

Scholarships:

"Another reason to be at university"

Jules Xavier

The issue of equality for women has finally played its way into North American locker rooms. Equal funding and scholarships are key issues today within the realm of women's athletics.

Athletics at the university level are male-dominated in both Canada and the United States, while female athletes have played second fiddle since the beginning of time.

Excalibur talked with members of the University of Iowa Hawks field hockey team about these issues while they visited York for the Early Bird Field Hockey tournament.

The scholarship issue is a controversial issue here in Canada, especially in Ontario. Iowa's entire field hockey squad is comprised of 'free ride', out-of-state scholarship athletes.

Each year a number of Canadian athletes go south on scholarships and Iowa gets its share. Junior Ann Marie Thomas of Montreal is one example. She played field hockey along side York's Laurie Lambert and Laura Branchaud on the Quebec Provincial squad before embarking south.

What are the feelings of those who receive scholarships?

Senior Mary Beth Schwarze of Illinois forsores the women taking an aggressive role in recruitment like the men although not to the extremes that some schools have gone to. "Your almost asking for scandals by offering scholarships. The women's coaches haven't reached that point yet," said Schwarze.

Freshman Dawn Chamberlin of Pennsylvania feels like a puppet on a string because "the scholarship puts a certain pressure on you to perform."

But she admits the pressure has improved both her game and her schooling.

"Scholarships also give the female athlete another reason to be at university other than just being smart," she offers shyly.

Spunky New Jersey native Lee Ann Detwiler would have found it a lot harder to attend school



Iowa Hawk Dawn Chamberlin feels the scholarship puts a certain pressure on a player to perform.

without her scholarship.

"I might not have gone to school," Detwiler says. "My field hockey has given me that chance."

Recruitment is an essential tool of the coach at Iowa. "Winning becomes important to the coach," said Schwarze. "How do you justify the large budget with losses?"

Iowa's field hockey squad works with a budget between \$10,000 and \$20,000.

Thus for Iowa coach Judith Davidson, recruiting plays a major role in getting the most for her money. She has a budget to scout but doesn't necessarily have to go searching for talent.

Talented Ann Marie Thomas from Montreal approached Davidson who later gave her a scholarship after previewing Thomas' game films.

Davidson has never regretted the move. "I've really been impressed with her."

Davidson though has mixed

feelings on the subject in question and speaks cautiously.

"I feel traditional towards scholarships. In a positive sense it allows students to attend school who cannot afford it otherwise. On the other hand it's negative side is the issue of 'big time athletics' and there is this commitment by the school towards athletics.

"It's very important for the athlete and school to match. We won't take an athlete who didn't feel happy playing for Iowa."

Recruitment violations, manipulating transcripts, dealings under the table and other related scandals have all been contributed to scholarship programs.

This has yet to surface at the female level. These aren't your basic stereotyped 'dumb jocks' at Iowa. They strive for excellence both on and off the playing field.

"Stereotyping at present hasn't befuddled the females as we haven't been getting scholarships long enough," Schwarze maintains. "Women athletes on a whole aren't high profile."

Detwiler felt that academics are stressed more by the female athletes. "We're student athletes," she said.

"The coach is concerned with your schooling besides your play," Detwiler advises.

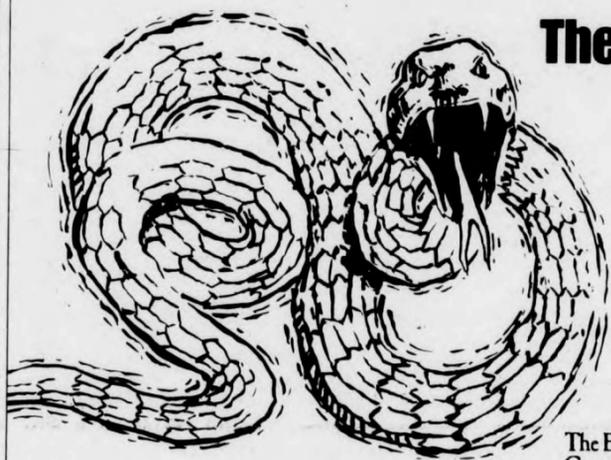
Chamberlin also noted that the media centred around the male athletes at Iowa.

"Football and basketball players are worshipped as 'Pros' by the school. The *Daily Iowan* gives the guys front page coverage. We get buried in the back of the paper."

Women's athletics has grown rapidly over the past few years at Iowa. Legislation passed Title Nine which has been beneficial to the women's programmes. It has guaranteed equal opportunity in athletic programming.

The one obstacle left in the female athletes way would be to change the thinking of the people. It's time the female athlete received the proper credit and recognition that they so deserve.

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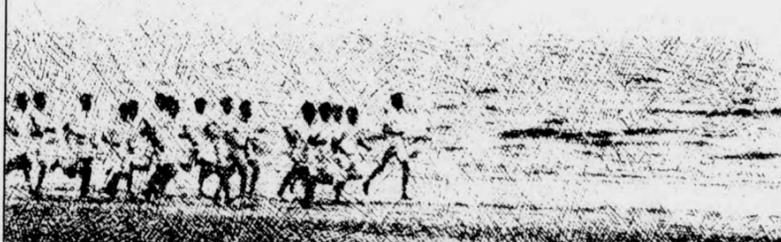
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