

The athletic program is trying to balance its opportunities, but now the Legislature has the opportunity to help out with...

Title IX

Federal mandates can do wonders for getting things motivated. A case in point. Although women's athletics has been around at the University since the 1890's, it wasn't until two years ago that women started to receive the recognition and funding comparable to the men's intercollegiate program.

The reason? Title IX of the Federal Education Act—the blanket federal ruling designed to end sex discrimination in any educational program or activity assisted by federal funding.

The 1972 federal mandate has goaded the men's intercollegiate program to give up some \$200,000 to the women's program this year to assist the University in complying with Title IX. And in an unprecedented move this year, the state Department of Higher Education has included a specified item in its priority list for the 1979-81 biennium budget asking for direct state funding for women's athletics.

The item would provide for \$920,000 to be divided between the eight state universities in accordance with enrollment figures. The University would garner \$255,000 for the biennium.

"It (the money) will help," Becky Sisley, assistant athletic director and former women's athletic director, says. "But \$130,000 a year is nothing, really. But it will help."

Athletic director John Caine is enthusiastic about the funding possibility, noting that it will "benefit men in an indirect way."

"I'm hoping the Legislature will come around," Caine says. "The upgrading of the women's athletics should not be the responsibility of the men's program."

The fate of the line item, which is listed as "mandated expense" along with facilities for the handicapped on the priority list, will be decided sometime prior next year. Before the ultimate decision by the Legislature the higher education budget must weave its way through a maze of committees, examinations, reviews, and legislators.

The list's seven priorities includes more monies for libraries; funding for non-sponsored research; an increased emphasis on physical plant maintenance; and more monies for the University's Health Science Center, and is currently under review by Gov. Bob Straub's budget analysts.

"The new governor (governor-elect Victor Atiyeh) will probably examine it, too," adds Curt Simic, University vice president.

The budget, along with the priority list, should be forwarded to the Legislature no later than Feb. 1, 1979, where it will be examined thoroughly by a sub-committee to the Ways and Means Committee. A proposal asking for state funding for women's athletics died in the sub-committee two years ago.

"Frankly, what comes out of the committee will probably be what we get," Simic says, adding that he doesn't expect

final legislative approval until May or June of 1979. The budget will go into effect July 1, 1979.

If the proposed higher education budget and priority list don't get passed as they stand now it won't be for lack of effort on the part of higher education supporters. A committee of interested alumni, athletic personnel and university officials from around the state have been barnstorming Oregon addressing groups on the importance of higher education funding.

The committee, which includes Simic, Sisley and several University-related officials, particularly addresses the groups with the importance of the priority of funding for women's athletics. Sisley says that many people attending the meetings are alumni or interested parents, who are urged to talk with their congressman

about the higher education budget.

The committee originally stressed funding for women's athletics above the approval of the entire education budget. But Simic stresses that, now, the entire budget is the issue, and not any one item prioritized in the proposal.

"If that (separate interests) would have happened, we'd be pitting ourselves against each other," he explains. "We said to them, if you do this we stand a chance of hurting the whole budget."

Sisley notes that the Legislature hasn't overtly supported increased funding for higher education in the past, citing figures which compare a 275 percent increase in the general fund monies for other programs with a 125 percent funding increase in the same 10 year time span for higher education.

She also notes that along with the Title IX mandate, the Oregon Legislature passed an equal opportunity mandate of its own, titled Chapter 204 of Oregon Laws 1975.

"We have all these mandates, but no money to go along with it," she says.

Currently the University is on the first leg of a three year compliance plan to upgrade the women's intercollegiate athletic program to meet mandate standards. Sisley cites the upcoming completion of a softball diamond and the reconstruction of women's locker space in the Mac Court basement as examples of Title IX compliance.

