



Message from the Director

[OESW’s February newsletter](#) examined media coverage of women’s sports. We did this by counting the number of articles on women’s sports and on men’s sports in the Minneapolis Star Tribune sports section every day during November 2016 .

Results were dismal: 8.7% of the Star Tribune’s sports articles during November were on women’s sports; 85.3% were on men’s sports. (6% were on both genders.)

There was a lot of interest in these findings. We also received suggestions that we do a similar analysis during March Madness, when both women’s and men’s sports are on steroids...so to speak. In addition, we were told that the Minnesota Spokesman Recorder, an 80-year-old newspaper focusing on Minnesota’s African American community, does an outstanding job of covering women’s sports.

Therefore, this month’s OESW newsletter takes a second look at gender equity in coverage of sports. We counted the number of articles on women’s and on men’s sports in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, the Duluth News Tribune, the Minnesota Spokesman Recorder, and—to give a national perspective—Sports Illustrated.

In the meantime, the 2017 legislative session ends on May 22nd. Things are too uncertain to have a legislative update in this newsletter, but stay tuned for a comprehensive overview of new 2017 legislation in OESW’s next newsletter.

OESW and the Minnesota Women’s Consortium are again co-sponsoring a *Session Wrap-Up: Gender Equity Style* on Tuesday, June 20, 5:30—7:30 p.m., Room 5 of the State Office Building. This is open to all. More details will be sent soon.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and informative. Its purpose is to provide information to legislators, legislative staff, and the community on priority and emerging women's economic issues.

Please send your suggestions to barbara.battiste@oesw.leg.mn. Visit OESW’s [Facebook Page](#), [Twitter](#), and website www.oesw.leg.mn.

Barbara Battiste, Director, Office on the Economic Status of Women

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SAVE THE DATE:

Session Wrap-Up: Gender Equity Style

Tuesday, June 20, 5:30—7:30 p.m., Room 5, State Office Building

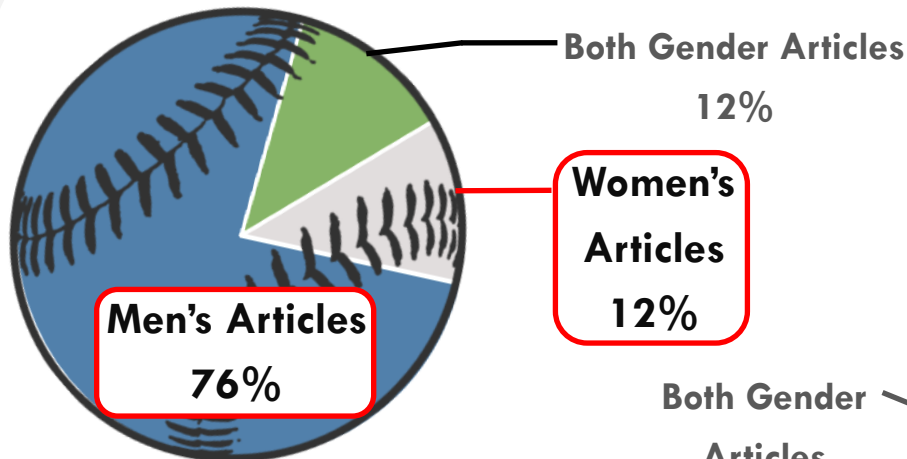
Details will be sent soon.

