sup> Lynn Dorn, interview with researcher, Bison Sports Arena, Feb. 7, 2011.
- <sup>127</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>128</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>129</sup> Ibid.
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- <sup>132</sup> "Lynn Dorn sees good year for women in athletics at SU," *The Spectrum*, Sept. 15, 1978, 12.
- <sup>133</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>134</sup> Lani Jacobsen, "Notice to media personnel: Media arrangements for 1979 AIAW National Small College Basketball Championship," North Dakota State University, Feb. 25, 1979, 1.
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- <sup>136</sup> "Women's basketball," *Bison* annual, 1980, 72.
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- <sup>138</sup> Helen Smiley, "Memorandum," April 14, 1979.
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- <sup>141</sup> Dorn, interview with researcher.
- <sup>142</sup> Christine Grant, "Recapturing the vision," *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance* 60, 3 (1989), 44.
- <sup>143</sup> Dorn, interview by researcher.
- <sup>144</sup> "College Women," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Feb. 8, 1981, B2.
- <sup>145</sup> "Shanley wins Class A basketball title," *The Fargo Forum and Moorhead News*, Nov. 16, 1980, E1; "Moose Lake, Armstrong win VB titles," E1 "Making their presence felt" (high school girls' basketball feature), E4.
- <sup>146</sup> *The Spectrum*, Dec. 5, 1980, 1.
- <sup>147</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>148</sup> "Women's basketball team splits at Purdue Invitational," *The Spectrum*, Dec. 9, 1980, 14; "Bison cagers cruise to third straight with 79-73 victory over Minot State," *The Spectrum*, Dec. 16, 1980, 13; "Bison women dump Concordia 76-57," *The Spectrum*, Jan. 30, 1981, 11; "Freshmen held Bison dump Duluth," *The Spectrum*, Feb. 10, 1981, 12.
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- <sup>150</sup> "Nine retiring teachers add up years of service," *The Spectrum*, May 21, 1982, 17.
- <sup>151</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>152</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>153</sup> "Amy Ruley," Women's Basketball Coaches, retrieved from [http://www.gobison.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB\\_OEM\\_ID\\_2400&ATCLID\\_75933](http://www.gobison.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID_2400&ATCLID_75933) (accessed April 22, 2011).
- <sup>154</sup> Gunderson, interview with researcher.
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- <sup>156</sup> Folstad, interview with researcher.
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- <sup>163</sup> Ibid, 102. Scott later went on to become a founding commissioner for the first National Intercollegiate Basketball Championship for Women in 1972. She is considered a national leader in women's sports and has been honored by several organizations for her contributions to the field of women's athletics. "Dr. Phebe Scott Honored with NACWAA Lifetime Achievement Award," Goredbirds.com, <http://www.goredbirds.com/genrel/091107aac.html>.
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## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

This project set out to chronicle how the women's intercollegiate athletic programs at NDSU, UND, and MSUM developed from 1950-1980, and how the press covered the development. During the time frame examined, these three public universities worked together closely in many facets of university life, especially athletics. Based on the information about the national development of women's athletics and the information about the women's intercollegiate athletic programs at NDSU, UND, and MSUM, the researcher concluded that the development of these three programs closely parallels the national development of women's athletics.

Research on the national level indicates that in the Midwest, basketball varsity programs were popular,<sup>649</sup> a fact correlating to the consistent existence of basketball at NDSU, UND, and MSUM from 1950-1980; basketball was frequently noted as one of the most popular sports for female athletes during the time frame, though the term "varsity" was not common until the 1960s when intercollegiate teams were formally established. In a constant mantra of sportsmanship and friendly competition, the physical educators who oversaw women's athletics — both nationally and locally — preferred that women played with their opponents instead of against them;<sup>650</sup> a fact asserted by NDSU *Bison* yearbooks from the early 1950s. Finally, regarding how the press covered female athletes, national research indicated writers often used gender labels in stories about women's sports when public perception did not favor women's athletics, like reporting on Babe Didrickson but *concentrating solely on her feminine qualities in the 1930s*;<sup>651</sup> the regional newspapers that reported on women's athletics at NDSU, UND, and MSUM as well as the yearbooks consistently used overly feminine language in their write-ups about women's athletics throughout the 1950s and 1960s. While some instances of feminine language occurred in the newspapers in the early 1970s, the



passage of Title IX may have instigated the ending to this practice because of increased equality awareness and regard given to women's athletics. However, the ending may not have been as immediate as Title IX's passing in 1972 because Helen Gunderson recalled pointing out the double standard of referring to female athletes and their physical attributes at a point in her career as a sports information officer from 1975-1978.<sup>652</sup>

