

the voice of women's sport

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Britain's best kept secrets

Quar
American football
NFL
Chicago 20
Detroit
Cincinnati
Pittsburgh
Dallas 21 Washington 14;
Cincinnati 16; Minnesota 27 Gr
American Conference:
1 New England (W6-L2-TO-
129); 2 Miami (5-3-0-161-
Buffalo (4-4-0-143-148); 4 NY
6-0-139-149). West Division: 1
Las Vegas (W8-LO-TO-PF246-PA130); 2
Denver (5-3-0-184-141); 3 Oakland (2-
6-0-138-184); 4 San Diego (1-7-0-
132-215). North Division: 1 Baltimore
(W5-L3-TO-PF184-PA149); 2 Cleveland
(2-5-0-115-130); 3 Cincinnati (3-5-0-
173); 4 Pittsburgh (2-6-0-148-
173). Division: 1 Indianapolis

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Squash
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Other results

NATIONWIDE CONFERENCE							
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hereford	16	10	4	2	38	18	34
Chester	16	9	6	1	24	9	33
Aldershot	16	10	3	3	39	25	33
Barnet	16	10	3	3	28	19	33
Exeter	16	9	4	3	28	20	31
Shrewsbury	14	7	4	3	21	15	25
Accrington Stan	16	6	6	4	20	24	24
Morecambe	16	7	3	6	25	24	24
Svenage	16	6	5	5	18	23	23
Tranmere	16	6	4	6	18	23	23
Woking	16	5	5	6	18	23	23
Telford	15	5	5	5	18	23	23
Margate	16	5	4	7	18	23	23
Scarborough	16	3	4	9	18	23	23
Forest Green	16	4	4	8	18	23	23
Dag & Red	16	4	4	8	18	23	23
Tamworth	16	3	6	7	18	23	23
Gravesend	16	3	6	7	18	23	23
Leigh RMI	15	3	4	8	13	2	2
Northwich	16	1	5	10	14	32	2
arnborough							

FA TROPHY
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Saturday: Alfreton T
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Htd 1 Lancaster 1; 1
Athletic 1; Barton P
Billericay 4; Tilbur
Bracknell Tn 1; 1
Burgess Hill Tn 1
4th 3 Rmole

24 Sport
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master

Laura Davies
on the
might of South Korean
women's golf almost single-
handedly yesterday, and just
out pulled it off with a final-
round 69 to finish joint second
at the Nine Bridges Classic
in Jeju Island.
South Korea

David Davies
Few teams can claim to be unbeaten in 75 consecutive outings, but for Fulham's men it was so — until the merciless and Jason Old man l...

Mike Tindall
Willing workhorse made the hard yards and proved his versatility when switched to the...

Paula Cocozz
The merciless and Jason Old man l...

Jason
Old man l...

Flintoff plays
hard for a
grateful galle

rounder. We play back Tests against and I bowled above one and about 90 took a bit of a han Without Flintoff struggle to field side, a problem in the cr things hardly rivalled

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Chief Executive, Women's Sports Foundation

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Support from the current Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and her predecessors



Sport holds the key to unlocking the potential of many of our young people at many things. It teaches discipline, teamwork and self-respect. Those are lessons worth learning for life as well as for sport.

The media is a powerful influence on young people. But all too often, it is dominated by football. And men's football at that. All too often we forget that some of our most inspirational sporting figures are women. Think of the incomparable Ellen MacArthur. Or the outstanding Paula Radcliffe.

These people are icons of their generation. Quiet, unassuming but brilliant. And while journalists may tell us where the next David Beckham is coming from, we rarely see the same attention given to women's sport.

Sport is inclusive, but more than ever before, we need the media to foster that belief. I wish your initiative every success.

Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP
Secretary of State, Department of Culture, Media and Sport.



I want to wish you all the very best for your campaign to challenge the invisibility of women in sport here in the UK. We have many great sportswomen, some of them at the height of their own sport, yet we hear too little about their achievements. We have millions of women around the country actively engaged in regular sporting activity, yet they receive too little public encouragement. Your campaign will - I'm sure - help to put this right.

Rt Hon Chris Smith MP
Secretary of State, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 1997 to 2001.



There were 23 female MPs in the House of Commons when I was first elected Member of Parliament 20 years ago. Since then we have managed to make strong advances, and there are now 118 sitting in the House.

Women in sport are in a similar position to when I first entered Parliament. We manage to produce world-class athletes such as Denise Lewis, Ellen MacArthur and Paula Radcliffe. Sport can reduce the chance of osteoporosis and heart disease, as well as being a source of pleasure. Yet only 5% of sports coverage follows women. This figure needs to be higher to promote the health benefits of sport, and ensure that women do not feel isolated.

Rt Hon Virginia Bottomley JP MP
Secretary of State, Department of National Heritage (Culture, Media and Sport), 1995 to 1997.

