

Advocacy Update

May 23 – June 3, 2011

The Competitive Cheer Debate (May 23) – The New York Times published an article outlining the current status of women's competitive cheer as it tries to become an NCAA sanctioned sport. Two competing cheer formats are pushing for recognition: Acrobatics & Tumbling and Stunt. Six programs competed in Acrobatics & Tumbling last year, while 22 schools competed in Stunt. Among the differences between the two forms are: roster size, number of competitions and number of scholarships. Acrobatics & Tumbling has larger rosters with proportionately fewer scholarships and has fewer competitions than Stunt. As both of these models push for NCAA recognition, critics worry that Universities will use competitive cheer as a way to increase their numbers of female athletes, while not providing a full, varsity sport experience.

[Read the New York Times Article Here.](#)

[Read the Time Magazine Article Here.](#)

WSF Responds to Competitive Cheer Article in New York Times (May 24) – The Women's Sports Foundation issued a response to the New York Times article [HERE](#). WSF supports competitive cheer as a viable NCAA sport as long as it is developed in a way that provides a full, meaningful varsity sport experience. [Read WSF position paper here.](#)

U.S. Department of State Empowers Women and Girls Through Soccer and International Exchanges (May 24) - Building on Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's vision to empower women and girls worldwide, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' SportsUnited Office will host 18 girls and six coaches from Bolivia, Germany, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Palestinian Territories, and South Africa May 31-June 10 in New York City and Washington, D.C. Representatives from this delegation will be meeting with the NACWAA National Office staff on June 9th. [Read more.](#)

Title IX Wrestling Case Goes to Trial (May 24) – The lawsuit *Mansourian v. Regents of the University of California*, which involves an allegation of discrimination by three former UC-Davis wrestlers, is being argued in court. The three women say that they were cut from the team for no reason and claim that it was an act of sex discrimination. This case has been ongoing for over five years and has been supported by the AAUW since 2005. [Read more.](#)

NCAA Punishes Schools Not Meeting Academic Standards (May 24) – The NCAA is issuing punishments for 103 Division I teams for not meeting the 925 APR score requirement. This year, 305 Division I teams failed to meet the 925 benchmark. Of the 305 teams that did not meet the standard, less than one-third are women's teams. Men's Basketball and Football accounted for the largest number of schools that failed to meet the standard. [Read more.](#)

Badminton's Dress Code Criticized as Sexist (May 26) – The Badminton World Federation issued guidelines this past week requiring all female badminton players who compete at the elite level to wear skirts or dresses. The Federation issued the rule in an attempt to increase interest in the sport. Officials said, "The dress code would make female players appear more feminine and appealing to fans and corporate sponsors." The rule has been received with outrage by many

who see the rule as an attempt to sexualize female badminton athletes and limit their personal freedom. [Read more.](#)

The Knight Commission Offers Research Grants (May 27) – The Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics is requesting proposals for grants to support research on intercollegiate athletics policy. The program is intended to enhance the Commission's long-standing legacy of recommending policy changes to improve the management and integrity of big-time college athletics by bringing new voices into the conversation about how to ensure that athletics programs provide value both to individual athletes and to the colleges and universities that support them. [Read more.](#)