

Equality in university sports overdue: symposium

By LORNE MANLY
and WAYNE WASSER

Equal opportunity for women in university athletics may be a long time in coming according to the general consensus of a symposium held last Thursday at York on Sexual Equality and University Sport.

The focus of the symposium was on Section 19(2) of the Ontario Human Rights Code, which states that "rights to equal treatment under the code are not infringed where membership in an athletic organization or participation in an athletic activity is restricted to persons of the same sex."

This law allows the Ontario University Athletic Association (OUAA) and the Ontario Women's Interuniversity Athletic Association (OWIAA) to restrict their leagues to members of the same sex. Kim Schweitzer, a member of the men's water polo team at York (there is no women's team), was ruled ineligible by the OUAA for this reason even though she had the ability to make the squad.

Section 19(2) is a limit on the basic requirement detailed in Section 1 of the Human Rights Code. The provision in this section protects the "right for equal treatment with respect to services, goods, and facilities without discrimination."

Section 19(2), according to Osgoode associate dean Mary Jane Mossman, "permits sex-segregated activities, but doesn't compel it." Attorney General Ian Scott announced last summer he would repeal this section as part of an omnibus bill. It has now passed

second reading in the Legislature and public hearings begin in January 28.

According to John Field, attorney and member of the task force on Equal Opportunity in Athletics, eliminating 19(2) may have no foreseeable effects since the provincial government does not directly fund university athletics. As a result, if the province did delete 19(2) the OUAA and OWIAA, who can determine, by sex, who may take part in the programs, would not have to comply since they are considered auton-

ous organizations.

The symposium spent a great deal of time examining whether or not there is equality of opportunity in resources, facilities, and competition. Field, in reading some of the task forces' findings, said females contribute equal funds to athletic sports but do not receive equal value for their fees. For example, male sport at the inter-collegiate level is more heavily promoted and there is discrimination against female students in getting facilities and practice times.

Dr. Helen Lenskyj, sport sociologist and spokesperson for the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport, said parity of resources is a major issue, adding that integration of women into male sports related fields is not necessarily the answer.

"There is a need to change legislation to improve equal opportunity, whether that be in segregated sports," she said.

Comments by those in attendance supported Lenskyj's position, saying that presently few women could

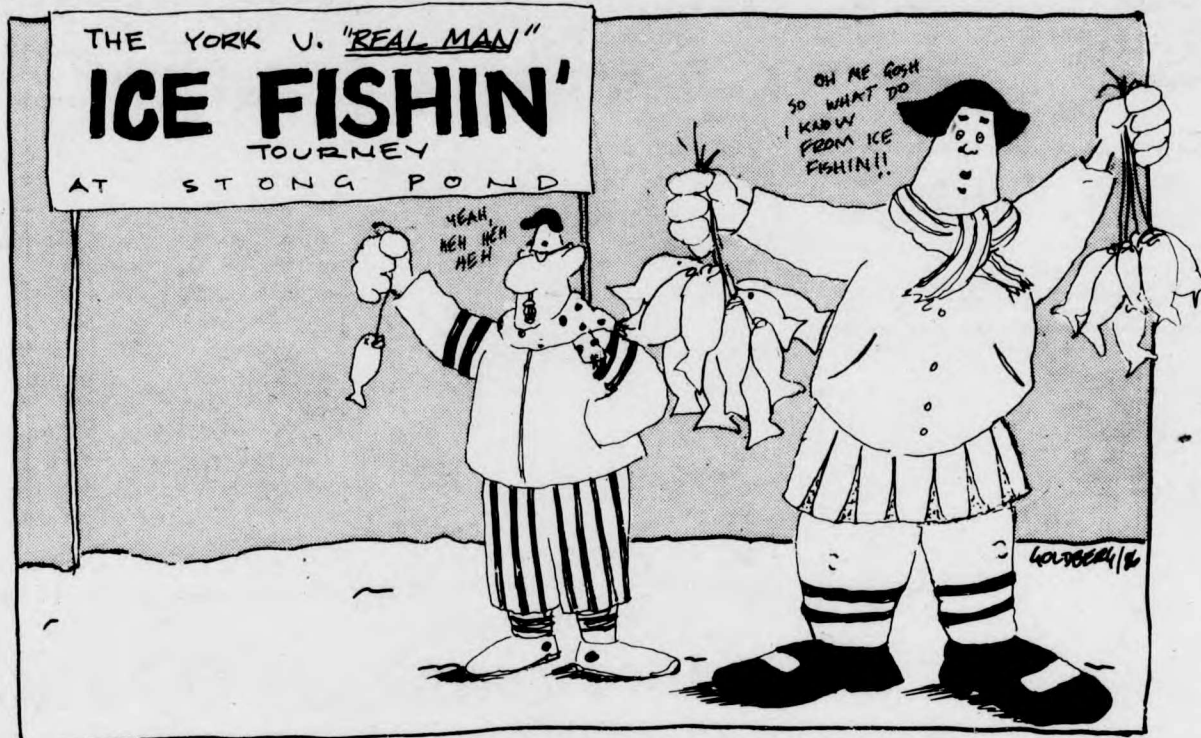
compete equally with men, but if services and training were improved this could change in the future.

Dr. Sue Vail, former director of women's programs at Sport Canada and now teaching at York and McMaster, outlined four options for alleviating this discrimination.

The first option should see separate but equal programming with opportunities for facility time and coaching expertise equally distributed.

The second option Vail presented was separate programming with affirmative action. "These programs would be there to clear up inequities," said Vail, "a temporary step to eliminating the discrepancies" through one way integration and a fairer allocation of resources. In this system, if a woman had the ability to play on a men's team and there was no women's team (as in Schweitzer's situation), she would be allowed to play.

The other options are open programming and a combination of both separate and open programming. The first proposal would see the selection of competitive teams based on ability, not sex, and women and men would compete together in both individual and team sports and in contact and non-contact sports. The adoption of this proposal would cause major changes in every facet of the university sport program, according to Vail. The latter alternative combines separate women's and men's sports along with the co-ed system offered in the previous proposal.



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TASTE THE DIFFERENCE

Arena jinx hands York 7-2 loss

By MANOJ PRAJAPAT

The York Yeowomen travelled to Varsity Arena last Wednesday looking for just their second victory there in the past seven years.

It didn't happen. Toronto won the contest 7-2.

"The place (Varsity Arena) seems to be a real jinx for us," Yeowoman hockey coach Sue Gaston said. "I really can't explain it."

York kept close through one period but couldn't contain Toronto's potent offense for the entire game.

"Toronto played well, they deserved the seven goals," Gaston said. "The problem with us was defense—we're just not playing well defensively."

With this being a non-contact hockey league, taking the body is out of the question. But there are ways around that.

"What we have to do is force the opposition outside—to make them shoot from the worst angle possible," Gaston said. "But we're backing in too far. We're not forcing the play."

This was the third meeting this season between the two clubs. York has yet to register a victory against the league leading Lady Blues. Gaston hasn't given up hope though.

"We knew from day one that in order to win the OWIAA title, we'd probably have to beat Toronto," she said. "I wouldn't say that we're discouraged, we know what we're doing wrong. It's just a matter of concentrating more."

Bonnie McMaster and Kelly Vandenthillart tallied for the Yeowomen.

Note: The Yeowomen travel to New Hampshire this weekend for a two-day, three-game round robin tournament. Also taking part, aside from the host New Hampshire club, are Providence and Minnesota. The games should be a good test for York as Providence and New Hampshire were ranked as the two top clubs in the US last year.