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PRESSURE IS A PRIVILEGE is Billie Jean King's first book in more than twenty years. Published in conjunction with the 35th anniversary of the "Battle of the Sexes," her legendary match with Bobby Riggs, Billie Jean shares the inspirational lessons that led her to her life achievements.

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Thursday, September 18, 2008

'Battle' starts a revolution

■ On Sept. 20, 1973, tennis star Billie Jean King defeated Bobby Riggs in the "Battle of the Sexes." ■ King's triumph helped spark a revolution for women that continues in sports 35 years later.



1973 ABC Sports photo

Tennis titans: Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King pose in August 1973, about a month before King's history-making 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 victory.



By Travis Lindquist, Getty Images

Golf: Over the last three years, Lorena Ochoa of Mexico has become the face of the LPGA, winning 20 events, including two majors.

Beating men opened doors for athletes

Front office opportunities much slower to emerge

By Heather Tucker
USA TODAY

In the early 1970s, one of the flash points in the women's athletic movement centered on a tennis player who remains a vocal advocate for equality and change.

When Billie Jean King defeated Bobby Riggs in 1973 in the "Battle of the Sexes," she struck a victory for women everywhere.

Cover story

King, who accepted Riggs' challenge to play a televised match at the Houston Astrodome, soundly defeated him in three sets and put a damper on critics' voices that women could not compete with men.

Another flash point of the era, Title IX, which bans sex discrimination at schools receiving federal funds, passed in 1972. King put a human face on federal law with her match against Riggs a year later. And the law led to the revolution in your neighborhood: In 1971-72, nearly 300,000 girls participated in high school athletics; by 1977-78, that number had increased sevenfold.

As for the federal legislation, King says, "Title IX was huge for education; we (sports) were an afterthought."

However, King recognized the importance of her match.

"I thought it would set us back 50 years if I didn't win," said King, a 12-time Grand Slam singles tournament winner and six-time Wimbledon champion.

King's battle for equality and change continues. She co-founded World TeamTennis, a league that encourages men and women to compete together on a level playing field, and founded the Women's Sports Foundation.

Thirty-five years after King's groundbreaking triumph, girls and women still consider her a role model.



By Robert Deutsch, USA TODAY

Tennis: Serena Williams is No. 1 in the world and has captured nine Grand Slam singles titles.



By Mark Humphrey, AP

Basketball: Tennessee coach Pat Summitt's 983 victories make her the winningest NCAA coach.



File photo by Roberto Schmidt, AFP

Soccer: Brandi Chastain pulls off her jersey and clinches her fists in triumph after her penalty kick won the 1999 Women's World Cup final against China. The victory by the U.S. team, led by Chastain and Mia Hamm, was one of the biggest moments in women's sports history.



AP file photo

Motor sports: In 1977, Janet Guthrie, a 29-year-old former aerospace engineer, broke the gender barrier in the Indianapolis 500.



By Mary Altaffer, AP

Track and field: Marion Jones put a stain on women's athletics when she pleaded guilty to lying about using performance-enhancing drugs.

- A look back at Title IX, 2E
- 10 pioneers who changed the face of women's athletics, 4E
- Madison Avenue targets female viewers, 5E
- Some Olympians find opportunity fleeting after the medal haul, 7E

Women in sports online



Throughout this section, you will see examples of historic accomplishments by women in sports. Did we miss any? E-mail sports@usatoday.com (include hometown and daytime phone number) by 5 p.m. ET today or post a comment at womeninsports.usatoday.com.

Please see COVER STORY next page ▶

1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979

1970s



1972 Immaculata College

Immaculata, left, a small Catholic women's college near Philadelphia, wins the first of three consecutive Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women basketball titles.

Mickey Wright earns the last of her 83 LPGA titles; **Robyn Smith** is the first female jockey to win a stakes race.

Tennis star **Chris Evert** wins the first of her four Associated Press female athlete of the year awards; **Donna de Varona**, right, a double Olympic gold medalist in swimming, co-founds the Women's Sports Foundation.



1964 AP photo

The U.S. team, which includes **Pat Head (later Summitt)**, **Ann Meyers** and **Nancy Lieberman**, wins silver the first time women's basketball is held in the Olympics.



1978 AP photo

Nancy Lopez, left, wins nine LPGA tournaments, including five in a row.

Billie Jean King wins the last of her 20 Wimbledon titles.

Title IX
BreakdownEquality grows
over the years

The year: 1972

The federal law: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

The purpose: To help bring equality on the field and in the classroom of high schools and colleges for girls and women.



By John Raoux, AP

Spellings: Secretary of Education cites classroom impact.

The verdict: Title IX's "greatest influence has been in the classroom." — Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education, in a statement on the 35th anniversary of Title IX.

► "Where it's had its most noticeable impact and where we've taken notice of it the most is on athletic fields. At the time when the legislation was passed, there were so few opportunities for women and girls to participate in athletics in educational settings." — Peter Roby, ex-director, Center for the Study of Sport in Society.

Participation

High school

While the number of boys playing sports in high school has hovered around 4 million for the last 30 years, the number of girls playing has increased by a million during that time to 3,057,266 in 2007-08.

1971-72

Girls: 294,015

Boys: 3,666,917

The compliance year for Title IX was 1978, and by then there was a significant increase in the number of girls playing.

1977-78

Girls: 2,083,040

Boys: 4,367,442

"Title IX opened the door, and it's directly reflective of the numbers in the participation survey." — John Gillis, assistant director, National Federation of High Schools.

College

1971-72

Men: 170,384

Women: 29,977

1981-82

Men: 169,800

Women: 74,239

2005-06

Men: 228,106

Women: 170,526

In the last 10 years, 2,755 women's teams have been created with dramatic growth in soccer, cross country, golf, softball, lacrosse and ice hockey.

Title IX supporters praise those numbers but point to unequal distribution of funds and an inadequate number of women's coaches.

The money

Average recruiting expenses per NCAA institution:

1995-96

Men: \$133,393

Women: \$49,176

1999-2000

Men: \$184,200

Women: \$85,900

2003-04

Men: \$218,000

Women: \$104,000

Average scholarship dollars per NCAA institution:

1995-96

Men: \$1,052,540

Women: \$634,689

1999-2000

Men: \$1,411,400

Women: \$1,055,500

2003-04

Men: \$1,891,800

Women: \$1,555,500

In 2007-08, 42.8% of women's teams were coached by men. In 1972, 90% of women's teams were coached by women.

