

Sports

Winning, publicity answer for women's sports

By Tom Mulos
Reporter

In 1982, the Texas A&M softball team brought the national championship home to Aggieland, but the UCLA Bruins claimed they were no. 1.

The conflict was caused by the nation's university presidents decision to switch from the Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women to the National Collegiate Athletic Association as the governing body of

Women's athletics at A&M Part two of a two-part series

women's athletics to gain exposure for women's sports.

Schools were given a five-year grace period to make the change over. The Lady Aggies won the AIAW national title that year, while the Bruins became the NCAA's first national softball champions.

The Southwest Conference started holding women's championships in 1982-1983.

Softball is the one women's team at A&M that has been a consistent winner. Since 1982, the Lady Aggies finished second twice nationally under Coach Bob Brock and won the national championship last season.

"Even with a national championship-caliber team, they still can't get many people to come watch them," said Lynn Hickey, assistant athletic director for women's athletics and head women's basketball coach. "But, we wouldn't have had a NCAA regional down here if we didn't get at least some fans."

Nan Elrod, A&M women's sports information director, was a student assistant at Tennessee at the time of the change over.

"When our basketball team (the Volunteers) played in the national championship at Oregon on live national television we didn't get any recognition," Elrod said. "Sports Illustrated mentioned the score in the scorecard section in the back. In 1982, when the game was picked up by CBS, Sports Illustrated actually had a picture and a story. The exposure between now and then is incom-

parable. There is so much more now."

The University of Texas was one of the schools that didn't change over the first year, Elrod said.

"Donna Lopiano (Texas' women's athletic director) was president of AIAW in 1981 and... is opposed to changing to the NCAA," she said. "I still think it's better because since we're with the men and we can learn more things quicker."

"The quality of the athletes has changed so much in the past ten years. Coaches say that women that played back then could not even make their teams today because the talent has gotten so much better. What Cheryl Miller did for women's basketball is amazing. Even Nancy Lieberman didn't do much."

Both Miller and Lieberman were All-American basketball players. Lieberman played at Old Dominion and tried to play with the Dallas Diamonds in a women's professional league.

Miller, who played at USC, did not play after college and is now with ABC Sports.

Hickey explained what is being done to increase interest in women's sports.

"We have tried to convey to the students and the public that 'Hey, we're here!' " Hickey said. "We're also trying to tell as many people as we can that we are playing a game, that we are good, and that it doesn't cost much to watch us play."

For the first time, the women were combined with the men on the all-sports pass without a price increase of the ticket book.

A&M also has followed Texas' lead in establishing a club for the boosters.

Texas established the Longhorn Associates, a booster club that is funded strictly on donations and dues. Its purpose is to get people involved in the program. They would meet after volleyball and basketball games and the players and coaches would field questions about the game.

Patti Spring, UT's women's sports SID, said: "It's a great way to make people feel involved. If they feel involved, then they will come back and

watch games again and again."

The Aggie Club gets money for scholarships for men and women athletes. The Maroon Club, for women's sports, gets a very minimal amount of money compared to the Aggie Club. The Maroon Club's money goes to special needs that the athletic budget doesn't provide.

Hickey said, "In less than six months, we have raised \$45,000. That surpassed all expectations that we had. The Longhorn Associates have 1,200 members and raise \$100,000 a year. Most of that money is from corporate involvement which will come for us in two or three years."

When Hickey came in four years ago, A&M's women's athletics was a good athletic program with good overall funding, but a plan of action was lacking, Hickey said.

"This program can produce revenues. The first thing is to establish a rapport with the community," Hickey said.

Kelly Krauskopf, assistant for women's athletics and three-year basketball letterman at A&M, said,

"Back when I played, we just existed because of Title IX. Now, the players are beginning to feel like they're accepted because of the Maroon Club. The players are feeling pride and when you feel pride, you feel like you can win."

The Sports Information Office has also tried to increase media coverage, Hickey said.

To do so, the athletic department hired Elrod, who is in her second full year at A&M, as the women's information director.

Assistant Athletic Director John David Crow is pleased with the SID's work.

"I am impressed with the work that the SID office and publicity has done," Crow said. "They have really made people notice that there is a women's program."

Krauskopf, who used to be work for KBTX-TV, said: "You really have to establish a base with the media and winning will help that a lot. They're just doing their job by covering the winning teams because

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Holtz says inexperience of Irish makes Cotton preparation vital

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP) — Lou Holtz believes he understands why Notre Dame lost to Miami, but says all that matters now is winning the Cotton Bowl.

No one on the 12th-ranked Irish squad has played in a major bowl game, so preparing for the New Year's Day contest against No. 13 Texas A&M, 9-2, becomes even more important, he said.

"They must realize that winning, and not just getting there, is the important thing," he said.

The Irish, 8-3, still had held hopes of a national championship appearance at the Orange Bowl before their 21-20 loss to Penn State. A first-half end zone interception and a failed two-point conversion in that game may actually have been the be-

ginnings of the 24-0 loss to Miami the following week, Holtz said.

"After looking back on that game, I've come up with four reasons why I think it happened like it did," he said.

"No. 1 is the way we lost to Penn State. That was a tough one to take," he said. "No. 2 was the decision to go to Miami early. I thought it would be better to bring the team together than to have the players spread all over the campus during the Thanksgiving holiday."

So the team traveled to Miami that Wednesday, three days before the game. "I think that staying around here would have been the better way to go than to take them down so early."

"Three: We worked very hard in

practice on our passing game without much degree of success. I fault myself for not going back to doing what we do best (running), because we never did develop a rhythm on offense against Miami."

The fourth reason for the loss was the Miami team.

"Miami was exceptionally well-prepared and emotionally ready to play," he said.

Looking to the Cotton Bowl, Holtz had no definitive answer about quarterback Terry Andrysiak's chances of playing against A&M. Andrysiak was the starter until he suffered a broken collarbone and missed the last seven games.

"Terry may not make any kind of a substantial contribution, and then again, he could start," Holtz said.

Former UNC coach is interested in rebuilding SMU football team

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Former North Carolina football coach Dick Crum will not rule out reports that he could be considered for the Southern Methodist University job.

"The SMU job is something that I might want to get more information on, but I certainly haven't given it a great deal of thought," said Crum, UNC's winningest coach, who compiled a 72-41-3 record in 10 seasons. His 1987 team finished 5-6.

Crum resigned from UNC Nov. 30 after agreeing to an \$800,000 buyout on the remaining four seasons of a 10-year contract he signed in 1982.

He told the *News and Observer* of Raleigh Tuesday night that he would not discuss the past at UNC but said it had been a "disruptive period."

The *Dallas Times Herald* newspaper Tuesday listed Crum among possible candidates to rebuild the SMU program.

In one of its toughest penalties, the NCAA barred the SMU program from competing this year under its "death penalty" provision because of a pay-for-players scandal.

The school was permitted to play a schedule of seven road games in 1988 but later voted to cancel the season.

Meanwhile, the New York Jets have given defensive coordinator Bud Carson permission to discuss a head coaching position with UNC officials, the *New York Daily News* reported Wednesday.

Carson joins former Kansas City Chiefs and Wake Forest University coach John Mackovic, Tulane's Mack Brown, Air Force's Fisher DeBerry and former UCLA and Philadelphia Eagles coach Dick Vermeil as those being considered for the Tar Heels' post.

The 57-year-old Carson is a former Tar Heel player.

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