Introduction



Clare Balding

Media coverage of sport in the UK has changed dramatically over the last decade, with an explosion of dedicated sports radio stations and terrestrial, satellite and digital television channels now offering us sports coverage twenty-four hours a day. The print media has focused on the lives of sports figures more than ever and the wonder of the World Wide Web has facilitated faster and more widespread analysis than would ever have been deemed possible.

It is, therefore, so much more frustrating to learn that despite such an expanse of space waiting to be filled, the coverage of women's sport remains appalling. Research by the Women's Sports Foundation reveals that only 2.65% of daily newspaper coverage is dedicated to women's sport. This figure stands alone as an atrocious indictment of the imbalance of media coverage in the UK. However, it is all the more depressing when you consider how little progress has been made since the last survey: in the year 2000, the figure was 2.3%. While global sporting superstars like Paula Radcliffe create the perception of a healthy state of affairs, the facts suggest otherwise.

It is these desperate figures that have driven the Women's Sports Foundation to ask some serious questions about the coverage of women's sport in the UK. This report is published on the day that key sportspeople, politicians, sports managers and media decision-makers are being brought together to try to carve out a way forward. The report offers further analysis of the current situation and some insight into why it remains as it is. It also puts the UK situation into a global context.

You will read the determined statements of support from international sportswomen and from the female sports stars of the future. Furthermore, you will note that the crucially influential media decision-makers, who dictate the type and depth of coverage, have also revealed support for change. Finally, and perhaps most crucially, this report shows that British public opinion is overwhelmingly in support of more media coverage of women's sports.

The current situation is just not good enough. We can and must do better. Too many of our female sports stars are, at best, being overlooked and at worst, totally ignored. This is a tragic

undervaluing of the sacrifices, dedication and extraordinary talent of Britain's exceptional sportswomen. It is also a dangerous game in which we risk undermining the continued development of our sporting nation. Whether that development takes place on a school netball court, on a windy football pitch or via the Olympic rostrum, the promotion of our sporting heroines is absolutely crucial. It is central to both the health and well-being of all British women and girls and to the development of our elite sporting future.

Of course, those heroines already exist. As a patron and fervent supporter of the Women's Sports Foundation, it is an honour for me to join them in calling for the media to acknowledge and celebrate the wealth of talent that we are privileged to enjoy.

"The media has a powerful influence over people and if that influence can be used to encourage young girls into mainstream and minority sports then British sport and women's health will benefit tremendously. Any role that the Women's Sports Foundation can play in promoting women's sport within the media can only be a good thing."

Denise Lewis, OBE

"I fully support what the Women's Sports Foundation is aiming to achieve. A campaign such as this is a great way for everyone to learn from sportswomen learning how to present themselves in the media, to the media appreciating the great things that British sportswomen are achieving every day and turning this into airtime."

Sally Gunnell, OBE

Analysis The current situation

Women are under-represented at all levels of sports media. Aside from exceptional achievers like Paula Radcliffe and those outstanding sportswomen such as Denise Lewis, Tanni Grey-Thompson and Kelly Holmes who excel in athletics, Britain's female sporting elite remains largely anonymous. There are pockets of exposure. On becoming world champions Karen Pickering and Nicole Cooke of course received attention. When the England women's cricket team won the world cup in 1993 reference was made to it. Nevertheless there is a fundamental lack of depth in the level of coverage. Where were the headlines after England's overwhelming test victories over South Africa in summer 2003? The lack of depth is based upon sporadic and ad hoc reporting at best and an absolute oversight at worst. During the 2002 Commonwealth Games we know that 32% of broadsheet and 26% of tabloid sports coverage was devoted to sportswomen. While this in itself is inequitable it is a figure that fell away desperately throughout the rest of the year.

In fact, our research has shown that there is a widespread perception of more media coverage of women's sport than actually exists. We estimate that 5% of sports media coverage is dedicated to women's sport. Amongst the media professionals and sportswomen that we interviewed for this report there was huge surprise at how low that figure actually is. It is a figure born out of several levels of analysis by the Women's Sports Foundation. In 2000 we conducted a study of sports coverage by tabloid newspapers. We found that women's sport received a mere 2.3% of the

coverage and while 1564 photographs of sportsmen were shown, there were just 36 of women. We have followed up that research in 2003. The results reflect an appalling consistency and given the growth in column inches dedicated to sport, a shockingly low rate of improvement. We studied a cross section of print media that included regional and local as well as national press. The daily average space dedicated to women's sport was significantly stronger in the national broadsheets at 7.1% but across the board the figure dropped to a mere 2.65%. Furthermore we found that there was an average of 10 days a month when women's sport received absolutely no mention at all.

Indeed, not only is the overall level of coverage poor, a substantial proportion of it is actually derogatory or focused excessively on the sportswoman's physical appearance, personal life or lifestyle. While we recognise the increasingly celebrity focused nature of all news coverage, the lack of focus on a sportswoman's athleticism, skill and achievements within sports reporting, in turn further undermines the status of women in sport.