Sources: NCAA; National Coalition for Women and Girls in Education; Linda Jean Carpenter and R. Vivian Acosta; USA TODAY research



By Shuji Kajiyama, AP

Motor sports: Danica Patrick broke another barrier when she won an Indy-car race this year.



By Dave Knachel, Virginia Tech

Softball: As a Virginia Tech senior in 2008, Angela Tincher led the nation in strikeouts and ERA.



By Gregory Shamus, Getty Images

Basketball: Besides leading Tennessee to the 2007 and 2008 NCAA titles, Candace Parker was the first woman to dunk in an NCAA tournament game and the first to dunk twice in a college game.

King dropped Riggs; Parker dunked

Continued from 1E

She lists her parents and brother and first tennis coach among those she looked up to while growing up in California. She points to Grand Slam-win-

Cover story

ning sisters Venus and Serena Williams, Olympic softball gold medalist Jessica Mendoza and two-time soccer gold medalist Julie Foudy as women who are strong role models for today's youth.

"I'm big on role models being the people in the trenches with you every day," King says. "We can inspire, but the real heroes are shaping your life every day."

Parker, hero for another age

King, directly and indirectly, provided motivation and inspiration for girls and women.

Candace Parker was the most highly recruited high school girls basketball player in the USA in 2004. But that's not what got her on the *Today* show. Beating the boys did.

She won the slam-dunk contest at the McDonald's All-American Game that year, beating five male competitors — including Josh Smith, who won the NBA dunk contest a year later.

"Competing against guys isn't what it's all about, but it's obviously fun," Parker says. "But I can't be mentioned in the same breath" with King. "For her to do what she did, win that match, says a lot about women's sports. It really put us on the map, with everything kind of rolling in after that."

Parker often played against boys as she grew up. "You play youth basketball, none of the boys on your team want to get done up by a girl," she says. "You go play at the park, and you get picked last. And then the next time, they say, 'Oh, she can play. So we're going to pick her first.'"

She says what matters most is not how she fares against men but how she plays against wom-

en. She hopes interest in the WNBA will grow.

"Obviously, people refer to the WNBA and how we need to get more support," Parker says. "But people forget about how young we are. We're 12 years young, and obviously the NBA wasn't always what it is today. It just needs time. We'll have a lot more growth with time."

Patrick defies the critics

Now, Parker is among the role models for the next generation. Like King, she shares the mantle with many others.

For example, there's Danica Patrick, whose breakthrough came in an Indy-car race in Japan in April, when she became the first woman to triumph in a national oval-track touring circuit such as the Indy Racing League or NASCAR.

Patrick, who had been criticized for cashing in on her sex appeal through various corporate sponsorships despite a fourth-place finish in her first Indianapolis 500 in 2005, believed the victory finally proved to her critics she had the talent to be on the circuit.

At the time, Patrick said of her peers, "I hope I have their respect. It means a lot to have that statistic of winning against them."

Virginia Tech softball pitcher Angela Tincher, who was named NCAA player of the year in the spring and is third all time in strikeouts with 2,149, remembers looking up to a different group of players.

"I remember watching Lisa Fernandez, Michele Smith — players like that. They were on the Olympics and on TV and you could keep up with them," Tincher says.

That might be more difficult now with softball no longer an Olympic sport.

"I think there's girls who are still going to be interested in softball and still going to be wanting to play at an advanced level, so hopefully that won't deter people from playing just because there's not an Olympics," Tincher says. "Hopefully people will look for more op-

portunities."

Shattering other ceilings

Perceptions of what women are capable of and what they can offer have been elevated thanks in part to these stars.

However, it seems to be taking much longer for women to break through in other roles — such as coaching, managing and team ownership.

"Sports are a microcosm of society. (When) women catch up, it will be a reflection of what's going on globally," King says.

A woman has a better chance to be president of a big-time football school than to be its athletics director.

About a dozen women are presidents and five are athletics directors at the 119 schools in the Bowl Subdivision (formerly I-A), according to a study by Linda Carpenter and Vivian Acosta, professors emeriti at Brooklyn College. They have kept an accounting for more than 30 years on the number of women coaching and administering college athletics.

"Statistically, why are you more likely to be the CEO of a I-A institution than you are to be its AD?" California athletics director Sandy Barbour says. "I wish I had an answer."

Big-time football is the answer, according to Carpenter's and Acosta's study, which shows 33.7% of schools in Division III have female athletics directors. So why is it only 4.2% in Division I-A?

"The assumption is that women somehow genetically don't understand football and therefore can't administer a program with big-time football," Carpenter says. "That is obviously not correct. But I think that assumption, though often unconscious, remains."

Maryland athletics director Debbie Yow remembers the resistance she encountered when named in 1994. She once told *The Washington Post* that one booster said, "It's a sad day for Maryland athletics. They hired a skirt as our AD." She declines to talk about such antagonism

anymore.

"Talking about it does an unintended disservice to where we are today," she says. "I only know that those of us who are in the roles need to prove our mettle and be productive. That's how doors are opened, however slowly."

Just three women are athletics directors in the six conferences that have automatic bids to the Bowl Championship Series: Yow, in her 14th year at Maryland; Lisa Love, in her third at Arizona State; and Barbour, in her fourth at California.

Last weekend when Maryland beat Cal 35-27, both athletics directors were women.

"Leadership is not a gender issue," Yow says. "It is a reflection of education, experience and a propensity for the work. ... Athletics are visceral in nature, but the fact is that as an athletic director, I don't have to block or tackle."

The other athletics directors in Division I-A are Kathy Beauregard at Western Michigan and Cary Groth at Nevada.

"I'm a woman serving in a position that has always been a man's world," Beauregard says. "But the numbers (of female ADs) are going up, just not at the schools that have Division I-A football."

According to Carpenter's and Acosta's study, 21.3% of athletics directors are women when combining Divisions I-A, I-AA, II and III. That's up from 18.6% in 2006, the last time they ran their study.

"It just goes to show that women are getting more chances at every level except Division I-A," Acosta says. "It goes back to the presidents. They're the ones who look for who they perceive are very good ADs."

King disagrees. "All those things you have to get quotas up. We have to change it. ... It's our responsibility if people aren't treating us right. It's accepting responsibility for our lives."

Contributing: Erik Brady and Thomas Emerick (Blacksburg, Va.)

Title IX
TimelineMeasure's
key moments

1972: President Nixon signs Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 on June 23.

1974: Congress in July directs the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to issue Title IX regulations, including for athletics. The forerunner of the National Women's Law Center files suit against the department in November for failure to issue regulations and enforce Title IX.