Overall, local press coverage of women's athletics from 1950-1980 followed closely with the national treatment of women's athletics. Because society did not embrace competitive women's athletics as an acceptable activity after World War II ended, newspapers did not expend time and energy to cover the few activities that occurred, instead opting to cover larger, national events. The coverage in the regional newspapers *The Forum* and *The Grand Forks Herald* supported this mindset based on the issues examined for this project that yielded few articles about NDSU, UND, or MSUM women's athletic activities and only a handful of articles about national events and or people from 1950-1970. For two decades, the regional newspapers in the Fargo-Moorhead and Grand Forks areas rarely reported women's athletics at these important universities, even though women frequently competed at that time. The student newspapers covered women's athletics more frequently than the regional newspapers, presumably because of their intimate focus on events occurring at the university, not national, level. Only the passage of Title IX in 1972 brought about expanded coverage of women's athletics in Fargo-Moorhead and Grand Forks.

Equality for women was not a regular topic in either the regional or student newspapers examined in this project, though the issue surfaced occasionally in the issues from 1970-1972. Title IX, specifically, did not appear in the issues studied for this project, though local issues like an equal rights amendment did. Once Title IX passed in 1972, the issue of equal athletic funding received more attention, especially at UND and MSUM. By 1975,

women's athletics received the most newspaper coverage of the 5-year incremental sets included in this project. Perhaps the legal recognition of equality in athletics prompted newspaper editors and reporters to dedicate more time and energy to the athletic ventures of women, because they believed that's what the public expected from them. Another possibility for the increased coverage could stem from the fact that many universities and colleges sought Title IX compliance through the hiring of sports information officers to concentrate on women's athletics, resulting in an influx of information to news organizations specifically about women's athletics. The sudden rise in available information about women's athletics may have pressured editors and reporters to include more information about the topic within the newspaper pages of the 1975 issues.

The lack of press coverage about women's athletics from 1950-1970 likely stems from the fact that at the time men were in charge of newsrooms and deemed coverage of women's sports unnecessary or not newsworthy. That was the mindset of the time, and they cannot be blamed for writing about what the public they wrote for believed was important. Journalists like Ed Kolpack and student journalists like Dale McCabe and Kay Christiansen took it upon themselves to report on women's athletics regardless of whether someone else believed it was worth covering. Further research should examine the role journalists like this had on the development of these women's intercollegiate athletic programs, as well as offer insight into why they personally believed women's athletics deserved coverage.

The presence of particular staff members at each newspaper staff likely affected the amount of press coverage women's athletics received in the 1960s and 1970s. For example, *The Dakota Student* employed Kay Christiansen in the late 1960s, *The Forum* employed Ed Kolpack in the 1970s, and *The Advocate* employed a female sports editor, Janna Quitney Anderson, in the late 1970s. The vested interest in women's athletics these individuals may

have felt could explain the increased attention paid to women's athletics at specific times examined in this project compared to the coverage of other newspapers that did not employ an editor or writer with special interest in women's athletics. Also, *The Advocate* seemed to cover women's athletics with longer articles during the 1970s than the student newspapers at NDSU and UND at the time; this discrepancy may have resulted from the difference in university size (NDSU and UND were larger than MSUM) as well as the scope of sports offered at MSUM compared to the two larger institutions. With fewer total sports to cover, perhaps the student newspaper devoted more manpower and space to the individual women's athletic activities at MSUM.

Another reason for the difference in how the student newspapers reported on women's athletics may stem from the institutional characteristics of the universities themselves. North Dakota State University was founded on the principles of being the state's land-grant agricultural college, with an emphasis on male-dominated fields like agriculture, engineering, and science, while the University of North Dakota is a research-based university with specific regard to the medical, legal, and aviation fields. Minnesota State University Moorhead was founded as a teacher's college with a primary focus on educating young women to become educators themselves, eventually expanding to include liberal arts and science programs and welcoming men into those, and many other programs. Because NDSU and UND have traditionally geared toward male-dominated educational fields, reporting on women's athletic activities may have been considered insignificant or, worse yet, taboo for audiences that expected student newspapers to cater toward male-friendly topics. At MSUM, where females held the majority of the student population, reporting on women's athletics may have been more expected because it was a topic of considerable interest to the student newspaper's audience. MSUM also boasted a liberal arts curriculum that may have provided

the impetus the student newspaper needed to report constantly on important social issues of the time.