The reasons for the current situation are complex and receive further examination later in this report. There are, however, obvious factors. Women are under-represented in all aspects of sports news production including sports journalism, sports photography and sports broadcasting and presenting. Over the last decade there has, without doubt, been a real transformation in the gender makeup of sports presentation. The international sportswomen that we interviewed for this report listed women such as Helen Rollason and Hazel Irvine as their early inspirations. Today the

likes of Clare Balding, Eleanor Oldroyd and Gabby Logan are further embedding that trend. In the print media too there are acclaimed and emerging experts such as Sue Mott, Amy Lawrence, Peta Bee, amongst others that are making their mark. However, the key decision making posts are still dominated by men. Not one of the daily national newspapers in England, Scotland or Wales in July 2003 had a female sports editor. In the words of Tanni Grey-Thompson "While progress has been made over the years we will never address the inequality of coverage in women's sport until we have more women journalists, editors and directors as well as more woman coaches and managers in sport. It is a multi-faceted challenge and it's absolutely crucial that we keep trying to get it right".

The media coverage of women's sport is significant because television, radio and the print media play a central role in informing our knowledge, opinions and attitudes about women and sport and informing perceptions that influence its future development. Poor media coverage also results in poorer levels of sponsorship and perpetuates the dearth of visible role models for young women and sportswomen of the future. Sport England research shows that even by the age of 7 many more girls than boys have been put off sport. Furthermore we know that by the time girls reach 18, 40% of them have actually have dropped out of sports activity entirely. To add to this, in adulthood, almost half of women in Britain participate in little or no sport at all.

The media is not entirely to blame for this. However, as the Secretary of State and leading athletes have outlined within this report, it is a powerful influence and plays a significant role.

"An increase in the coverage of female sport would be the desired outcome from the Women's Sports Foundation campaign. We need to look at ways of improving the quality and variety of the coverage of women's sport with a view to raising the profile of women's sport in general."
Laura Davies, CBE

"I have been involved with the Women's Sports Foundation for several years now. I think this is a worthy campaign to get the media on board to encourage greater representation and participation in sport. Women's sport is developing so rapidly and standards are improving all the time, we need the media to move forward with us."
Kelly Holmes, MBE

The global context

The portrayal of women's sport varies in countries similar to the UK around the world.

Longitudinal research conducted by the Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles from 1989 to 1999¹, the largest study of its kind, revealed some familiar patterns. Depressingly they found a continuation of the low overall output of women's sports coverage. USA women receive 8.7% of total sports coverage. They also found that the coverage that does exist is again focused on women as sex objects rather than athletes.

A similar longitudinal study has been conducted every four years since 1980 in Australia. The 1996 study showed that television coverage of women's sport for the period sampled was just 2%. This research was followed up in what is the most recent study of female sports media coverage in Australia. The report *An Illusory Image: A report on the media coverage and portrayal of women's sport in Australia 2000*², shows that although the nation's sportswomen are more professional than ever, with a proven international record, they still struggle for consistent, long-term coverage. The 2000 survey took a snapshot of media coverage of women's sport from newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations during a two-week period, establishing a measurement of coverage and additional information about the portrayal of women's sport in the media. The results show that media coverage of women in sport is treated very differently to that of men. One example highlighted by the research was that of a commercial 'current affairs style' sports programme that devoted six minutes of air time to

guinea pig racing yet the only story about women's sport on the same show ran for 15 seconds.

The Illusory Image 2000 report also showed television coverage of women's sport for the period sampled was still 2.0% of total sports broadcasting. Radio coverage was surveyed and showed a total figure of 1.4% of total sports broadcasts while sports magazines registered 6.8% of coverage devoted to women's sports. There was some good news however, the newspaper reportage of women's sport has doubled since 1992, although results showed only 10.7% of newspaper space was devoted to women's sport.

Dr Murray Phillips, author of numerous reports based on women and media coverage stated "women's sport also suffers from positioning in newspapers, with women's stories often placed at the bottom of the pages or at the inner, most inaccessible pages of the sports section. Only 5.6% of women's stories and 2.6% of mixed sport made the 'male' domain of the back page."

The role of commercial as opposed to public sector broadcasting in Australia is significant. With regard to commercial broadcasters Women Sport Australia President, Margot Foster has argued that they "maintain they are giving the public what they want to watch, which translates as being 'popular'. But how do they know women's sports can not be as popular as rugby league and men's cricket, if they keep shoving that down people's throats?"

To show how television could increase the popularity of women's sports and change people's attitudes, Margot Foster sites "the popularity of Australia's Olympic swimmers". She believes this

is an example of how the media created the image of swimming being a part of Australia's culture, turning the sport into a very sponsor friendly and marketable commodity.

According to Women's Soccer Australia Chief Executive Director, Warren Fisher the lack of coverage of women's sport on commercial Australian television is due to, "the networks' conservatism, which does not give smaller sports [played by women] a chance to be watched by the public".