1975: In June, the department issues regulations prohibiting sex discrimination in athletics and gives colleges three years to comply. Sen. John Tower, D-Texas, on July 15 reintroduces an amendment he tried a year earlier that would exempt football from Title IX; it fails again. The regulations become effective July 21, although they lack detail.

1977-78: The department puts Title IX athletic complaints on hold until further policy interpretation.

1979: The department issues on Dec. 11 a final policy interpretation that includes a three-part test. Schools need to pass one part to be in compliance. The first part says the number of athletes from each sex should be roughly equivalent to enrollment percentages. The second says a school should show a history and continuing practice of adding women's sports. The third says a school should show the athletic interests and abilities of women have been accommodated.

1980: The first case claiming sex discrimination in an entire college program is filed in April and leads to a settlement in 1988 in *Haffer v. Temple University*. The department is replaced in May by the Department of Education, which reissues the Title IX policies as its own.

1984: The Supreme Court rules in *Grove City v. Bell* that Title IX does not apply to programs that do not directly receive federal aid, essentially ending its application to athletics.



By Kirby Lee, US Presswire

Out front: Southern Cal's Sarah Cocco leads a race Saturday.

1988: Overriding a veto by President Reagan, Congress passes the Civil Rights Restoration Act, which mandates that civil rights law applies to all operations of any school that gets federal funds. This effectively supersedes *Grove City*.

1992: The Supreme Court allows monetary damages to be awarded in Title IX cases in *Franklin v. Gwinnett County*. This opens the door to more suits. They are filed against Auburn, Colorado State and Brown.

1994: The Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act is passed. The act requires coed schools that provide federally funded student aid and offer athletics to report annually on participation, staffing, revenue and expenses by men's and women's teams.

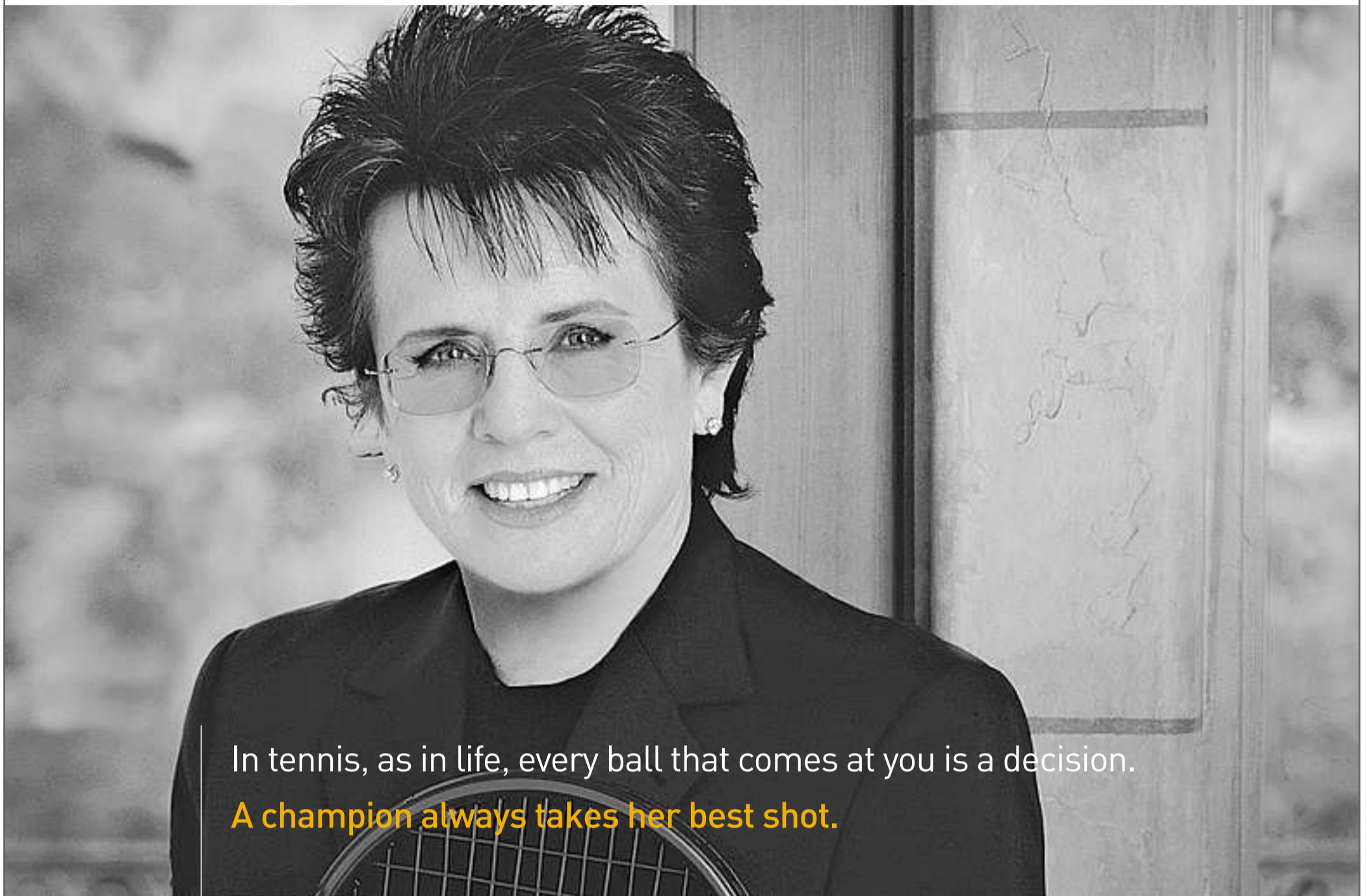
1996: The Department of Education in January issues a clarification of the 1979 policy interpretation. Much of it involves the three-part test. In November, Brown University loses after trying to make the case that women do not have as much interest in playing sports as men. *Cohen v. Brown* upholds the department's regulations, including the test.

1999: Cal State-Bakersfield loses a claim that capping the number of athletes on men's teams is reverse discrimination.

2002: A coalition of coaches led by the National Wrestling Coaches Association sues in January, challenging the underlying regulations of Title IX. It charges the three-part test is a quota system. The Justice Department asks in May that the suit be dismissed on technical grounds. In September, the plaintiffs ask for summary judgment. The plaintiffs want the 1979 test and 1996 clarification vacated.

2005: In March, the Supreme Court rules in *Jackson v. Birmingham Board of Education* that individuals have the right to sue if they are retaliated against for alleging Title IX violations.

Source: USA TODAY research



In tennis, as in life, every ball that comes at you is a decision.
A champion always takes her best shot.