The binding factor among the three universities examined for this project is the common characteristics of the people who attended the schools. Residents of the Upper Midwest are renowned for their work ethic, resilience, and fortitude; these characteristics often describe both men and women. If this same project had been conducted examining universities in the southern United States or on the East Coast, the conclusions would likely have been very different based on the characteristics of the people who attended those institutions. Each region of the United States embodies specific characteristics based on attitude and physical location, and those characteristics influence every facet of the region's history.

While the 1970s clearly represented a significant time not only in the general attitude toward women's athletics but the press coverage afforded, the decade also marked an interesting change in how women's athletics were covered. After the influx of coverage in the 1975 issues examined, the 1980 set of issues for four of the five newspapers illustrated an increase in frequency of coverage but not an increase in the length of coverage provided to women's athletics. For example, by the 1980 set, the two regional newspapers and *The Spectrum* and *Dakota Student* included very brief write-ups about games (simply the result and high scorers) or only a box score. While this change may seem like a regression regarding press coverage of women's athletics, the explanation for it may stem from the passage of Title IX. After the federal government mandated equality in athletics, many universities were forced to add certain women's sports to be compliant with the law, resulting in a greater number of athletic events a newspaper was expected to cover. With a greater number of total sports to

cover, newspaper may have sought compromise in reducing the amount of information included but increasing the frequency with which information appeared.

For all of the women interviewed for this project, the appearance of any article in a newspaper during this important time prompted celebration and excitement. During the 1950s, women's athletics at NDSU, UND, and MSUM infrequently appeared in either the regional or student newspapers, save for a handful of articles about recreational activities; as competition at the universities expanded beyond interclass contests to full-fledged intercollegiate competition, the female athletes realized the importance of being recognized for their achievements on the athletic field. Playdays dominated the landscape of women's athletics throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, implying women's athletic activities were trivial or inconsequential. Once that notion was abolished in the mid-1960s, the attitude about women's athletics became more serious, resulting in more expectations about press coverage female athletes felt they deserved. Players did not hope to see their names in the newspapers for selfish reasons; they just saw it as equal to what male athletes received. Administrators like Helen Smiley saw the value of newspaper coverage in growing the overall women's athletic program. Once the formal women's athletic program was established in the 1970s at each university, newspaper coverage was expected even though not always provided.

The difference in perspective from the former athletes who provided insight to this project may be a result of the very different roles a player takes on versus an administrator or coach. Athletes concentrate on individual contests and game-by-game success, while coaches and administrators possess a wider perspective necessary to advance both the team and the program at a higher level. The MSUM former athletes recalled challenges but also the presence of newspaper coverage both at the local and regional level; the coaches and administrators attested to newspaper coverage provided solely by them or other school officials and not

independently by the newspaper itself. It is possible that the former athletes did not realize at the time the source of the information being published in the newspaper or that their reports about being so happy about even a little coverage overshadowed recollections about where the information may have come from.

Women's athletics advocates like Joan Hult, Collette Folstad, Helen Smiley, LaVernia Jorgensen, Flora Frick, and Jessie McKellar provided these regional programs with leaders who understood and embraced the responsibility of expanding the athletic opportunities for women and had connections at a national level that kept athletics at these three Midwestern universities up to speed with the broader development of women's athletics. The influence of these and many other women should not be understated; they were women who sacrificed time, money, and personal gain to ensure female athletes at NDSU, UND, and MSUM had an opportunity to compete at a level higher than intramural. A more detailed study of these women and their contributions would greatly enhance the overall understanding of how these three programs developed by providing deeper, personal insight, not to mention pay tribute to women who often received very little praise and support for their beliefs when they were advocating for women's athletics.

Another aspect this project revealed is the need for additional investigation into the development of newspapers during the included time frame. While this project simply looked for articles about women's athletics within the sports pages, newspapers themselves underwent significant changes during the same time frame that reorganized where information was located within the pages and what staff members covered certain topics. Detailing the development of newspapers from 1950-1980 would enhance this project by widening the context of where women's athletic information was located within the newspaper and why. Additionally, a content or textual analysis of newspapers during this time frame may yield

additional significant insight into the topic of press coverage and women's athletics. A content or textual analysis could identify more specifically how women's athletics were reported on and what information was included in the coverage.