He added that television media has "pre-conceptions" about what interests the Australian public and most viewers "have become used to just accepting what is on the TV menu, because they don't know any different." He suggested that if commercial television took more chances by broadcasting women's sport "at prime time in a prime timeslot" people would watch it.

Furthermore there are television channels in Australia that are improving their coverage of women's sport. Channel 10 has been one of those and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), is more inclined to broadcast women's sport, as it is not driven by commercial considerations. The ABC broadcasts women's netball and basketball, the most popular women's sports in Australia.

New Zealand is equally hailed as a progressive example of how women's sport can become a familiar part of sports broadcasting. Rugby, cricket, netball and rugby league are the four big sports which dominated television coverage. While, with the exception of netball, those sports are on the whole dominated by the male version, there are exceptions. The two rugby union

"As an Olympic medallist and now a TV presenter, I have seen how sport and the media work from a variety of angles. It's really important that women and girls are given the right opportunities in sport and the media have a huge role to play in this, from promoting sport to girls at grass roots level to creating heroes out of our top class female athletes in a wide variety of different sports." Sharron Davies, MBE

World XV versus the New Zealand Black Ferns tests in summer 2003 received live television coverage on terrestrial and SKY channels. According to one of the English representatives Gill Burns, the newspapers coverage was substantial too, to such an extent that she was recognised on the street several times. This would be an unlikely occurrence in the UK.

Furthermore in Sweden the commercial broadcaster TV4 gained record viewing figures for its live coverage of the 2003 women's football World Cup final, which Sweden lost to Germany. With a population of only 9 million, 3.8 million watched the game. This figure compares with the 2.9 million that chose to watch the Swedish men's national team lose their quarterfinal tie to Senegal in the 2002 men's World Cup.

The hints of positive progress also come through strongly when you examine Olympic coverage.

The Sydney 2000 Olympics were the most successful medal performance by Australian women at any Olympics. Consequently the media praised the achievements of women in sport. The Games were designated as a tribute to women at the Olympics, celebrating 100 years since females first competed.

In Europe, Capranica and Aversa³ studied the portrayal of Italian female athletes

during the 2000 Sydney Games. The proportion of television airtime coverage of female athletes (29%) was close to the proportion of the Italian female participation in the Games (International 38%, Italian 28%), with no gender differences regarding the placement of women's sport in the broadcast. Women's events hit 26% of total mean audience, which included 40% females. The male share was 31% for both total Olympic events and women-only sports, while the female share was 19% and 20%, respectively.

These figures illustrate what can be done. However they beg the question: why are women's achievements so newsworthy during the Olympic period while at other times excluded or marginalised within the women's sport/men's sport mentality?

A brief overview of the global context reveals some allied patterns to the UK position and some prospects for change. However as Bernstein⁴ points out, although women have gained some ground as far as media visibility is concerned, especially in major sporting events, it is far too early for a 'victory lap'. With regard to the breadth, consistency and quality of the coverage of women's sport, there is still a long, long way to go.

¹ Wilson. W (ed) (2000). *Gender in Televised Sports: 1989, 1993 and 1999*. Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles.

² *An Illusory Image: A report on the Media Coverage and Portrayal of Women's Sport in Australia*. (2000) Australian Sports Commission.

³ Capranica L. Aversa (2002) *Italian Television Sport Coverage During the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games: A Gender Perspective*. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. pp. 337-349(13).

⁴ Bernstein A. (2002) *Is It Time for a Victory Lap?: Changes in the Media Coverage of Women in Sport*. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. Vol. 37. No.4.



What are the issues ?

For a real perspective on the issues behind the problem of media coverage in the UK, the Women's Sports Foundation assembled the opinion and perspectives of the key people working, performing and reporting on sport in the UK. We provoked some interesting discussion and brought forward some forthright and differing views.

Is the poor balance of sports coverage really a gender issue?

For many people the issue of balanced media coverage of sport is as much a type of sport issue as a gender issue. For some it is professional football against the rest. As Craig Tregurtha the Sports Editor of the Sunday Mirror explained, "any sport will currently find it hard to break through the monolithic dominance of professional football. There is so much money involved it is hard to see where less commercially orientated sports can make in-roads". It is true that while there are far too many anonymous female sports stars there are also elite sportsmen that suffer from the same obscurity. The current world number one in men's squash is Pete Nicol. Not a household name. Likewise our survey of public opinion, conducted in October 2003, found that when asked to name just three leading British sports stars, respondents listed Paula Radcliffe more times than the third placed Michael Owen.

Nonetheless this deflects from the clear evidence of a massive disparity between the coverage of sportsmen and women both across sport generally and most acutely in mainstream team sports such as cricket, rugby and football.

What drives sports coverage?