Billie Jean King resolved early to make a difference, both on the court and off. Throughout a career that spanned decades in a sport usually measured in years, she worked tirelessly not only to be a champion, but to champion others.

Her talent made her famous. Her decision to use that fame to help others made her an icon.

Today, her work off the court takes the same passion it took to be the best tennis player in the world. But now she partners with people

across the globe to further the causes she cares most about. And she trusts Merrill Lynch Financial Advisor Dick Phelan to listen to her ideas carefully and help her reach her goals.

Right now those goals include actively supporting causes like the Women's Sports Foundation and the Elton John AIDS Foundation.

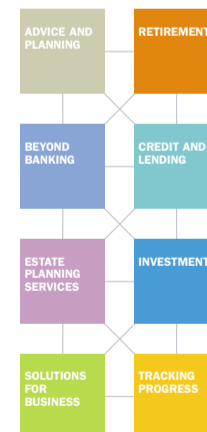
She set out to change a sport and ended up changing a world. Truly the work of a champion.

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1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989

1980s

NCAA begins to take control of women's sports from AIAW.



1983 Getty Images photo

Mary Decker, left, wins the 1,500 and 3,000 meters, left, in her first world track and field championships.

Georgeann Wells of West Virginia becomes the first woman to dunk in a college game; **Cheryl Miller** helps the U.S. women to their first Olympic basketball title. **Joan Benoit Samuelson** wins the inaugural women's Olympic marathon.

Kathy Whitworth wins the last of her record 88 LPGA tournaments; **Michelle Akers** scores the first goal for the U.S. national soccer team.

Pat Bradley becomes the first woman to earn \$2 million in a golf career; **Anita DeFrantz**, a former rower, joins the International Olympic Committee as its fifth female member and first African American.

Tennessee and coach **Pat Summitt** win the first of eight NCAA women's basketball championships.

Florence Griffith-Joyner, right, sets world records in the 100 and 200 and wins both in the Seoul Olympics; sister-in-law **Jackie Joyner-Kersey** wins the heptathlon and long jump in the Games.



1988 USA TODAY photo

Pioneer profiles

These 10 women broke barriers in their respective fields and continue to be advocates for women seeking opportunities in sports — as players, coaches, executives, owners and broadcasters.



1996 photo by Robert Deutsch, USA TODAY

Leaps and bounds: Jackie Joyner-Kersey won a gold and two bronzes in the Olympic long jump.

Jackie Joyner-Kersey

Born: March 3, 1962
Sport: Track and field
Defining moments: She won the heptathlon and long jump in the 1988 Olympics. She often is called the world's greatest female athlete — *Sports Illustrated* named her the top female athlete of the 20th century. She competed in four Olympics, winning three gold medals, a silver and two bronzes. She still holds the world record in the heptathlon.
Career (post-sports): Through her foundation, she concentrates on providing educational and athletic opportunities, especially for underprivileged females in her hometown of East St. Louis, Ill. Dawn Harper, the 100-meter hurdles winner in Beijing, benefited from the foundation and called Joyner-Kersey "a big inspiration."
Impact: Her excellence helped legitimize women's sports and the heptathlon. She was universally admired because of her unpretentious personality and sense of humor, which she often used on husband-coach Bob Kersee.



By Jim McIsaac, Getty Images

Icon: Pat Summitt has won eight NCAA titles, second only to UCLA legend John Wooden.

Pat Summitt

Born: June 14, 1952
Sport: Basketball
Defining moment: In 34 seasons at Tennessee, she has the most wins in NCAA history, men's or women's, with a record of 983-182, including a women's-record eight NCAA titles. Only UCLA's John Wooden has more titles (10).
Career: She played on the 1976 Olympic team that won the silver medal and coached the 1984 Olympic team that won gold. Her teams are 27-for-27 in making the Sweet 16 of the NCAA tournament. Her program has produced 12 Olympians. She earned \$250 a month in 1974 when she was a grad student and head coach and became the first coach in the women's game to crack \$1 million in annual salary.
Impact: Summitt is perhaps the major contributor to the growth of women's basketball because of the dynasty she created and her tireless promotion of the sport. She rarely ducks a challenge — 47% of her games have come against ranked opponents.



By Steve Powell, Getty Images

L.A. story: Mary Lou Retton won five medals, including all-around gold, in the 1984 Games.

Mary Lou Retton

Born: Jan. 24, 1968
Sport: Gymnastics
Defining moment: In 1984, she became the first American to win an Olympic gold medal in all-around, one of five medals she won. She nailed a perfect 10 on the vault to capture the title. She also won silver medals in vault and team competition and bronze medals in uneven bars and floor exercise.
Career (post-sports): She balances her time as a motivational speaker, author, charity fundraiser and celebrity spokeswoman for various corporations.
Quotable: "The smile actually gets on some people's nerves," Retton said in 2000 of her trademark grin, according to the *Chicago Tribune*.
Impact: Twenty-four years after her all-around championship, she remains the face of U.S. gymnastics and a sports icon. Retton was *Sports Illustrated's* Sportswoman of the Year in 1984. She became as marketable as Michael Jordan in the 1980s.



By Chris McGrath, Getty Images

Huge implications: "I thought it would set us back 50 years if I didn't win," Billie Jean King said of her match with Bobby Riggs. "It would ruin the women's tour and affect all women's self-esteem."

Billie Jean King

Born: Nov. 22, 1943
Sport: Tennis
Defining moment: She defeated Bobby Riggs in the "Battle of the Sexes" at the Houston Astrodome on Sept. 20, 1973. Riggs, a star in the 1930s and '40s, was 55 and past his prime, but earlier that year he had beaten the top female player in the world, Margaret Court, 6-2, 6-1. King decided to accept his challenge. She won 6-4, 6-3, 6-3. "I thought it would set us back 50 years if I didn't win that match," King said. "It would ruin the women's tour and affect all women's self-esteem."
Career: King won 12 Grand Slam tournament titles in singles and 39 overall, including 20 at Wimbledon (singles, doubles and mixed doubles) in her career. She was the first female athlete to earn \$100,000 in a year. But her work off the court — during and after her career — is more significant. King was the central figure in the drive for equality

for women's tennis. She helped spearhead the development of the pro women's tennis tour and founded the WTA in 1973. She also founded the Women's Sports Foundation. She runs the tennis organization she co-founded in 1974, World Team-Tennis, which completed its 33rd season in 2008. King became the first female commissioner in any sport when she took the helm of WTT in 1984.