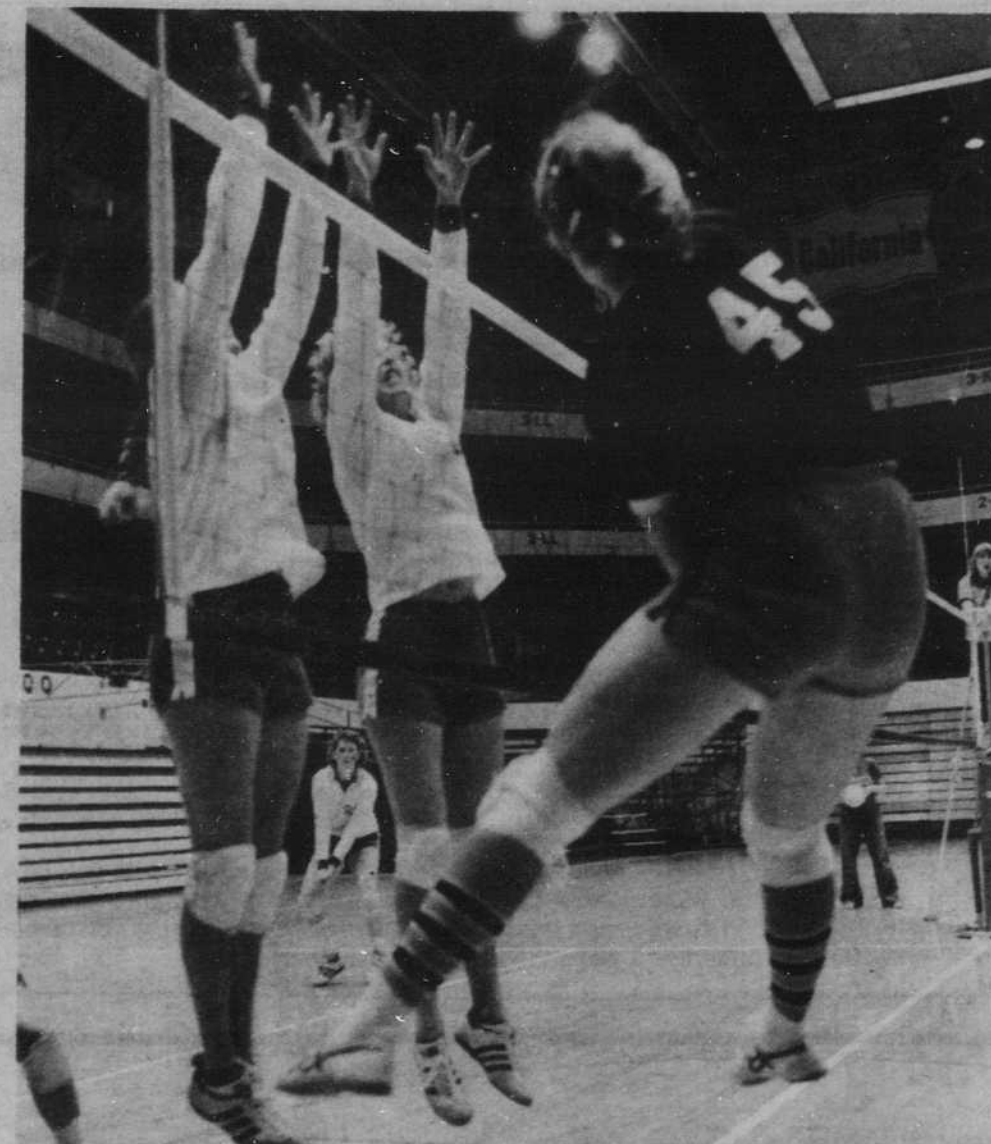
But after ticking off several improvements Sisley shakes her head. "But the Department of Health, Education and Welfare is issuing revised standards, so we really don't know. We don't know what those new standards are yet."

Until those revisions are unveiled the University will continue on its current compliance plan. But Caine has noted that the idea behind the intercollegiate athletic program is not to make the men and women's programs identical, but to equalize the opportunity in both programs' sports.