The many different sections of the media do not approach sports coverage in the same way. The media professionals that we interviewed acknowledged that the tabloids' coverage of sport was often sensationalist and could be based on monumental failure as much as any form of success. There are however sections of the media that cover sport for the sake of sport and these should prove to be more fruitful hunting grounds for future coverage of women's sport. Here there is scope for more coverage based upon achievement. Andy Kay, Sports Editor, Capital Radio Group, believes that while "women's sport should not be promoted for the sake of it, there is certainly a case for more balanced broadcasting. However it needs to be based on achievement and excellence, a certain quality, not a certain sex. The sportswomen are out there, we just need to engage the audience".

The inclination and bias of programme or story editors will of course be significant.

However there is again room for optimism. According to James Porter, Editor of Sports Gathering at BBC Sport, "The media is a competitive world but I believe that a real concerted effort, combined with some tenacity and imagination will eventually see an improvement in the media dedication to women's sport. Too often editors are just unaware that events are happening. The more information they receive, the more scope there is for change".

Has sport become too celebrity focused?

It is true to say that almost all news coverage has gradually become more personality and celebrity focused in the last decade. In the words of Gary Franes, Executive Producer at Sunset + Vine, "The media likes personalities. They also like success. Where those two characteristics combine there is of course potential for better media exposure".

To a certain extent women's sport will have to play the game. Craig Tregurtha "the people pushing for coverage of their particular [women's] sport need to be more aggressive while also realistic. You will inevitably have to appeal to sports loving men, be visually interesting and thrilling to watch".

"I bet most people would be hard pushed to name a top female British gymnast, yet we've had great success over the last few years. If the Womens Sports Foundation campaign can help raise the profile of our top athletes from a variety of different sports then I support it wholeheartedly."
Beth Twedde.

"Women's and girls sport has come a long way recently and in a sport like athletics, men and women are now equally recognised based on merit of performance. I think there is a long way to go in some other sports, but it's important that all women and girls have role models in their chosen sport."
Tessa Sanderson, OBE

Perceptions of women's sport

It's vital that the case for more coverage of women's sport is not based on an idealistic, principled position of what is fair. As has already been established there are different factors that contribute to the decisions about which sports, teams, and people are covered in the pages and programmes dedicated to sport.

It is however time to shatter the illusion that women's sport is seen in a negative light or that there is a belief that women shouldn't play sport.

Andy Kay, Sports Editor of the commercial Capital Radio Group told us "There should be no men's or women's sport. Sport is sport". Furthermore in the opinion of James Porter, Editor of Sports Gathering at BBC Sport "There are no sports that women should not play – all sports should be for all people".

Likewise it is untrue that women's sport does not appeal to a wider audience. When almost half of the Swedish population tune in for the women's football World Cup Final there must surely be some appeal. There are parallels in the UK too. The Women's 2003 FA Cup final was shown live on the BBC on a Bank Holiday Monday in May. Despite the fact that the elite of

women's football is still only semi-professional in the UK, the game managed to attract an audience of 1.9 million.

Aside from the exceptionally popular women's sports such as tennis and athletics it seems that other women's sport is not the boring turn off it is perceived to be. A viewing figure of 5.4 million at midnight on a Thursday for the Olympic curling final in 2003 suggests that women excelling at a sport, to whatever extent it is a minority sport, can truly engage the public.

It is indeed the apparent attitude of the public that is so often quoted as the driving force behind what coverage we read, see or hear. "You have to be realistic" a newspaper editor told us. "We only publish what our readers want".

However we have found evidence that the public is being short changed. In conjunction with Vision 21 we conducted a survey of the British public. We found that the people we surveyed were overwhelmingly in favour of the encouragement of women and girls' sport. In fact 85% believe that we should do more to encourage girls to take part in sport and these figures are similar across demographic groups.

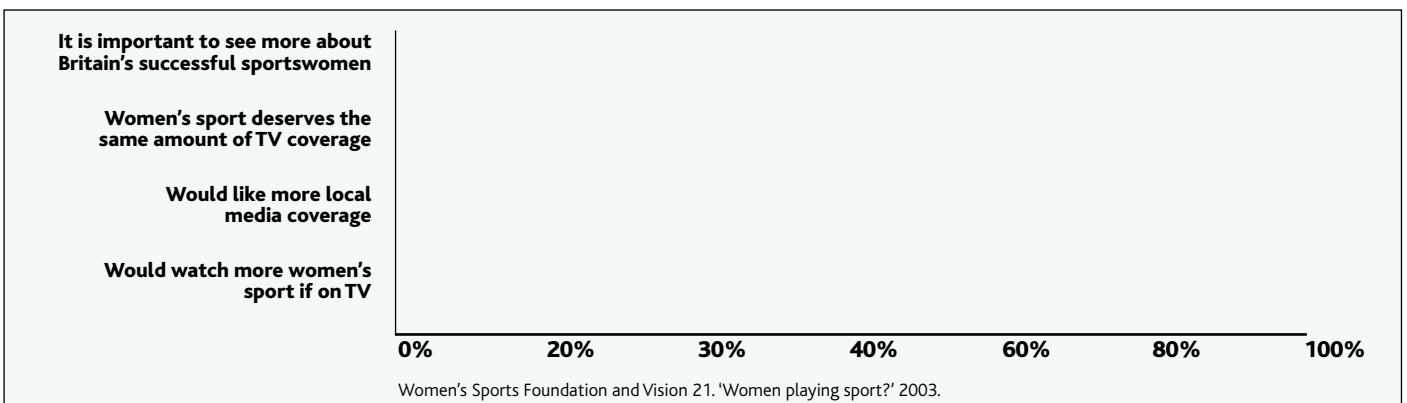
Both men and women feel that coverage of women's sport should be improved and feel that this would be beneficial to women's sport in Britain. A total of 87% of people feel that 'more female sports stars on the television would encourage girls to play more sport'. And 82% agree that 'more women's sport in the media would help develop more women champions for Britain'.