Women's Sports & the Media

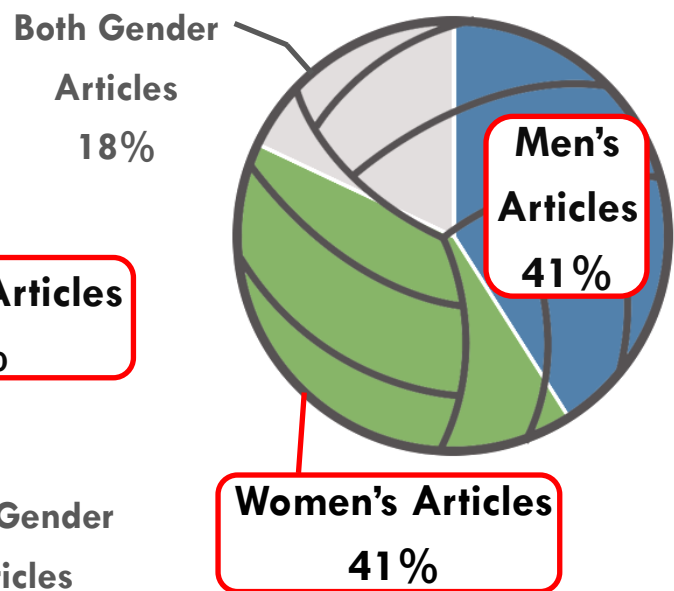
A Second Look during March Madness

Percentage of Articles on Women's Sports Compared to Men's

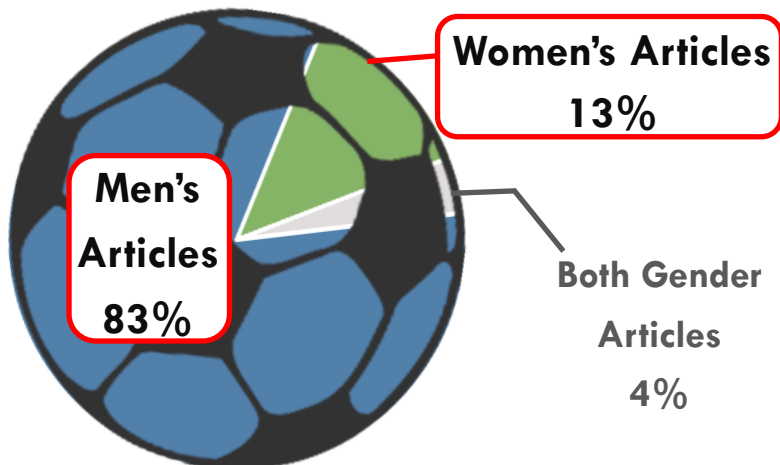
Duluth News Tribune



Minnesota Spokesman Recorder

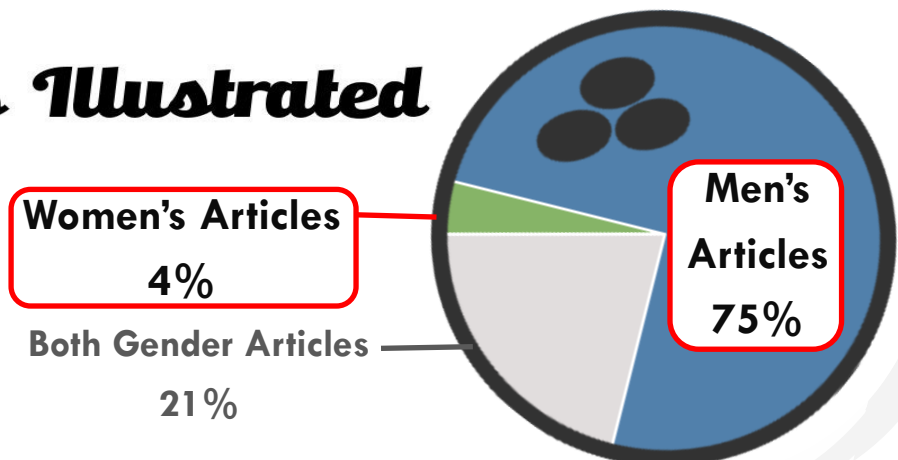


Star Tribune



Sports Illustrated

About this Data
Sports articles were counted every day throughout March and do not include score reports, summaries, standings or game schedules, but do include multiple stories under one headline, "notes", "jottings," and unrelated "etc." pieces.



Minnesota Spokesman Recorder:

The MSR is the oldest Black-owned business in Minnesota. Established in 1934 by Cecil E. Newman, the MSR remains a family-run newspaper that is African American and woman-owned, led by CEO/Publisher, Tracey Williams-Dillard, granddaughter to Mr. Newman. OESW commends the MSR on its achievement in equitable gender reporting in the sports section. In the month of March, MSR gave equal coverage to male and female sports.

Commentary to OESW by Charles Hallman, MSR Columnist and Sports Reporter:

Perhaps the most exciting Women's Final Four in recent history took place this year in Dallas. This included an "instant classic" semifinals contest, won in overtime on a made jump shot by the shortest player on the court – a shot heard around the women's basketball world by Mississippi State that snapped Connecticut's historic 111 consecutive win streak. The championship was won two days later by South Carolina, whose coach Dawn Staley was the first player to win the title game's most outstanding player award on the runners-up squad.