The men's athletic program has contributed considerably to the commitment to equalize opportunity. The women's budget this year totals \$450,000, a far cry from the \$40,000 funding five years ago, and an increase from \$174,994 of a year ago. The men's program contributes \$206,996; student fees chip in \$90,000 \$100,602 is comprised from state funding for teacher/coach salaries; \$25,000 is received in redirected gifts; and an additional \$2,000 is expected in gate income from women's events.

Is it reasonable to expect that much revenue from women's events? Caine is not optimistic the full \$2,000 amount will be realized, but several women's gymnastic and basketball events will cost onlookers money this year.

The entire projected intercollegiate budget this year totals roughly \$3.5 million. Men's programs take a giant chunk



McArthur Court is now open to the women's volleyball team, who previously played in Gerlinger Annex. Federal mandates have forced the men's program to loosen its stranglehold on facilities — and operating budgets.

out of that amount with \$1,155,671 for football; \$470,151 for basketball; \$140,000 for track and cross country; \$55,000 for baseball; \$13,050 for swimming; \$72,000 for gymnastics; \$54,000 for wrestling; \$16,500 for golf; and \$8,020 for tennis. Greg Robinson, the athletic program's business manager, notes that men's football and basketball are the only two programs that make a net gain. Most of the budget's fundings come from alumni contributions, gate receipts and fundraising.

Caine notes that the state doesn't fund one penny of the budget directly. "I'm hoping someday they'll realize it (athletics) is the best public relations the state of Oregon has," he says.

Women's programs take notably smaller portions of the budget with volleyball using up a projected \$4,203; basketball \$54,621; track and cross country \$62,818; softball \$16,856; gymnastics \$29,055; field hockey \$45,794; swimming \$22,681; and tennis \$11,174.

As the Title IX compliance program moves onward the women's intercollegiate program will be requiring more funds for the necessary equipment, scholarships, facilities and personnel. Although \$130,000 a year in state funding may not seem large pitted against the sums required for the transition to a fully equalized opportunity for men and women in athletics, it is a start.

Story by Ann Treneman.



Emerald Photos

The Ducks field hockey team may not be in the league that produces the Rose Bowl, but they are playing in Autzen Stadium, long the domain of men's athletics. Because of Title IX

legislation, the women are receiving equal funding as well as the use of all facilities.

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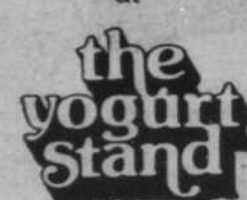
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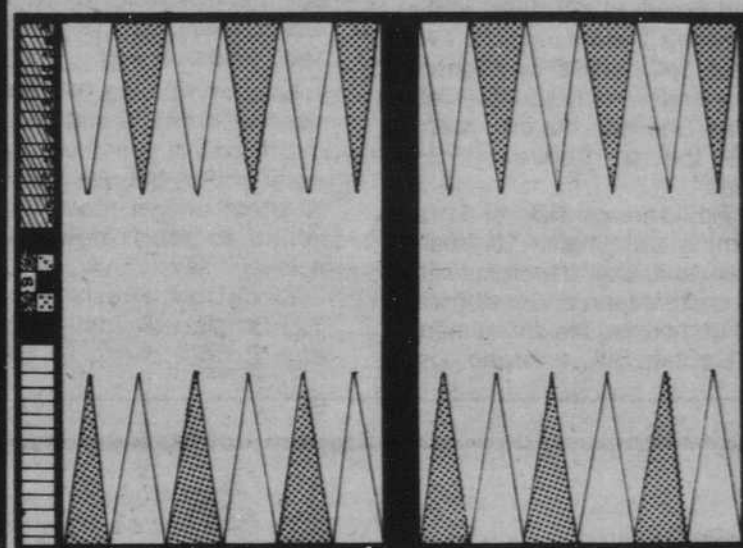


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