This project provides significant insight for each university's women's athletic program because it relied on primary documents and personal interviews to tell a story not often described or explained. Many of the women interviewed expressed a passion for athletics and a love of sports, no matter how little press coverage her team received or how the athletes were treated. They were happy to play with what they had because they *truly loved to compete*. Many interviewees expressed gratitude that someone was taking the time to research and explain how these programs developed because no one yet had done so. Today, these programs play an important role in promoting and generating revenue for the university, though few have taken the time to understand the challenges and obstacles early pioneers faced when founding modern programs. The task was not easy, but it was necessary. Athletics offered women a venue through which they could compete and aspire to do great things — and they did.

The 1970s presented a distinct period of growth and change for women's athletics, possibly as a result of Title IX passing in 1972 or perhaps as a result of women in all facets of society demanding equality and fairness. The athletic field provided a unique venue through which women could assert themselves and the need for equality, though other venues surfaced as well. While total equality for men and women at any level has yet to be achieved, the important fact is that there are women in every generation like the early pioneers of women's athletics at NDSU, UND, and MSUM who are willing to work and sacrifice to make the dream of total equality a reality.

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<sup>649</sup> Joann Rutherford, "Women's Intercollegiate Athletics in the United States: A Geographical Examination, 1973-1977," (PhD diss., Oklahoma State University, 1977), 6.

<sup>650</sup> Sandra Steen and Susan Steen, *Take It to the Hoop: 100 Years of Women's Basketball*, (Twenty-first Century Books, 2003), 22.

<sup>651</sup> David Welky, "Viking Girls, Mermaids, and Little Brown Men: U.S. Journalism and the 1932 Olympics" *The Journal of Sport History*, 24, no. 1, 30.

<sup>652</sup> Helen Gunderson, telephone interview with researcher, Feb. 2, 2011.



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## APPENDIX A

### Informed consent for oral history

You are invited to participate in a historical research study of the development of women's intercollegiate athletic programs in the region. Your background and knowledge of the topic could offer vital information and significant perspective to the study, making you an appropriate potential subject for the project.

Because of the historical nature of this research, your name and identifying role within a program will be attached to the information you provide to lend credibility to the project. The interview will be recorded to ensure accuracy of information, and the recordings may be given to university archives for use in additional research. Because of the public nature of each university's archives, there is a potential for many other historical researchers to access the recordings.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any point. The interview should take approximately 1 hour, depending on the responses provided.

Benefits of participation include offering insight toward a greater understanding of how these programs developed, offering significant educational opportunities for students or researchers interested in this project.

Risks of participation include realization that information you give may be disseminated to a larger audience, either on a history website, at a regional conference presentation, or as part of other academic or trade publications.

Participants can be compensated in the form of a copy of the final research project.

If you would like more information on this project, please contact Ross Collins, Ph.D., principal investigator, professor of communication, North Dakota State University, 231-7295, or [ross.collins@ndsu.edu](mailto:ross.collins@ndsu.edu), or Danielle Teigen, graduate student, North Dakota State University, 231-8209, or [danielle.teigen@ndsu.edu](mailto:danielle.teigen@ndsu.edu).

For questions regarding human subjects' rights or to file a complaint regarding the research, please contact the NDSU Human Research Protection Office at 231-8908 or email [ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu](mailto:ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu).

By signing this document, you are demonstrating your understanding of this informed consent form. For interviewees contacted over the phone, do you understand and agree to the informed consent as it has been read to you? If so, please say, "I agree," followed by your name.

---

Signature

---

Print name

## APPENDIX B

Tentative interview questions (follow-up questions possible)

1. How frequently did local newspapers cover women's athletics activities?
2. How did the student body and general public treat you because you were involved with women's athletics?
3. Was information about women's athletics published frequently? If information was published, how much was included?
4. How did female athletes and administrators react to newspaper coverage?
5. How was Title IX reported on in local newspapers? What was your primary source of information about Title IX?