Furthermore, more men (51%) than women (40%) said that they would definitely watch more women's sport if it was televised. A further 20.3% and 20.2% said they would perhaps watch more.

As the chart illustrates below there is overwhelming evidence that British people believe that more should be done to further women's sport.

As the current England rugby union captain Maxine Edwards told us, "people are furious when they find out that an England women's team exists, is highly successful and yet they are denied the right to know about it".

There is a case for renewed optimism amongst those promoting women's sport and, we would suggest, an urgency for the media to think again about what the public actually want.



Can the media make a difference?

It is clear then that there is a depth of feeling in support of more focus on women's sport. This feeling however is for change that must run right across the elements of sport from the playground to international competitions. It is false to proclaim that a transformation of the media alone would suffice.

Nonetheless, amongst sportswomen themselves there is a real belief that the media does make a difference. Clare Taylor the former England footballer and current England cricketer believes that while there are many factors that influence sports development amongst women and girls "if the media portrayed more positive images of women, then girls would be encouraged to stay involved in sport". While her heroes as a child were sportsmen like Ian Botham, the likes of Paula Radcliffe are the figures that are offering the inspiration today. A number of the sportswomen that we interviewed listed sportsmen as their early role models.

Quite often there were no high profile women in their particular sport, this was especially true for football and rugby and for sportswomen with disabilities. Therefore, the inspiration came largely from men or the ground breaking television presenters such as Helen Rollason, or women in more mainstream sports such as Mary Peters. This left a sense of further detachment for the potential sportswomen from what was achievable and a reliance on more local influences such as parents.

We also found a sense that, despite all being international athletes, the women we interviewed very often felt like second class sports people. They

pointed out that the high level of discipline, the intensive training, the personal and financial sacrifices and the mental and physical exertion that they endure in order to be at the very top of their sport, too often go unnoticed. This inevitably impacts upon morale.

As the England and Great Britain hockey player Kate Walsh acknowledged, the almost non-existent coverage of the woman's football World Cup was shameful and hardly inspiring for the next generation of women footballers.

The issue of role models is vital in sport and positive role models are particularly important for young women and girls. Surely it must be more than a coincidence that Sweden enjoys both better media coverage of women's sport and almost equal participation rates between men and women. While we are reflecting on the evidence that tells us that 40% of girls in the UK have dropped out of physical activity by the age of 18, we might ponder for a moment on the power of the media to influence them and the role models that exist now.



"As an experienced sailor and successful sportswoman it is key that organisations such as the Women's Sports Foundation get the support they need from the media and sports organisation to help promote female role models. I fully support what they are trying to achieve and wholeheartedly support the campaign".

Tracy Edwards, MBE

"I welcome the initiative and support the campaign for more coverage of women's sport. More coverage can only help British sport, particularly in an Olympic year".

Katherine Grainger

"As a world champion swimmer I know that kids look up to me. If they are encouraged to become better swimmers because of it then that's fantastic. This can only work with the media on board to support female athletes and move the focus away from football a bit."

Katy Sexton



"As a woman who has excelled within her given sport and won an Olympic gold medal, I feel that the work that the Women's Sports Foundation are doing is vital to raising the profile of women in sport and so giving up and coming female athletes who have the potential to win gold in Athens a greater amount of media exposure."
Stephanie Cook, MBE

"British men's rowing has a good profile in this country, and British women's rowing profile is beginning to grow. However it is still at a low level, even though we have Olympic and World medallists who all have a story to tell. I hope that bringing sports and media people together will help stimulate more coverage of women's sport in general."
Cath Bishop

New media and a new approach to women's sport

As the evidence presented in this report has illustrated there is scope for optimism regarding the future of women's sport in the media. Not least because there are many ground breaking areas that are already setting the standard.