Quotable: "Billie Jean King fought for years, and no one deserves this more than her," Venus Williams told the Centre Court crowd at Wimbledon in 2007 after claiming the singles title, which — for the first time — paid her the same prize money the men's champion received. Wimbledon was the last of the Grand Slams to pay equal amounts to its champions. "She's done so much for women's tennis, and I wouldn't be here without her."
Impact: King was, and is, the face of women's sports in the Title IX era.

Janet Guthrie

Born: March 7, 1938
Sport: Auto racing
Defining moment: In 1977, she became the first woman to qualify for and race in the Indianapolis 500. After enduring engine trouble, Guthrie finished 29th. A year later, she finished ninth. Also in 1977, Guthrie became the first woman to compete in the Daytona 500, NASCAR's premier event in its top series, and was named top rookie.
Career: The daughter of an airline pilot, Guthrie competed in 33 NASCAR races. Her race suit and helmet reside in the Smithsonian Museum and she was elected to the International Motorsports Hall of Fame.
Quotable: "Without you, there wouldn't have been a Danica (Patrick)," tennis champion Billie Jean King once told Guthrie of the Indy Racing League driver who became the first woman to win on a national oval-track touring circuit.
Impact: Before Guthrie came on the scene, signs proclaiming "No Dogs or Women Allowed" could be found at many tracks nationwide. Even though Guthrie wasn't welcomed with open arms ("She's no lady," Richard Petty once said. "If she was, she'd be at home"), she proved that a woman could compete. Patrick, Lyn St. James and Sarah Fisher are among those who followed in her footsteps.



By Greg Griffo, The Indianapolis Star

Breaking through: Janet Guthrie is overjoyed after qualifying for the 1977 Indianapolis 500.



UCLA

All-everything: Known then as Ann Meyers, she had the first quadruple-double in Division I.

Ann Meyers Drysdale

Born: March 26, 1955
Sport: Basketball
Defining moments: She led UCLA to a national title in 1978 and was a key player on the 1976 Olympic team, which won a silver medal. She was the first teenager to make the national team, first woman to receive a four-year athletic scholarship and first woman to be drafted in the NBA, by the Indiana Pacers in 1979. Though cut, she became the team's TV analyst.
Career: High-profile TV analyst for more than 25 years with ABC/ESPN, NBC and CBS. She became the Phoenix Mercury general manager in 2007, when they won the WNBA title. She also serves as the VP of player personnel and scouting for the NBA's Phoenix Suns.
Quotable: "Young people don't always know the opportunities they have were not always available. It's up to us to keep telling the story so these opportunities won't be taken away."
Impact: She has been high profile in the game for more than 30 years, helping build credibility for women's basketball and women's sports.



1978 AP photo

Instant star: Nancy Lopez was an LPGA tour rookie in 1978 and a Hall of Famer in 1987.

Nancy Lopez

Born: Jan. 6, 1957
Sport: Golf
Defining moment: She was inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame in 1987 and won 48 titles and three majors in her career.
Career: Her Nancy Lopez Golf company makes a full line of golf clubs, clothes and accessories. The mother of three daughters also has a golf school.
Quotable: "As a young person, I saw that women weren't allowed to play golf after 9 a.m. on some golf courses and couldn't even play on certain days. As good as I was, I couldn't believe I couldn't play at certain times. It made no sense."
Impact: Lopez has provided inspiration for Mexican-Americans, girls, women and fellow competitors since taking the LPGA tour by storm in her 1978 rookie season. With a cheerful persona, big smile and unique swing, Lopez won nine titles that year and became the only woman to win LPGA Rookie of the Year, Player of the Year and the Vare Trophy (lowest scoring average) awards in the same season.



2004 Reuters photo

Championship career: Brandi Chastain won two World Cup titles and two Olympic golds.

Brandi Chastain

Born: July 21, 1968
Sport: Soccer
Defining moment: She scored the winner in a penalty-kick shootout to beat China in the final of the 1999 Women's World Cup. She stripped off her jersey in celebration, and the image of her in a sports bra was on the cover of *Time*, *Newsweek* and *Sports Illustrated*, among others.
Career (post-sports): Broadcasting (ESPN, NBC) and co-founding the afterschool program Bay Area Women's Sports Initiative (BAWSI), through which student-athletes help younger girls develop healthy lifestyles.
Notable: She was a forward in the first Women's World Cup in 1991, then was dropped from the U.S. national team. She worked her way back as a defender to win two Olympic golds.
Impact: Though women's soccer in the USA didn't maintain the momentum from the 1999 World Cup — the WUSA, which made its debut in 2001, folded after three seasons — the sport is firmly entrenched in the country.



2000 file photo by H. Darr Betsler, USA TODAY

Dr. Dot: Shortstop Dot Richardson is a two-time gold medalist and an orthopedic surgeon.

Dot Richardson

Born: Sept. 22, 1961
Sport: Softball
Defining moment: Richardson hit the first home run in Olympic softball history, in the 1996 Summer Games. She homered three times in the tournament, the most crucial being a two-run shot in a gold medal-clinching 3-1 win against China. She also earned gold in 2000.
Career: During much of her softball career, she doubled as a budding orthopedic surgeon and has continued in this field. Her presence in health consulting is nationally renowned. She's commissioner of the Profapitch X-treme Tour.
Notable: Richardson was Team USA's first Olympic softball team captain.
Impact: In a crucial developmental period for the culture of softball in America, Richardson arguably was the best around. The NCAA named her player of the decade for the 1980s, in large part for earning accolades such as three-time All-America honors while dominating the short-stop position at UCLA.



1994 Getty Images photo by Mike Powell

Setting precedent: CBS Sports' Lesley Visser was the first female sideline reporter in 1988.

Lesley Visser

Born: Sept. 11, 1953
Occupation: TV sportscaster
Defining moments: Visser became the first NCAA Final Four sideline reporter (1988), the first and only woman to present the NFL's Super Bowl trophy (1992) and the first woman inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame (2006).
Career: For network TV, she has covered the NFL, college football and basketball, the Olympics, the NBA, horse racing's Triple Crown and tennis. She has worked for CBS and ABC/ESPN.
Quotable: "I helped represent the idea that men don't have a genetic blueprint for loving sports like the NFL, that we could know it and love it like they do."
Impact: By replacing various male athletes as a sideline reporter, Visser pioneered the TV presence for women on big-time sports events.

Contributors: Steve DiMeglio, Beau Dure, Thomas Emerick, Joe Fleming, Marlen Garcia, Michael Hiestand, Dick Patrick and Tim Wendel

1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999

1990s

Martina Navratilova wins a record ninth Wimbledon singles title on her way to 59 total Grand Slam tournament titles.