## APPENDIX C

### NDSU women inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame

1. Gladys Bockwaldt Lauf	1980
2. Collette Folstad	1990
3. Donnie Lauf	1991
4. Carolyn Schmidt	1993
5. Mary Goebel	1994
6. Autumn Ross	1995
7. Becky Clairmont	1996
8. Lori Knetter-Robbins	1997
9. Kathy Kappel Meagher	1997
10. Laura Jacobson	1998
11. Donna Palivec	1998
12. Deb Bergerson	1999
13. Pati Rolf	1999
14. Kim Brekke-Heisler	2000
15. Peggy Zimmerman-Stibbe	2000
16. Gretchen Hammond-Ehnes	2001
17. Nancy Dietman-Holovnia	2001
18. Trisha Reichl Cyr	2002
19. Janice Woods	2002
20. Lisa Stamp Thomas	2003
21. Janet Cobbs Mulholland	2003
22. Kristi Kreme Clarkowski	2004
23. Pat (Smykowski) Jacobson	2004
24. Lora Jean (Schloss) Bodin	2004
25. Amy (Quist) Raymond	2005
26. Shelley (Oistad) Rice	2005
27. Bev (Owen) Weiman	2006
28. Dana (Retten) Patsie	2006
29. Edie Boyer	2006
30. Dr. Julie Shorter Downing	2007
31. Jill DeVries	2007
32. Jennifer Barber Odette	2007
33. Nadine Schmidt	2008
34. Amy Ruley	2008
35. Jody Buck Stefonowicz	2008
36. Becky Schulze	2009
37. Brenda (Foti) Schultz	2009
38. Lisa (Eckroth) Ristau	2009
39. Jen (Hume) Miller	2009
40. Dawn (Koehn) Beil	2010
41. Teresa (Hegg) Wendland	2010
42. Julie (Sherman) Pasche	2010

## **UND women inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame**

1. Grace O. Rhonemus	1981
2. Era Bell Thompson	1981
3. Pam Solseth-Fisher	1991
4. Patricia A. Warcup	1991
5. Nancy Demmers Nelson	1994
6. Dr. Helen Smiley	1997
7. Margaret Peterson	1998
8. Nancy Anderson Johnson	1999
9. Connie Gebhardt Courtney	2000
10. Durene Heisler Frydenlund	2001
11. Mary Beth Dunlevy Tuttle	2002
12. Whitney Meier	2003
13. Marie Crep Suchy	2004
14. Karla Danielson McHugh	2004
15. Michelyn Rudser Baker	2004
16. Steph Bruening Payne	2005
17. Sheri Kleinsasser Stockmoe	2005
18. Janine Owens	2005
19. 1984-85 Women's Swimming and Diving Team	2005
20. Mindy Sutter Nielson	2006
21. 1980 Women's Field Hockey Team	2006
22. Laurie Bakke	2007
23. Margie Hutson Evers	2007
24. Marion Warner Nielson	2007
25. 1989 Women's Swimming and Diving Teams	2007
26. Colleen Chaske	2008
27. Kris Presler	2008
28. Shannon Burnell	2009
29. Mikki Cochran	2009
30. Janine Etchepare	2009
31. Tiffany Pudenz-Mannausau	2010
32. 1997 women's basketball team	2010

## **MSUM women inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame**

1. Jesse McKeller	1982
2. Judith Aageson	1983
3. Flora Frick	1983
4. Mary Ann Donnay	1988
5. Karin Schumacher	1989
6. Lori LaCombe	1990
7. Betty Fiandaca	1991
8. Brenda Ebner	1993
9. Kelly Owen	1993

10. Becky Marx	1994
11. Katie Class	1995
12. Sara Lee	1995
13. Judy Mogck	1966
14. Eileen Kuppich	1997
15. Karen Card (1998)	
16. Wendy Devorak Kohler	1999
17. Brenda Braun-Carver	2000
18. Elise Olsgaard-Erickson	2000
19. Susan Lasch	2001
20. Carol Howe-Veenstra	2001
21. Wendy Granum Frappier	2002
22. Kris DeClerk Thompson	2003
23. Julie Willoughby Stone	2003
24. Kari Farstveet Odermann	2004
25. Ann Kiecker Stalboerger	2004
26. Renee Olson Holland	2005
27. Cynthia "Sam" Booth	2006
28. Carrie Hegg Vetter	2006
29. Amy Gernand	2007
30. Jen Bagley	2008
31. Traci Fie	2010
32. Nicole Scholl	2010