But sadly this barely made most newspapers and magazines' sports front pages. USA Today instead ran a full page spread on the Men's Final Four teams. Eventual men's champion North Carolina made [Sports Illustrated's cover](#) and almost ten pages were devoted to the semifinals and finals but the entire Women's Final Four were barely squeezed within three pages.

Gender inequity in sports media coverage? An oft-discussed topic over the years in academia ([Michael Messner and Cheryl Cooky](#) have done numerous studies on the subject). The [University of Minnesota's Tucker Center](#) has long advocated for better women's sports coverage. Minnesota [Gov. Mark Dayton](#) also has challenged local media to do better in this regard.

I spent over three-fourths of my four-decade-plus journalism career focusing on women's sports, beginning with college radio in Michigan in 1975, then in Illinois, and now in both broadcast and print since relocating to the Twin Cities in the early 1980s to comment on the "Second Look" follow-up at women's sports and the media. I wish I could offer something new, profound, or new revelation.

The sad truth is that 45 years after the passage of Title IX, 20 years after the successful launching of the WNBA, and over two decades since the debut of the Williams sisters (who have ruled tennis both single and doubles), gender inequity in sports coverage still exists.

Change, especially in women's sports coverage, remains turtle-like mainly because of the influential and mostly male sports editors, who all too often operate with chauvinist beliefs. Pressuring them to change is still needed, but added to that pressure are ones who write the editors' checks. Copy such pressure on advertisers as well.

But doing this doesn't take those of us who cover women's sports off the hook either. There are still too many who cover it like they are waiting for something better (namely men's sports) to come along. There are still too many who exert as little effort as possible in their coverage, lacking any imagination.

And I still strongly urge women's sports fans to be consistent squeaky wheels -- bombard sports editors, program managers, publishers, owners and advertisers with phone calls, letters, emails and social media messages. Praise them when they do provide coverage, but push them for more.

Until then, nothing will change.

Professional Women's Hockey: A Timeline

October 11, 2015

The National Women's Hockey League (NWHL) becomes the first professional women's hockey league in North America. They begin with 4 teams in the US.

October 2016

The second NWHL season officially starts. Women's hockey players earn \$1,000 a month for six months of a four-year Olympic cycle. For the rest of the 3 1/2 years, the players earn virtually nothing. ¹

March 15, 2017

Ranking #1 in the world, US women's hockey players announce their decision to boycott the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) world championship after wage negotiations were stalled.

November 17, 2016

NWHL reduces players' salaries to save the season. Neither the players nor the players union were involved in this decision.

March 23, 2017

USA Hockey starts searching for replacement players for the IIHF world championship.

The boycott gains the support of the NHL, NBA, WNBA, NFL, MLB and the US women's soccer team.

March 28, 2017

An agreement is reached! After 15 months of negotiation and 13 days of boycotting, USA Hockey and the US women's team agree to forming a Women's High Performance Advisory Group to advance women's and girls' hockey at youth levels, travel and insurance provisions equal to that of men's, \$2,000 training stipends per month and larger performance bonuses for winning medals. ³