1992 USA TODAY photo

Speedskater **Bonnie Blair**, left, wins the 500 and 1,000 meters in the Olympics; **Lynn Jennings** wins a third world cross country title in a row and is third in the Olympic 10,000; sprinter **Gail Devers** wins the first of consecutive Olympic golds in the 100.

Julie Krone, right, wins the Belmont Stakes to become the first female jockey with a Triple Crown race triumph.



1993 USA TODAY photo

Connecticut goes 35-0 in winning the NCAA basketball title and stimulates news media interest in the women's game.

Cynthia Cooper, right, and **Sheryl Swoopes** lead the Houston Comets to the first of four consecutive titles as the WNBA begins and signals the demise of the American Basketball League, which folds during its third season (1998).



1997 Getty Images photo

Marketers alter their pitches

As more female fans tune in sports, advertisers take heed

By Michael McCarthy
USA TODAY

WNBA President Donna Orender laughs when asked to compare current audiences for women's sports to those from her days as an All-Star point guard with the old Women's Professional Basketball League.

"I think my games were on home movies when I started to play," jokes Orender, noting ESPN/ABC now telecasts dozens of WNBA and college women's basketball games every season.

TV coverage of women's sports isn't the only thing that's changed in the 35 years since tennis star Billie Jean King beat Bobby Riggs in the "Battle of the Sexes."

Female fans make up a growing percentage of sports viewers, even for traditionally male sporting events such as the Super Bowl.

The advertising agencies on Madison Avenue increasingly view sports as a vehicle to reach female consumers.

Just ask the NFL.

More women watched at least part of the New York Giants' victory against the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XLII than there were total viewers for the 80th Academy Awards in February: 69.7 million vs. 64.2 million.

League research indicates 45% of NFL fans in 2008 are women and they make up about 35% of avid fans. Beauty-product brands such as Dove have advertised during the Super Bowl to reach female viewers.

"At the game level, we don't do anything specific to tailor it more broadly to a female audience," says Mark Waller, the NFL's senior vice president of marketing. "Yet we have as mixed a fan base as you can get."

Rather than asking female fans to buy baggy jerseys made for men, the league has established a lucrative business at NFLShop.com sell-

ing jerseys, shirts, hats and purses designed for women. There's even a pink "fashion jersey" for the player who's sold the most jerseys in NFL history: quarterback Brett Favre of the New York Jets.

The Olympic Games traditionally have catered to a female audience.

Women's gymnastics, figure skating and beach volleyball typically generate the highest TV ratings and grab most of the airtime.

The average sports fan might not know it, but women, not men, make up the majority of Olympic TV viewers by a wide margin — 7%.

Women 18 and older made up the largest percentage of viewers for NBC's coverage of the Beijing Olympics at 49%, according to Mike McCarley, the network's vice president of strategic marketing. In second place: men 18 and older at 42%.

The male-female skew is even more lopsided for female-dominated sports such as figure skating. The World Figure Skating Championships in March drew an audience that was 70% women, according to Nielsen Media Research.

NBC focused much of its pre-Olympic ad campaign this year on swimmer Michael Phelps and his quest for a record eight gold medals. Rather than simply hyping his athletic abilities, the network also focused on his relationship with his mother, Debbie Phelps.

"The idea was to introduce him as an athlete who could become the greatest Olympian ever — and appeal to different people for different reasons," McCarley wrote in an e-mail from China.

"It focused on several aspects of his life: his special relationship with his mom; his bulldog, Herman; his love of music; his insatiable appetite; his crazy workout routine."

NBC's strategy paid off when Michael Phelps became the Games' breakout star.

And Debbie Phelps, who sported

clothes from Chico's while watching her son from the stands, landed an endorsement deal with the retailer.

As Debbie Phelps proved, where audiences go, Madison Avenue follows. More marketers are using sports to reach female fans as well as male.

Dozens of global marketers used the Olympic Games to reach female viewers, including AT&T, McDonald's, Visa and L'Oreal. Many featured female Olympians such as gymnasts Nastia Liukin and Shawn Johnson and swimmer Dara Torres in their ads.

AT&T, for example, touted the elegant Liukin in its advertising buildup to the Games. All told, the company sponsored seven female athletes. It also sponsored seven male competitors.

"The Olympics tend to skew more female. It's a great platform for us to activate," says Tom Hughes, director of sponsorships and events for AT&T.

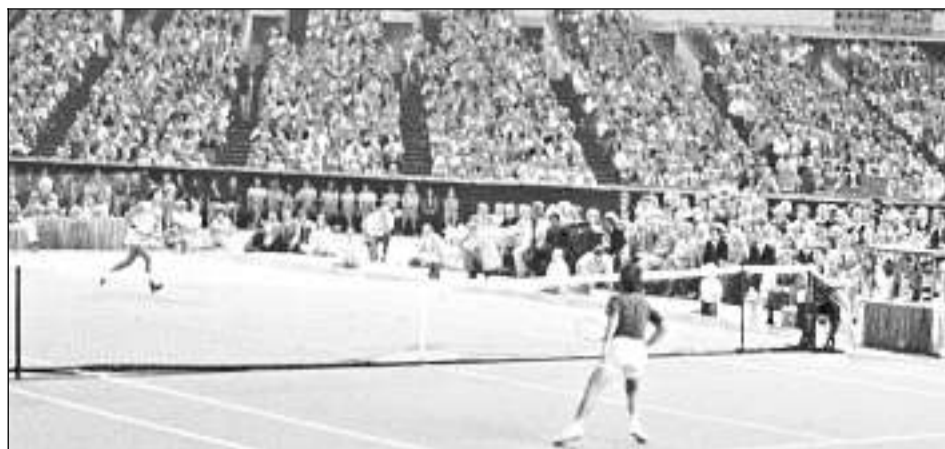
With new stars such as rookie Candace Parker of the Los Angeles Sparks, the WNBA is generating across-the-board increases in attendance, TV audiences and merchandising sales this season.

Average attendance for the season-to-date is up 3%. The average viewership per game is up 23% on ESPN2 vs. last season. Merchandising sales are up 68% at the NBA Store and NBAStore.com.

The WNBA picked up three new sponsors this season — McDonald's, Kia Motors and Peak — and renewed a deal with Beringer Vineyards, Orender says.

Don't look now, but WNBA players such as Parker are even nabbing big-bucks sneaker and beverage endorsements that used to be reserved for NBA stars.

Says Orender: "Candace has definitely made an impact in terms of the partnership she's announced with Adidas and Gatorade. We'd like to see that grow."



