



Women basketball players play for love and Coach Joann Rutherford, whose most cutting remark is, "Hey, you ought to go back to intramurals."



*It isn't the possibility  
of a pro bid, it isn't  
the cheers of the fans, it  
isn't headlines, so . . .*

## What Makes Samantha Run?

**T**HEY SAY it makes men out of boys. They say it builds character. And deep down, what player doesn't dream of that \$1 million pro contract?

Men's athletics is as American as apple pie. National heroes, even Presidents, emerge from the locker room. Athletic competition mixes — some would say exemplifies — our traditions of democracy, capitalism, rugged individualism and teamwork.

But if you mention women's athletics, you are likely to run into different and not always favorable attitudes on the part of the public. It's too rough, some say. It's not ladylike. Why do those girls want to spend all their time practicing and sweating? They'd better get an education so they can make a living; after all, they can't go pro like the men. Even among the athletes themselves, their coaches and the counterpart to the NCAA, the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (IAAW), a controversy is raging about how competitive women's athletics can or should be.

"Mizzou's women's athletics program is destined to be highly competitive, because our men's program is and Title IX requires 'equality of opportunity' between the two programs," says Jean Cerra, assistant director of athletics and head of the women's program.

The University fields women's intercollegiate teams in basketball, field hockey, golf, softball, swimming, tennis, track and field (including cross country) and volleyball. Basketball, because it is less acceptable as a women's sport than, say, tennis and because it is the only sport likely to produce revenue in the future, is this article's focus for the questions about women's athletics and competition.

Though Mizzou's women's athletics' budget for 1976 at \$160,000 is roughly 1,000 percent of its 1973 budget of \$15,000, money is still the major problem, says Cerra.

Mizzou's entire women's budget (excluding scholarship money) currently comes from institutional funds. The men's program (\$3.3 million) is self-supporting, receives no institutional money and, as it plans to increase its revenue, gradually is accepting more responsibility for the women's program.

Mizzou had 37 women on scholarship. Some receive \$644 (two semesters' fees); others receive \$322 (one semester's fees) and some also can work for additional money (up to \$322).

In the Big Eight, KU is giving one full ride and K-State three this year in addition to smaller grants.

*Schools with the biggest scholarships get the top athletes and have the best teams.*

Oklahoma, on the other end of the spectrum, has only three scholarships — one in swimming and two in golf.

In the Big Eight schools, the scholarship money is coming from state, institutional and general athletic (that means the men's program) funds. At Mizzou, the feeling seems to be that the women's program should generate its own funds for scholarships — a difficult proposition at best, without the long tradition of support that the men's program has developed.

Cerra does what she can to raise scholarship funds, but the expectation that all the necessary money can be raised through donations in the next few years may be unrealistic. Colorado's fund-raising goal for this year, for example, is \$800.

"We've raised more than \$6,000 this year, but to meet the commitments for 1976-77 scholarships alone we must raise a total of \$18,500," Cerra says.

The women athletes and their coaches raised about \$4,300 with a concession stand at football games and a swim marathon. Alumni too are involved. The Alumni Association's Committee on Women's Athletics, now in its second year, has 17 enthusiastic members from alumni districts around the state. These volunteers are trying to interest alumni in women's athletics.

The St. Louis Alumni Club held a golf tournament last summer to raise \$300, and the club made a gift of an additional \$200 to the scholarship fund. The Kansas City Quarterback Club gave \$200. St. Joseph alumni pledged more than \$300 to the swim marathon.

With some schools offering women "full rides" and others offering nothing, those schools with the biggest scholarship programs are likely to end up with the top high school athletes and the most competitive programs.

Basketball Coach Joann Rutherford tells about the four girls from last season's Seminole (Oklahoma) Junior College team who expressed interest in coming to Mizzou. The girls wanted scholarships. "This year," Rutherford says, "they're all starters for the University of Nevada-Las Vegas. It's a shame, but we just didn't have the money to give them. Nevada-Las Vegas is currently ranked first in the nation."

The Tigers finished their regular season with 25-9



A young "starting seven" gives Mizzou some depth and excellent potential for next year: front left, freshman Kathy Stevenson, junior Nancy Rutter, freshman Julie Maxey; back left, junior Suzanne Alt, freshman Cindy Kiser, junior Beth Hokamp and sophomore Sharon Farrah.

and had played several teams with national rankings. "But," says Rutherford, "we don't have the caliber of players to be a national contender. You can't build a national team with Missouri players."