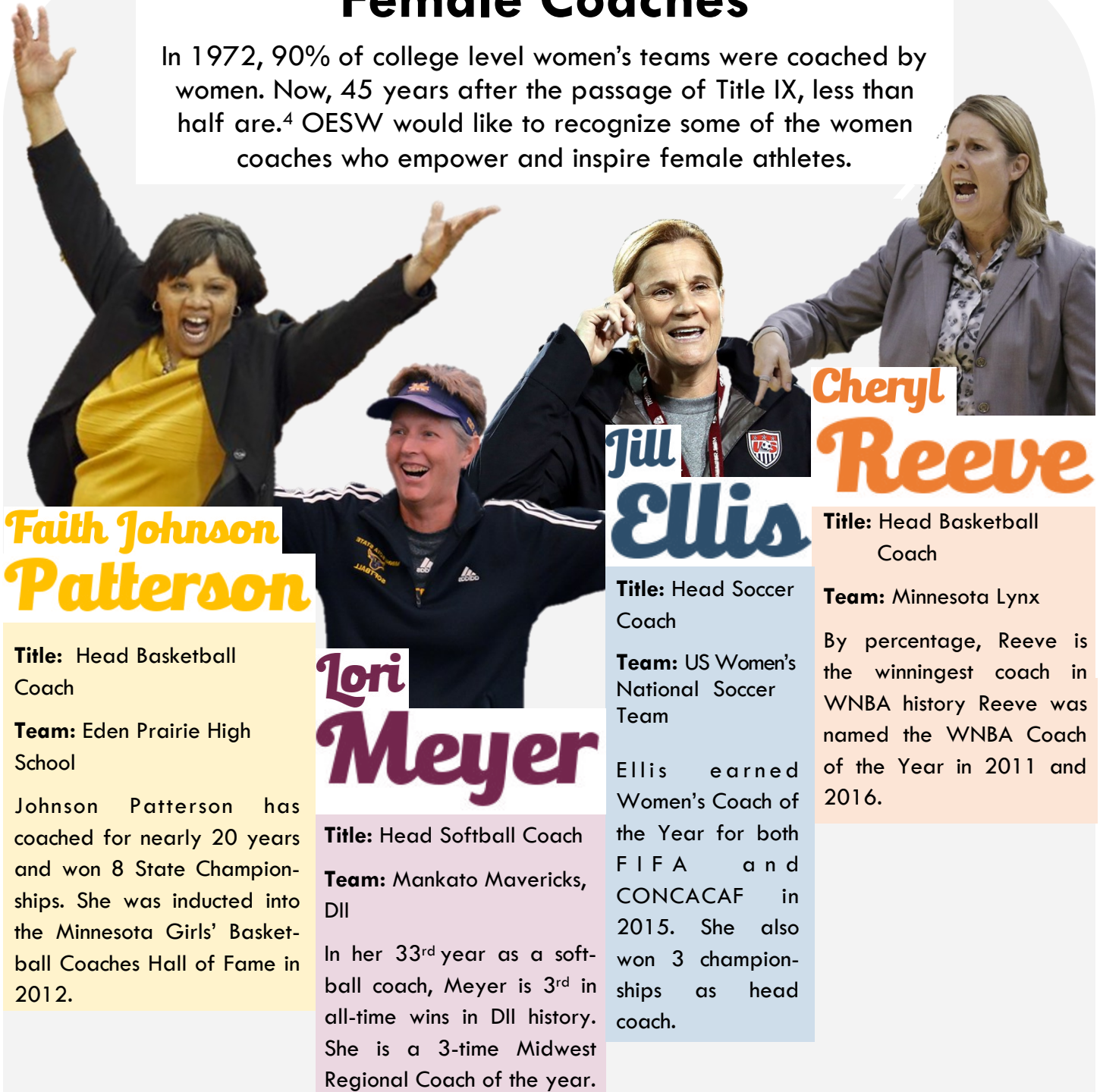
March 27, 2017

20 US senators signed a letter addressed to USA Hockey Executive Director Dave Ogreaan urging him to resolve the dispute equitably. ²



Female Coaches

In 1972, 90% of college level women's teams were coached by women. Now, 45 years after the passage of Title IX, less than half are.⁴ OESW would like to recognize some of the women coaches who empower and inspire female athletes.



Faith Johnson Patterson
Title: Head Basketball Coach
Team: Eden Prairie High School
Johnson Patterson has coached for nearly 20 years and won 8 State Championships. She was inducted into the Minnesota Girls' Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame in 2012.

Lori Meyer
Title: Head Softball Coach
Team: Mankato Mavericks, DII
In her 33rd year as a softball coach, Meyer is 3rd in all-time wins in DII history. She is a 3-time Midwest Regional Coach of the year.

Jill Ellis
Title: Head Soccer Coach
Team: US Women's National Soccer Team
Ellis earned Women's Coach of the Year for both FIFA and CONCACAF in 2015. She also won 3 championships as head coach.

Cheryl Reeve
Title: Head Basketball Coach
Team: Minnesota Lynx
By percentage, Reeve is the winningest coach in WNBA history. Reeve was named the WNBA Coach of the Year in 2011 and 2016.

Sources

1. National Public Radio, All Things Considered. (24 March, 2017). *U.S. Women's Hockey Starters Plan To Boycott Championship*. [Available here.](#)
2. United States Senators. (27 March, 2017). [Personal letter]. [Available here.](#)
3. Berkman, S. (28 March, 2017). *U.S. Women's Team Strikes a Deal with USA Hockey*. New York Times. [Available here.](#)
4. Stark, R. (2016). *Where Are The Women?*. NCAA Champion Magazine. [Available here.](#)