1973 AP photo

"Battle of the Sexes": In a match at the Houston Astrodome that attracted an estimated 50 million TV viewers worldwide, Billie Jean King, 29, dispatched Bobby Riggs, 55, in straight sets.

King's win: Net gain for women

By Joe Fleming
USA TODAY

The "Battle of the Sexes" between Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King on Sept. 20, 1973, began as a spectacle, a circus. It ended as a statement, bold, authoritative and lasting.

More than 30,000 spectators were at the Houston Astrodome and a worldwide audience estimated at 50 million watched on television. Men cheered for Riggs; women stood for King.

Riggs was a tennis star in the 1930s and '40s — winning Wimbledon in '39 and the U.S. championship in '39 and '41 — but by the 1970s he was a hustler and impresario.

Once the hoopla ended and play began, it was no contest.

Riggs, at 55, was no match for the fit King, 29. She ran him back and forth around the court, playing the aggressor, rushing to the net and smacking winners. She won easily 6-4, 6-3, 6-3.

Game, set, mismatch.

"Most important perhaps for women everywhere, she convinced skeptics that a female athlete can survive pressure-filled situations and that men are as susceptible to nerves as women," *The New York Times* said.

Last April, in an interview in USA WEEKEND, King talked again about her old adversary.

"I adored him," King said. "We stayed in touch. I kept telling him, 'It's not about winning a match. It's about making history, making a difference.' The last conversation we had on

the phone, the day before he passed away in 1995, he said, 'We did make a difference, didn't we?' I thought, 'He finally got it.'"

King 29		Riggs 55
	Age at time of match	
	Career major titles	
12	Singles	3
39	Total	6
Borne by four bare-chested men dressed as slaves	Grand entrance	Carried in by five women known as "Bobby's Bosom Buddies"
Gave Riggs a gift fit for a male chauvinist, a pig named Larimore Hustle (Riggs' middle name was Larimore).	Gift exchange	Gave King a giant Sugar Daddy ... The message — she was a sucker.
"It's not women's lib, it's women's lob."	Prematch quote	"I love women. I think every man should have two of them."
"I thought it would set us back 50 years if I didn't win that match."	Postmatch quote	"She was too good. She played too well."

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The Women's Sports Foundation salutes our Founder Billie Jean King and her bold vision.

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2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

2000s

Sprinter-long jumper **Marion Jones** wins five Olympic medals, but in 2007 she surrenders them after admitting to performance-enhancing drug use; **Stacy Dragila** wins the inaugural women's pole vault in the Games; **Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki** is the first woman to head an Olympic organizing committee, for the Athens Games.

Annika Sorenstam shoots 59 in an LPGA event; **Jackie Stiles** of Southwest Missouri State becomes the leading NCAA scorer in women's basketball.

Sarah Hughes, 16, is the surprise winner of the Olympic figure skating title; speed-skater **Chris Witty**, battling mononucleosis, wins the 1,000 meters in the Olympics.

Serena Williams wins the Australian Open for her fourth consecutive Grand Slam title, beating sister **Venus**; the Washington Freedom, with **Mia Hamm** and **Abby Wambach**, win the title in the third year of the Women's United Soccer Association, which folds shortly thereafter; England's **Paula Radcliffe** sets a world record of 2 hours, 15 minutes, 25 seconds in the marathon; nearly **3,000 girls** are playing high school football.

Michelle Wie, 14, becomes the youngest player in a PGA Tour event and misses the cut by one shot; **Candace Parker** beats the boys to win the dunk contest at the McDonald's high school all-star game.

Pat Summitt gets her 880th victory to become the winningest basketball coach in NCAA history.

Figure skater **Michelle Kwan**, who has five world and nine U.S. titles to go with two Olympic medals, is named public diplomacy ambassador by Secretary of State **Condoleezza Rice**.

Lorena Ochoa of Mexico becomes the first LPGA player to earn more than \$3 million.

Danica Patrick, right, becomes the first woman to win a major Indy-car race; **Natalie Coughlin** becomes the first woman in Olympic history to win consecutive 100 backstroke titles; **Nastia Liukin** edges **Shawn Johnson** for the all-around title in gymnastics in the Olympics; **Lisa Leslie** earns her fourth Olympic gold in basketball; **Yelena Isinbayeva** of Russia wins the Olympic pole vault with a world record of 16 feet, 6¾ inches.



By Shuji Kajiyama, AP

Timeline by Dick Patrick, USA TODAY

Over before they know it

Post-Olympic life can be hard for athletes

By Marlen Garcia
USA TODAY

Nastia Liukin plans to stay busy for a long time.

The 18-year-old is riding the fame of the Olympic all-around gymnastics championship she won in Beijing last month. She is on a 37-city gymnastics tour with all-around silver medalist Shawn Johnson.

Liukin also has commitments to sponsors such as Cover Girl, Adidas and Visa.

Looking long term, her agent, Evan Morganstein, notes some of her contracts are multiyear endorsements. He's also in talks with a sports-drink company to have Liukin market a drink for women. She has a deal to help design clothing for a jeans company, he adds. "They're clamoring for us," Morganstein says.

Similarly, Johnson, a 16-year-old from West Des Moines, Iowa, signed deals with Coca-Cola, Adidas and a Midwest grocery chain leading up to the Beijing Games.

Yet if history is any indication, the shelf life of their celebrity status will be short-lived. That's life for Olympians, says Rob Prazmark, founder and CEO of 21 Marketing, a Connecticut-based sports and marketing firm.

"Unfortunately, the ticker tape parade stops and they're left for another three- or four-year cycle before they come into view with the next Olympics," Prazmark says.

The fleeting success hits women's gymnasts hard. Female gymnasts rarely get a second try at the Olympics because of growth spurts, injuries and fatigue. Additionally, the sport's minimum-age requirement of 16 narrows their window of opportunity. They go from being teen sensations, who work tirelessly in the gym for up to 40 hours a week, to retirees virtually overnight. The Olympic lifespan for male gymnasts often is longer because they peak later.

Even the most famous American female gymnasts struggled with retirement blues by their late teens or early 20s.

"When you retire at age 19, no one gives you a hand up on life, nobody tells you what to expect or what job to go get or how to use your skills," says Shannon Miller, America's most decorated gymnast who won seven Olympic medals over two Games. "They just let you go."

Miller found an outlet in school. She received a degree in marketing and entrepreneurship from the University of Houston and a law degree from Boston College in 2007. She promotes fitness through clinics and speaking engagements, has been a television analyst and is performing on the tour with Liukin and Johnson.

