



A witch switch? Wiccans at U. of Iowa keep their brooms in the closet.

Any Witch Way

THEY DON'T RIDE BROOMSTICKS. THEY DON'T STIR bubbling caldrons. They don't cast evil spells. But the U. of Iowa students who follow the ancient religion Wicca do call themselves witches.

Recently recognized as a student group by UI, the nature-based, life-affirming Wiccans faced no opposition when they applied for religious group status last winter.

"We didn't have any qualms [about recognizing them]," says Curt Boelman, of the UI activities board. "We might giggle a little, but our own personal feelings towards the group have nothing to do with who gets in or not."

But the 12 core members of the group want to publicize that their beliefs are no joke.

UI senior Lon Sarver says that since people don't understand the religion of Wicca, they tend to believe in stereotyped characters. "What they get is the wicked witch from Disney."

Instead, Wiccans are students who go to class, celebrate eight holidays, commune with nature and pay homage to the Goddess Mother.

The single rule that binds the more than 200,000 witches in North America is the Wiccan Rede: "If it harm none, do as ye will."

Loosely translated, that means Wiccans have nothing in common with the broom-riding harriidan that chased Dorothy around Oz.

"There are a lot of people who have beliefs like ours but don't have a name for them," says Dawn Atkins, a grad student at UI. "We don't recruit, but we do want people to understand what we're doing [when we worship]."

Atkins and the other Wiccans at UI are designing a series of tapes for public access TV to explain that witches are not what fairy tales make them out to be.

So just who dances with the devil in the pale moonlight? Only Macbeth, the Brothers Grimm and Goody Proctor would know.

Kathryn Phillips, U. of Iowa/Photo by Michael Dickbernd, U. of Iowa

The Buzz

• When do four wrongs make a right? On the S.A.T. As of last April, a student can miss as many as four questions and still get a perfect 1600. The College Board recalibrated its scoring to correct five decades of declining scores on the standardized test.

• Shannon Faulkner withdrew Aug. 18 from the Citadel, the Charleston, S.C., all-male military college that spent millions trying to block her admittance. Faulkner, who spent her first week in the infirmary, said the stress from her two-and-a-half-year legal battle finally got to her.

• The House of Representatives voted in August to eliminate financing for the Americorps national service program. The program, whose budget is currently \$470 million, gives members a \$4,724 tuition voucher for each year of service. President Clinton vows to veto the bill if it comes to his desk in its present unamended form.

A Final Note

IN THE ABSENCE OF comprehensive regulations, the issue of sexual harassment in the workplace is a crucible of legal and ethical debate.

Controversy recently flared at Michigan State U. when the discovery of a sexually explicit note resulted in the resignation of the student newspaper's editor in chief.

MSU senior Kyle Melinn resigned from the paper after a note he wrote describing a sexual fantasy involving a female intern was found in the newsroom by staffers.

After discovering the note and hearing prepared statements from Melinn and MSU junior Alicia Sare, the subject of the note, staffers petitioned Melinn to resign. The incident sparked campuswide controversy and media attention across the state.

"I don't think he should've resigned," says MSU doctoral student Harold Cowherd. "He has a First Amendment right to express whatever he wants. The whole thing is kind of scary, you know?"

MSU senior Kurt Hauglie disagrees. "It's disappointing," he says. "I think he broke the trust with the staff, so I don't think he could have stayed on as editor. The fact that he has a position of authority and power is what makes this wrong."

Cowherd is still perplexed. "If it was a private note between two people, how and why did a *State News* reporter pick it up and circulate it?"

"It was left out on a computer that everyone uses," says interim editor in chief Jeff McMillan. "It was a private note, but it was left in a public place."

Melinn himself believes his resignation was the only viable choice.