The explosion of new media has provided fresh opportunities for a broader perspective on sport. The official website of the FIFA women's World Cup USA 2003, www.fifaworldcup.com, has recorded more than 50 million page views since its launch in July 2003. The visitors to the site have come from over 200 countries.

In the UK the popularity of women's football has led some established professional clubs to embrace their women's teams and fully mainstream news of their players and teams endeavours throughout their news coverage. One such example is Arsenal FC who fully integrate news of their women's team throughout their club programme, official magazine and club website www.arsenal.com. The news is not hidden away or difficult to find. It is easily viewable and on the occasion when the story warrants it, it is part of the headline news. The same could be said for the Football Association's website too that, right from the front page, fully integrates the women's game into it's information.

The BBC Sport website has also provided some ground breaking exposure for sportswomen. The academy section of the site has, in particular, offered a balanced coverage

to both male and female sporting stars and although women's sport fails to feature fully or proportionately on the front page of the website, very often the information is there for the determined researcher.

The proliferation of satellite, cable and digital television broadcasting in the UK has also provided new opportunities for the coverage of women's sport. The sports channel Eurosport has an established track record of providing women's sports coverage including women's football, cycling and extreme sports. Sky Sports has also provided some dedicated coverage including women's golf and the England women's football internationals.

Likewise there are pockets of good practice and improvement in the print media. As our survey indicated daily broadsheets offer by far the best quality and breadth of women's sport coverage at an average of 7.1% of total space.

The Women's Sports Foundation is seeking to build upon those areas that provide us with grounds for optimism. Our work, as encapsulated in this report, is to analyse the current situation, ask questions regarding the causes, consult about the way forward and facilitate and encourage change.

To call upon the whole "media" as a distinct entity in itself to achieve any specific targets would be an own goal. We recognise that the media is a diverse and monolithic arrangement of separate institutions with different agendas and conflicting pressures. However we have established some discernable objectives that, along with our broader influencing work, will steer us in the right direction.

We want to see improvements in three areas:

Results

The reporting of international and elite fixtures and results.

A commitment to women's sport through public service broadcasting

The acknowledgment of a public desire to see a breadth of sports coverage in the renewed BBC Charter.

Acknowledgment of achievement

In depth analysis with a focus on the achievements of Britain's currently anonymous elite sportswomen.

The Women's Sports Foundation will conduct research again in 2006 and alongside a move towards achieving the above we specifically want to achieve:

- An overall increase in the average newspaper coverage of women's sport from 2.65% to 5% (within broadsheets from 7.1% to 10%).
- A public opinion survey that illustrates a higher level of satisfaction with media sports coverage.
- A survey of international sportswomen that reveals a stronger level of satisfaction with the respect and recognition they have received.



Embracing the momentum and the desire for change
Deborah Potts

The support we have received for this initiative from right across sport and the sports media and the political world has been quite astounding. From those competing at a local level, through to international stars past and present, governing bodies and sports councils, media professionals themselves and Members of Parliament, we have had nothing but a resounding affirmation that the questions raised in this report are long overdue an airing.

It was our determination not to shirk those difficult questions that led to this campaign. There are no easy answers. However, at the very least we hope to have consolidated the progress already made and edged forward towards some fresh steps for the future.

This report gathers together the evidence. On it's own it provides a powerful case for change. However our work and our campaign for media

coverage will go on and will permeate and compliment the others areas in which we continue to work. In Parliament we will continue to gather support for the importance of women's sport as a whole and the furtherance of media coverage in particular. At the time of writing this report we have tabled Parliamentary Questions and an Early Day Motion to raise the issue in the House of Commons.

We will also be focusing on the renewal of the BBC Charter (scheduled for 2006) and seeking to include sport within the BBC's commitment to balanced and representative broadcasting.

Amongst sports organisations we have forged an alliance that includes all the major sports in the UK. The group of media managers draws representatives from Sport England, the Sports Council for Wales, UK Sport, the Football Association, the England and Wales Cricket Board, the Lawn Tennis Association, the Women's Rugby Football Union, UK Athletics, British Gymnastics, England Netball, the Modern Pentathlon Association of Great Britain, the Professional Golfers Association, the Ladies' Golf Union, the Amateur Swimming Association, British Cycling and the CCPR. The alliance will share good practice and information and provide a collective voice to take the push for more balanced media coverage forward.

However, the Women's Sports Foundation cannot do it all on our own. All of us have a responsibility to write letters, make phone calls and motivate each other in order to remind the decision makers in the media that the public do want to see, hear and

read about our sportswomen and they are ready to do it now.

This report has attempted to raise awareness about the appalling situation that exists in the UK today and to inspire you to act. Increasing media coverage of women's sport is one of our greatest challenges but one that we cannot afford to ignore. Change will not happen over night and it will not happen by one action alone but we KNOW it can be achieved by people working together to produce small step changes.

Please keep us informed of your successes and setbacks and let us hope that when we repeat our survey in 2006 we see a marked improvement in the quality and quantity of coverage devoted to our many inspiring and successful sportswomen.