"I was lucky that I went right back to



By Robert Hanashiro, USA TODAY

All-around duo: U.S. silver medalist Shawn Johnson, left, and gold medalist Nastia Liukin have secured several endorsement deals.

"When you retire . . . no one gives you a hand up on life, nobody tells you what to expect or what job to go get. They just let you go."

—Shannon Miller, America's most-decorated gymnast

college and got that degree," she says. "At the same time, I went through a few years of, 'What do I do now?' Now all of a sudden I have 40-plus extra hours in the week and I didn't know what to do with them."

"Every single second in your life has been structured (in gymnastics). . . I knew exactly what I had to do every day to reach my goal."

Mary Lou Retton, who in 1984 became the first American to win all-around gold and remains the sport's biggest celebrity in the USA, counted McDonald's, General Mills, Hasbro, Vidal Sassoon, Ralston-Purina and the National Bowling Council among companies that signed her after her breakout performance. But in 1986 she retired from gymnastics and started transitioning to life out of the spotlight.

Like Miller, Retton also describes a period of angst.

"I can remember my first evening in my home, sitting down and watching a sitcom," she says. "It was like 6 or 7 o'clock at night. It was a surreal moment for me. It was like, 'Oh my gosh, this is what normal people do.' It sounds so silly to say that, but it was a defining moment of transition for me."

Retton experienced growing pains in college and eventually dropped out of

the University of Texas. Although she met her eventual husband, quarterback Shannon Kelley, at Texas, she has said she couldn't gain social acceptance by some classmates jealous of her fame.

Then there were awkward physical issues. "You're not a little girl anymore," Retton says. "Your body is changing. Usually we put on weight because we're not training our tails off. It's a battle of growing up."

Retton, now 40, found her niche as a motivational speaker. "I didn't know I had that talent," she says. "I think I still have a pretty good reputation as a public speaker. Otherwise, I wouldn't be getting jobs. The name is good, but you've got to perform."

Carly Patterson, who won the Olympic women's all-around title in 2004 at 16, has devoted herself to a music career after briefly attending community college. She's trying to make it in an industry that is as cutthroat as elite gymnastics. She has traded leotard for high heels, hair extensions and heavy stage makeup. Her pop debut album is expected this fall or winter.

Similarly, Olympic figure skaters sometimes have to launch second careers as adolescents. They reach their prime in their teens or early 20s, as Kristi Yamaguchi did in winning gold at 20 in 1992 in her only Games.

Yamaguchi, now 37, extended her skating career by 10 years, however, by touring with Stars on Ice. Such an opportunity doesn't exist for gymnasts.

"I worked as hard or harder to build a professional reputation," says Yamaguchi, who won *Dancing with the Stars* in May. "If you want a career post-Olympics, you can't just rest on laurels."



1997 AP photo by Brian K. Diggs

Longtime legacy: Kristi Yamaguchi, who won a gold medal at 20 in 1992, is one of the few athletes to remain in the spotlight years after her Olympic career was over.

In sports announcing, women are left on the sidelines

Glass ceiling exists for play-by-play on major sports

By Michael Hiestand
USA TODAY

Despite the proliferation of TV sports, which have created more on-air jobs — albeit on new channels that draw tiny audiences — the formula for who gets those jobs hasn't changed much in recent years.

Meaning not much has opened up for women in sportscasting — at least when it comes to the starring roles.

Consider the top of the TV sports pyramid: live coverage of spotlight events, where networks spend the big bucks on rights fees and production costs and draw their biggest audiences.

The TV stars on those events are the game analysts and sometimes the studio analysts. And here, unless TV sports formulas are blown up, women aren't going to appear — at least on major sports such as football or baseball. Of course, 99.99% of males aren't going to be eligible for those analyst jobs, either, because — with rare exceptions such as Howard Cosell, Dennis Miller and Tony Kornheiser — one of the job requirements is that



By Al Messerschmidt, Getty Images

Imbalance: Erin Andrews, here with Evan Longoria, is one of many female sideline reporters, while Pam Ward is the only woman regularly doing football play-by-play.

they've been players or coaches.

But that's not true of play-by-play announcers — who, with few exceptions, are not ex-players or coaches — and gender would hardly seem a barrier to being able to note down-and-distance or a pitch count.

But it wasn't until 2000, after sporadic cameos by women calling play-by-play, that ESPN's Pam Ward called a few col-

lege football games and moved on to what is now her seventh season calling a full slate of Big Ten games.

She doesn't know of any other women regularly calling football.

"ESPN is not the place to start doing play-by-play," says Ward, who did some local sportscasting before being hired full time at ESPN in 1998.

"You need a feeder system. We have

no minor league system."

Still, as more women's games get on TV — especially in basketball — more women already are doing play-by-play, at least on women's sports. Ward, who calls ESPN WNBA and college women's basketball games, says that hasn't translated into regular assignments on men's basketball: "I don't think the opportunity is there. Maybe I shouldn't have said that."

There are many TV opportunities for women as reporters, either along sidelines or in studio shows.

Ward says she often is asked about those roles from girls and young women who approach her for advice: "More than 90% of them want to do sidelines. That's what they see as possible. They see it as a female role."

Since CBS' NFL studio show famously hired Phyllis George in 1975, the roles increased for women in studios and along sidelines. That's partly because the TV sports tonnage has increased so dramatically — creating more studio and sideline jobs overall — but also because female reporters, especially along sidelines, began replacing ex-athletes.

But with few exceptions — Paula Zahn co-hosting CBS' 1994 Winter Olympics,



Ward: Does football play-by-play.

Hannah Storm hosting NBC's NBA studio show in the 1990s and Lesley Visser popping up on big-event sidelines across sports — women haven't gotten many juicier roles on marquee events.

Like doing play-by-play announcing. But, says Laurie Orlando, an ESPN senior vice president overseeing announcer planning and development, "That will change. It has to change. . . . It took time to accept women as (studio) anchors. Our goal is to get a similar acceptance for play-by-play."

CBS' Visser, who was the first woman to work a Super Bowl sideline (in 1995) and go into the Pro Football Hall of Fame (in 2006), calls ESPN's Ward "a great role model that young women can see. Play-by-play is the great hole in the marketplace — it's something women should be able to aspire to. There's no reason someone couldn't say, 'Let's try Pam Ward on an NFL game.'"

It shouldn't be that big of a deal, since women routinely constitute about 40% of NFL audiences.

And, Visser notes, times can change: "Now, sidelines is where they put all the women. But only 15 or 20 years ago, that was so radical."

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