WOMEN IN INTERCOLLEGIATE SPORT
A Longitudinal Study Twenty Three Year Update 1977-2000
R. Vivian Acosta and Linda Jean Carpenter

Background

The architecture of sports for females in the United States has changed considerably since the enactment of Title IX in 1972 which prohibited sex discrimination in educational programs which receive federal funds.

In 1971, the AIAW (Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women) became a model and a new voice in the structure of collegiate sports for women. Additionally, with the passage of Title IX, a massive growth in participation took place. In contrast to the massive growth in participation, leadership positions such as coach, athletics director, official, previously mostly held by females, became more frequently occupied by males, yet no concomitant increase in the representation of female leaders in men's athletics took place.

The 1970s and 1980s saw many changes including: (1) the demise of the AIAW when the NCAA took over women's athletics and (2) the effects of historic lawsuits and legislation concerning the application of Title IX's jurisdiction to college athletics.

In the 1990s additional lawsuits have provided more knowledge concerning Title IX including the fact that punitive and compensatory damages are available to the successful plaintiff in a case involving intentional violations of Title IX. Additionally, current cases in the courts are exploring the applicability of Title IX jurisdiction to the NCAA itself.

We believe all athletes should have the opportunity to participate in sports programs without regard to gender. Schools which cancel sports for females OR males, especially if for the purpose of altering the appearance of gender imbalance, violate the spirit of the law and demonstrate a lack of administrative creativity, courage, sincerity and contravene good administrative decision making. There is great benefit in athletic participation. Those institutions which chose to move toward compliance early in Title IX’s life or which are unafraid to review budgets for all teams, including high profile teams, have found ways to meet compliance guidelines without sacrificing men’s teams. We applaud those administrators who seek creative, viable, all-inclusive and educationally sound solutions to the challenges of Title IX.
Participation Opportunities for Female Athletes

The average number of teams offered per school is at an all time high of 8.14. In 1972 the number was a little over 2 per school and in 1978, the mandatory ‘compliance’ date for Title IX, the number was 5.61.

In the one year period of 1999 to 2000, 205 new women’s teams were added. More than half of the new teams were in Division III.

All three divisions continue to show an increase in the number of sports offered to their female student athletes. Division 1 schools average 8.87, Division II average 6.62 and Division III average 8.45 teams per school.

The same five sports continue to be the most popular: basketball, volleyball, tennis (tied with) cross country, and softball.

Soccer exhibits the greatest growth of any sport in the last 23 years. It is now offered for women on 84% of the campuses and in 1977 it was only found on 2.8% of the campuses. Soccer has overtaken softball in 2000 in popularity.

Lacrosse and golf have grown markedly in the past decade while gymnastics, a sport which is being dropped from some men’s programs has also declined in the past decade among women’s programs.

Status of Women as Head Coaches

45.6% of the coaches of women’s teams are females, down from 47.4% in 1998. This is the lowest representation of females as head coaches of women’s teams in history.

When Title IX was enacted in 1972, more than 90% of women’s teams were coached by women.

In 2000, there were 7771 head coaching jobs of women’s NCAA teams, an increase of 534 jobs from 1998 and an increase of 1191 jobs since 1996.

Of the 534 new jobs in the last two years, women have been hired for only 107.

80% of the new coaching jobs in women’s athletics since 1998 have been filled by males.

The percentage of females among the coaching ranks of men’s ath-