Thank you

Deborah Potts
Chief Executive
Women's Sports Foundation

Woodward's men take game to new heights

SPORT ON THE INTERNET

Tough to find football sites with right blend of stats and action as Euro 2004 approaches

AFTER SATURDAY'S display by England in pursuit of Euro 2004 qualification, the prospect of watching Wednesday's further instalment live at Old Trafford or on television might be too much to bear for those



US humbled in Walker Cup

GOLF

By Lewne Malr

GREAT Britain and Ireland pulled off the most remarkable of Walker Cup triumphs by humbling the Americans at Ganton yesterday. Having trailed 7-5 at the end of a first day on which only one hole

win badly. This is going to hurt for a while."

McGimpsey had put O'Connell and Wilson and Gary Wolskel out first because he knew that GB and Ireland who were 9-7 down at the end of yesterday, had to get a fast start if there was to be any hope of winning the match for a third successive time.

Minor Counties Championship Final

At Cleethorpes Devon won toss

DEVON - First Innings

M P Hunt not out 94
R J Foan c Burford b Wilson 84
*R I Dawson c Dowman b Davies 36
A J Pugh st Burford b Christmas 40
TC M Mole not out 57
Extras (b 7, lb 12, w 11, nb 6, pen 24) 60

Total (3 wks: 70 overs) 371
Fall of wickets: 1-153; 2-201; 3-265.
Did not bat: D G Court, R J Newman, D J Burke, A Jones, I E Bishop.

Bowling: Wilson 16-1-41-1; Davies 9-1-37-1; Airey 11-1-43-0; Christmas 11-1-76-1; Dowman 18-3-114-0; Dobson 5-1-17-0.

LINCOLNSHIRE First Innings

J Clarke c Mole b Bishop 16
*Pollard b Burke 15
Dobson not out 20
Extras (b 5, w 1) 6

RESULTS AND TABLES

WORLD CUPS

SOUTH AMERICA GROUP

Argentina (2) 2 Chile (0) 2
Gonzalez 32, Milosevic 60
Aimar 38, Navia 77

Argentina's Walter Samuel sent off, 87
Chile's Cristian Alvarez sent off, 87
Chile's Reinaldo Navia sent off, 90
(at Buenos Aires)

Ecuador (1) 2 Venezuela (0) 0
Espinoza 11, 20,000

NATIONWIDE FOOTBALL LEAGUE

FIRST DIVISION

Gillingham 4 Millwall 3
Brentford 1 Plymouth 3
Brighton 2 Swindon 2
Chesterfield 0 Barnsley 2
Colchester 2 QPR 2
Grimsby 1 Peterborough 1
Hartlepool 0 Oldham 0
Notts County 1 Luton 1
Rushden 2 Wycombe 0
Sheff Wed 2 Tranmere 0
Stockport 2 Port Vale 2

P W D L F A Pts
6 4 2 0 9 3

SECOND DIVISION

Bournemouth 0 Bristol City 0
Brentford 1 Plymouth 3
Brighton 2 Swindon 2
Chesterfield 0 Barnsley 2
Colchester 2 QPR 2
Grimsby 1 Peterborough 1
Hartlepool 0 Oldham 0
Notts County 1 Luton 1
Rushden 2 Wycombe 0
Sheff Wed 2 Tranmere 0
Stockport 2 Port Vale 2

P W D L F A Pts
6 4 2 0 9 3

THIRD DIVISION

Boston Utd 1 Scunthorpe 1
Bristol Rovers 1 Kidderminster 0
Bury 2 Huddersfield 1
Darlington 2 Carlisle 0
Mansfield 3 Macclesfield 2
Oxford Utd 2 Southend 0
Torquay 2 Leyton Orient 1
Yeovil 2 Swanssea 0
York 1 Rochdale 2

P W D L F A Pts
6 4 0 2 15 11

NATIONWIDE CONFERENCE

Yesterday

Shrewsbury (0) 3 Tamworth (0) 1
Rugby 64, 90, 90 Rioch og 89
0, 82

Tamworth's David Robinson sent off, 86

Saturday

Barnet 0 Accrington 0
Burton Albion 2 Woking 0
Dag & Red 1 Telford 1
Exeter 1 Stevenage 0
Farnborough 0 Hereford 5
Halifax 5 Northwich 3
Leigh RMI 1 Forest Green 2
Margate 1 Chester 2
Morecambe 2 Aldershot 0
Scarborough 2 Gravesend 0

P W D L F A Pts
7 5 1 0 23 6 18

Dr Martens-Premier

Bath City (1) 2 Dover (1) 1
Tweddle 28 Carruthers 15 542
Hendy 80

Cambridge City (1) 2 Havant & W (3) 3
Bloomfield 11 20

Man marking

David James Just when he seemed to have dropped, Caught out

TOP 10 SPORTS BOOBS



www.wsf.org.uk

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