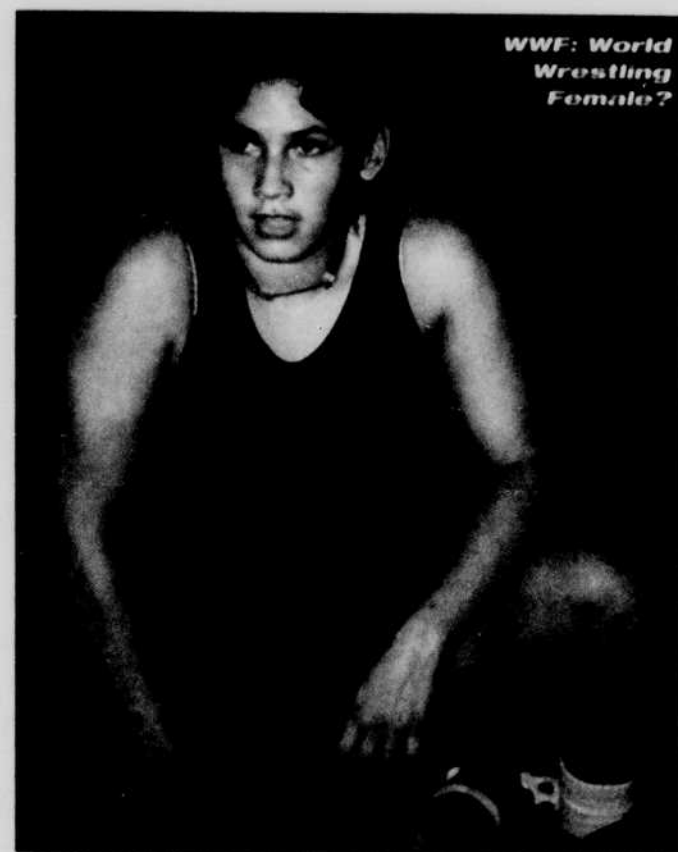
"I'll look back two or three years from now, and it will still have been best for the newspaper."

Vikas Bajaj, Michigan State U., contributed to this story.

• States and schools are scrambling to address affirmative action: U. of Minnesota administrators want to consolidate existing affirmative policies into one diversity policy; Michigan legislators have proposed three bills that would abolish affirmative action; Iowa's governor has stated that he anticipates no changes in the state's policy; and the Association of Big Ten Schools, a coalition of student government representatives, passed a resolution in support of diversity.

• "R" movies are back at Brigham Young U. — in an edited form. BYU, 99 percent of whose students are Mormon, had banned them outright in January. But after 85 percent of the students expressed a desire to see them once they had been appropriately edited, the board of trustees changed its decision.

• Don't you worry — the case of the century will indeed live on: Cornell U. has established an O.J. Simpson murder trial archive. Text, graphics, cartoons, videotape and other materials that relate to DNA fingerprinting evidence presented in the trial will be saved and used to understand the DNA science.



WWF: World Wrestling Female?

Can't Pin Her Down

ABBEY SCHWARTZBERG JUST WANTED TO GET A jump start on conditioning for her upcoming gymnastics season. But after she began working out in the Berkeley High wrestling room in Huntington Woods, Mich., things changed.

"A couple of the boys asked me, 'Why don't you go out for the team? You're really strong,'" recalls Schwartzberg, a sophomore at California State U., Bakersfield.

On the first day of wrestling practice in the fall of 1992, Schwartzberg was in the room again, but this time for a different reason.

She wanted to wrestle. "I was basically ostracized by the boys at first because they didn't think I would make it," says Schwartzberg, who is currently ranked second in USA women's freestyle wrestling. "But then after I did, it was like having 25 brothers."

Schwartzberg parlayed a gutsy five-win/18-loss season during her senior year at Berkeley into an amateur wrestling career with Sunkist Kids, a national wrestling club. She placed second at the World Team trials in Oklahoma in June and fourth at the U.S. National Freestyle Championships in May.

Schwartzberg knows she is more than just a female in a

male-dominated sport.

"I'm also a pioneer, because women's wrestling is just beginning," she says. "There's a lot of skepticism out there. But usually your biggest critics turn out to be your biggest fans after they come out and watch you. You can't argue with heart."

Schwartzberg's rise hasn't come without adversity. In one match, she had to resort to extreme measures.

"The guy was just a brick house, a monster," she recalls. "He was pounding my head into the mat. Then he started cross-facing me and the referee didn't call it. So I just opened up my mouth and bit him because I couldn't breathe."

Schwartzberg, who transferred from Arizona State U. to CSU this year, is premed and wants to become a chiropractor.

"I'm going to hurt my opponents, then give 'em my card and say, 'I'll give you 20 percent off,'" she jokes.

Dan Miller, Arizona State U. /Photo by Mark Kramer, Arizona State U.