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SPRING 1994

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As the first woman athletic director in the country overseeing both men's and women's sports, Davidson expected to meet with the skepticism of her peers. Not surprisingly, however, her gender was the least of everyone's problems. "The difficulties I've faced since taking this position in 1988 have to do with the recession," she says. Davidson spends much of her time in conference with the department's business manager juggling the budget and deciding on cutbacks.

Traditionally, athletic directors were coaches or physical education teachers, but this is no longer true. "Athletic experience is important, but I would not recommend a physical education background anymore," says Davidson. "It would be better to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration or communications. Then, at the master's level, an MBA or a postgraduate degree in sports management would be most helpful."



Judith A. Davidson

Davidson, a varsity athlete in lacrosse, field hockey, and basketball at the University of New Hampshire, holds a PhD in sports history from the University of Massachusetts. Ten years of hands-on administrative experience coaching and managing the field hockey team at the University of Iowa prepared her for the job of athletic director at Central Connecticut.

If you're interested in working in a college setting, contact the NCAA Ethnic Minority and Women's Enhancement Program, which offers internships and postgraduate scholarships.

Write to Stanley D. Johnson,

Director of Professional Development,
National Collegiate Athletic Association, 6201 College
Blvd., Overland Park, KS 66211-2422. **CW**

Not For Men Only

Looking for a career in the sports industry? Sports Careers, the only sports career development organization in the nation, may be just the answer.

"Our mission is to help people find a position within the sports industry," says Jay Abraham, president of Sports Careers, based in Phoenix, AZ. "Our success ratio is 15% to 20%, which is very good for this industry. We've helped people get jobs with ESPN, the Atlanta Braves, the San Diego Chargers, the Detroit Red Wings, and the Phoenix Suns. The jobs have ranged from public relations to sales and marketing to being on-air personalities."

According to Abraham, opportunities for women in sports are good, but women have a perception that sports is only for men, which prohibits them from pursuing the many available opportunities. "Women have to remember that although men are dominant on the playing field, that doesn't apply on the business side," he notes. Abraham cites research conducted on why women have difficulty breaking into the sports industry. "One of the top findings showed that women weren't even applying," he states.

Sports Careers offers a wide range of vocational programs including conferences, seminars, educational products, and publications. "With our seminars, we bring the industry to our members," Abraham notes. "Who you know is important, so our seminars offer individuals the opportunity to network and begin to build relationships. We've

found this method to be the most successful way to help people."

You can join Sports Careers by paying a one-time membership fee of \$199. Annual dues are \$95. Members receive a self-assessment kit, an audiocassette package, a résumé kit, and a six-month subscription to the biweekly newsletter, *Career Connections*. Sports Careers also publishes *Sports Market Place*, a directory listing over 7,500 entries including teams, leagues, broadcasters, associations, agents, and promoters.

According to Abraham, sports is a \$100 billion industry, and the demand for qualified people will grow even larger. "Five years ago, there was only one sports radio station. Today, there are 52," he says. There are over 60,000 sports manufacturing firms in the world, 160 colleges offer sports management degrees, and 19 arenas are either being constructed or redone. In 1980, the National Basketball Association's licensing revenues were \$100,000; today, revenues are \$1.8 billion dollars."

All of which translates to jobs. "Women need to forget about gender being a hindrance and concentrate on educating and marketing themselves properly," Abraham stresses. "You make your own luck. Sometimes you have only 30 seconds to convince someone of your skills and talent. If you're not prepared, you've lost that opportunity. At Sports Careers, we prepare you for those 30 seconds."

For more information, contact Sports Careers, PO Box 10129, Phoenix, AZ 85064; 800/SPORT-77.

—By Cynthia Scanlon