

ATHLETIC/INTRAMURALS DEPARTMENT

Memo

From: V. Barfield

April 23, 1976

To: F. McInerney

cc: D. C. Bischoff, R. O'Connell, A. Rufe and Coaches

of Women's Sport

Subject: Barber Grants-In-Aid - Distribution

Your recent administrative dictum declaring athletes in only four sports to be eligible for Barber Grants-In-Aid deeply concerns me. Even though more members of the Department of Athletics expressed disapproval than approval of the plan, no energies to my knowledge have been exerted to effect a compromise which not only may serve as a morale factor but equally as another indication of a concerned, humanistic and democratic administration. You have held meetings, which I applaud, to permit the coaches to express their views, but I am unable to recall a single meeting where alternative solutions toward the allocation of Barber funds were explored with you. This is very puzzling to me. Of course, this may be explained in your forthcoming memo which, as you wrote in your memorandum, will present your rationale for the recent Barber decision.

Additionally, the effect of the plan on the development of the women's program worries me. I have expressed verbally to you the reasons for my concern. Others, equally, have written their concerns to you. I, for one, am very confused as to why you sought input since in fact, it appears you disregarded it. The plan as proposed by you regardless of dissenting views appears to be in the process of implementation.

My primary objection to your recent administrative dictum is that it ignores the established process through which decisions have been made that effect the development of the women's program. Your action takes decision-making power regarding the scope and nature of the program away from the very people who are most critically involved in its implementation.

The coaches of women's sports, as I am sure you are aware, have been given, in the past, a specified sum of dollars for Barber awards. After the allocation is determined, the coaches meet as a whole with the Assistant Director of Athletics and often the Associate Director of Athletics and, at that time, decide how the dollars are to be distributed among the varsity sports for women. This process not only creates between the coaches an awareness of each program's uniqueness, but, and just as importantly in my judgment, permits these professionals to have control over the development of a unified program for women student-athletes. The program becomes "our program". Such involvement may result in a stronger commitment not only to each respective team but to the entire program.

Concomitantly, the recent decision which identifies participants in two sports for women as recipients of Barber dollars forces the athletic program for women to emulate an athletic model, which not only exists at the University of Massachusetts but other places as well; a model which I believe may not only be archaic but may be detrimental to the educational value of athletics for students, especially student-athletes. What in essence this action says is that a "meritocracy" is being developed in the women's program based on arbitrarily administered preferential treatment.

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Barber Grant-In-Aid

These sports were selected, I assume, because of their potential to generate revenue. Even though I believe all athletic events have the potential to generate revenue, I do believe, and I am sure you may agree, that revenue producing is not the prime role of an athletic experience in an educational atmosphere. The negative effect of the revenue producing concept in athletics is chronicled daily by the power struggles within the men's athletic governing bodies as well as what appears to be development of a collegiate feeder system for professional teams funded by tax dollars. Additionally, this action seems to ensure that the major and minor sports syndrome which presently exists in men's athletics will occur in women's athletics.

Women want to prevent this. Women want to develop their own athletic model. And our male counterparts, furthermore, have warned us repeatedly to avoid the 'evils' of male athletics. This is not only one of those 'evils' but a force which seems to mandate that the women's athletic program shape itself according to the male model. Such a model appears to be predicated on 'winning is the only thing,' revenue producing being more important than education hence exploitation of an athlete, excessive controls over the athlete's personal life, enormous recruiting budgets, voluminous rule books, mounds of records, policing teams, and maintenance of a governance bureaucracy that serves mostly those 'special' sports.

I must, therefore, ask my questions. Would it not be better at this stage of development in the women's program to permit the coaches of women's sports to decide how dollars for Barber awards are to be distributed? Why not take the \$10,000 that may be allocated to athletes in these two sports for women and permit the coaches of women sports to determine how the money will be allocated? Would it not be wiser to try to experiment and develop a new model for allocation of Barber awards than to follow a pattern of proven addiction?

We have, in my judgment, an opportunity to develop an athletic program sensitive to the times, thus minimizing 'evils' which appear to be present in today's athletics. This could be the cornerstone of such a model. In closing, therefore, I urge you to reconsider your recent decision regarding the allocation of Barber Funds.



Vivian M. Barfield
Assistant Athletic Director

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Coaches: Albert
Evans
Follansbee
Gaudette
Griffin
O'Brien
Ogilvie

Garber
MacConnell