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'women athletes are third-class citizens'

A plaque hangs on a wall in the Women's Gym proclaiming Mizzou a charter member of the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women. But in intramural sports, intercollegiate sports, and recreation, women are relegated to third-class citizenry in the world of sport—behind men and more men.

First, intramural sports. The women's program is managed by the Women's Athletic Association and faculty advisors. From 15 to 30 women belong, and we donate our time to run the tournaments, fill out triplicate forms, and keep competition records. Men have an intramural office. Last year, women referees were paid for the first time; men have been paid for years.

for outdoor sports like flag football, we have only two fields. To use those, we have to chase men students off. The men have 11 football fields and 2,591 participants; the women have two fields and nearly 550 participants.

For indoor sports, we have the small court at the Women's Gym. And that isn't always ours, since several men faculty members claim the gym for 1½ hours every Monday for badminton.

We have so many teams during volleyball season that we have three games going all the time on the courts. Our tournament is too large to permit more than one practice, so many teams get less than two hours total practice and playing time.



"I'm a sports nut," Margaret Holt says. A senior majoring in journalism and political science, she has a golf scholarship, is a flag football official and plays intercollegiate basketball, softball and golf.

The best that can be said for our intramurals is that we at least have second priority on the Women's Gym—after physical education classes that finish at 4:30 p.m.

Lowest on the totem pole are intercollegiate sports. Women's basketball and volleyball teams, who compete against Missouri college and university teams, practice at times like 5:30-6:15 p.m. or 10-11:30 p.m. In the spring, the softball team practices after intramurals, often in near dark.

Budgeting is worse. Until this year, WWA funded intercollegiate sports through the sale of gym suits. With the new voluntary PE program, WAA no longer has income from required gym suit sales.

When representatives sought aid last spring, everyone holding purse strings praised our program, but stopped short of financing it. From anyone who would listen, WAA requested \$1,200 minimum to cover transportation, entry fees and motel deposits for state tournaments.

a faculty committee sent us to the MSA budget committee, which asked why the PE department didn't support the program. The department said then it couldn't because of policy, a decision now under review.

Next stop—Student Activities. They sent us to the Intercollegiate Athletics office. Women's sports don't qualify there, either, because we don't charge admission to our games. Under the women's intercollegiate policies, only national tournaments can charge.

AWS took pity on its sisters and tried to allocate \$500 for women's sports. MSA snagged that, charging it was against policy to help a sports group. Meanwhile, the Student Affairs recreation committee has an extra \$1,000, which it reportedly plans to spend on more elaborate prizes for such events as chess and ping pong tournaments. At this stage, WAA has no idea where money will come from. Ah, well, it looks like a good year for bake sales.

More than half of the 100-plus women who played on Mizzou intercollegiate teams last year were not PE majors. We fielded teams in softball, basketball, field hockey, volleyball, golf, swimming and tennis. Our rock-bottom expenses were \$1,500.

For the team sports, except field hockey, each woman buys her own uniform. On away games, each pays for her own meals and chips in on any motel bills. We compete with state university teams like Warrensburg, whose budget last year was \$5,000.

Any woman who has been intimidated into giving up a tennis court or letting an all-male golf foursome play through hopefully sympathizes with the state of female sports on Campus. We're not exactly bitter. And we certainly have no desire to compete on the same level with men.

We just want a share of the action.
—Margaret Holt.