Rutherford wants to coach a highly competitive team, but Missouri has not put the emphasis on basketball for girls that some other states have, notably Iowa and Oklahoma. And, for Mizzou to attract out-of-state players, scholarships big enough to cover out-of-state tuition must be available.

"It's hard to recruit on our reputation," Rutherford says. "We don't have one. We have to decide what kind of program we're going to have at Mizzou and how competitive it's going to be. But we have to get going quickly. The budget for next year is crucial.

"It's getting harder and harder to compete with the state schools," she says. Mizzou took third in the state last year. This year's Tigers took second behind Central Missouri State - Warrensburg and won an at-large berth in the regional tournament.

Attitudes of the basketball players themselves about competition are changing rapidly. Only last year, Rutherford told her players to stay in shape

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over the Christmas holidays. After the break, she was disgusted that so many players had gained weight and not maintained conditioning. This year, 18 players competed for spots on the travel squad. The top 10 spent their holidays traveling 2,200 miles through Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas, playing nine games in 10 days.

Co-captain and top scorer Nancy Rutter says, "I play ball for the same reason guys do — I enjoy it." The six-foot junior is majoring in home economics education and plans also to coach in high school. Averaging 15.7 points a game, Rutter scored a career-high 40 points against Graceland (Iowa) College on the road.

"You have to just like to play ball. You don't play for the crowd, because only a fraction of your playing time is in front of people," she says.

"Crowds," for the women's home games are averaging about 200 people in the 12,600-seat auditorium at the Hearnes Building. With that kind of support, none of the women play for the "roar of the crowd."

Last year in their first game on the "big floor" at Hearnes, Coach Rutherford remembers having to remind some of the players not to stare at the band and the cheerleaders and not to wave at their parents and friends. Now the team is more sophisticated. And Hearnes is almost familiar enough to give them some home court advantage, though most practices are held in the practice gym upstairs.

"You could find something easier to do for what publicity and honor you get," says Rutherford, wryly.

The Columbia media are doing a much better job of covering women's athletics this year, but out-state coverage is almost non-existent. Even locally, sometimes only a paragraph giving the final score makes the papers. The student newspaper *The Maneater* typically gives all women's athletics 12 inches or less in six pages of sports news. *Missouri Alumnus Tiger Sports* makes it a point to cover women's athletics, but more from the philosophy that "It's the thing to do," than meeting a grass-roots demand from the newsletter's readers. Most players have yet to see their names in headlines. There are no "stars." And nobody's name is a household word.

So they play for the love of the game and for personal reasons. Senior Sharon Rudolph, who was out for half the season with mononucleosis, says, "It's a chance to practice or perfect something you're doing. You can be satisfied when you've done a good job,

when you've given 100 percent. That also applies to life.

"It's wholesome. Life is a goal you set for Christ and for your Christian principles. If you don't fulfill your life, you haven't really been giving and competing and being the best you can be," says Rudolph, president of the M-Women, the athletes' organization.

**S**idelined because of her illness, Rudolph watched a practice and listed some specific attributes athletes develop. It's the same list that's cited by most proponents of men's athletics as character-builders.

"You gain in self-confidence. That carries over in everything. You know if you work hard enough, you can do the job. You also develop the ability to concentrate, if there are three seconds left and you are making a free throw. You don't let yourself get flustered."

The women don't mention playing pro ball as a goal, though a national women's league has just been formed. But many, particularly freshmen, do plan to coach and are majoring in physical education.

"Society has not been oriented toward accepting career women as normal, especially if they wanted to have a career in sports. When I was in high school," Rudolph remembers, "you didn't dare say 'I want to coach basketball.' Now that's changing."

Freshman Kathy Stevenson, who does plan to coach, says she plays for personal satisfaction. "You do get a chance to meet a lot of people. You learn to control yourself and your temper in difficult situations. You learn to perform under pressure. It makes you more outgoing to perform in front of people."

Suzanne Alt at 6'2" is the tallest member of the team. The junior says she likes her teammates and the companionship. She also likes to keep physically and mentally fit. "Once you're physically fit, you want to keep fit. It gives you an appreciation for your body. You realize that there are always winners and losers, and you have good games and off-games. You can't always win, and you can't always be the star. You have to work your way to the top in life, too."

Why do women athletes want to go out and practice and sweat and spend all that time and effort? The question annoys Rudolph. "Why not ask a musician the same thing?" she asks. "Is it good for people to spend all that time and effort to play an instrument well? Is it worth it? Sure." — Anne Baber