

Fact file: facts and figures about women and girls in sport

Women into sports leadership

Why do we need women leaders in sport?

We need women leaders in sport:

- to act as role models
- to bring a different perspective to decision-making
- so that decision-makers represent the communities they serve
- because their absence suggests that there are inequitable barriers that prevent women succeeding at the highest levels in sport.

What is the current situation?

Sport Administration

| SOURCE/ORGANISATION | FEMALE REPRESENTATION | MALE REPRESENTATION |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR) member organisations (chairs, chief executives, senior managers) | 24% | 76% |
| UK Sport funded bodies 2001–2002 (performance directors, key coaches and staff) | 19% | 81% |
| British Universities Sports Association (BUSA officers, athletic union presidents, executive board and committee members) | 39% | 61% |
| Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (chief leisure officers) | 12% | 88% |

Coaching

| SOURCE/ORGANISATION | FEMALE REPRESENTATION | MALE REPRESENTATION |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Sport England Active Sports Programme (coaches) | 34% | 66% |
| British Olympic Team 2000 (coaches and team managers) | 8% coaches 4% team managers | 92% coaches 96% team managers |
| Commonwealth Games teams (all home countries coaches and team managers) | 21% coaches 32% team managers | 79% coaches 68% team managers |

What are the barriers to women in sports leadership?

The barriers to senior positions that women face in coaching and administration include:

- The nature of many women's careers with breaks for domestic reasons (births, duties of care for elderly dependants, children or siblings and so on), particularly in a workplace culture that is predominantly geared towards men's lives. Coaching qualifications that are time-limited pay no regard to women who take time out for family reasons.

● Lack of role models and peers:

the few women who do succeed can be isolated and lack peer support. Because of the small number of women in senior positions, they are very visible and can be more exposed to criticism. This is a particular issue for female coaches.

- **Expectations:** the perception that women will not be taken seriously by others who may have to carry out instructions. This was highlighted in the court case brought by Maria Grant in 2000 under the Sex Discrimination Act. Lancashire Cricket Board (LCB) was found guilty of discrimination. LCB did not appoint Ms Grant as Development Co-ordinator on the assumption that meetings chaired by a woman would not be acceptable.

● Notions of women's work:

that women are better suited to caring or expressive activities. This might include caring for children or athletes with disabilities or preparing refreshments for meetings.

- Stereotypes about management and leadership positions as demanding and 'combative', hence unsuited to women. Meetings themselves can also be conducted in a combative style, usually because of poor chairing or facilitation, and this deters some women from becoming involved.

- Networks within sport have been long established and men may find these helpful in developing their careers via a personal sponsorship system. This is difficult for women as there are so few at the top to start with, so women are less integrated into the networks.

- There is evidence that women are less likely to apply for senior positions unless they feel confident that they can fully execute all the functions, whereas men are more likely to apply for positions even if they do not fulfil all of the person specification.

The climate for change

There have been a number of recent developments in sport which may provide women with more opportunities to contribute to decision-making processes. These include:

The UK Strategy for Women and Sport
This is a three-year strategy with strategic objectives that focus on increasing participation, improving performance and excellence, and increasing the number of women leaders in sport. The strategy aims to change the culture of sport and is supported by all home country sports councils and a wide range of governing bodies and national sporting organisations.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport Coach Delivery Plan
The recommendations of the Coaching Task Force culminated in a delivery plan in 2002 which seeks to increase the number of high quality professional coaches from community to elite level. It recognises that women are under-represented at all levels of coaching and seeks to address this through its three sub-delivery plans.

Equality Standard in Sport
Following the success of the WSF National Action Plan (1999–2002) and the Racial Equality Standards (2000), the Equality Standard in Sport is being developed to support national governing bodies and national sports organisations to achieve equity for women, disabled people and those from ethnic minority communities. Representation on executive boards is a key area to be addressed and the

Standard will provide mechanisms to recruit and develop people from different groups in order to establish genuinely democratic processes. It is due to be launched in April 2004.

International Olympic Committee (IOC)
The IOC Working Group on Women and Sport has been monitoring progress against quotas set by the IOC for 2000 and 2005. Specifically, all national Olympic committees, and international and national federations were required to achieve at least 10% representation by women on their executive boards by 2000. This figure should rise to at least 20% by 2005. The first of the two targets has been achieved although this success is due in part to some organisations exceeding the target while others fell short. Women currently represent 15% of the British Olympic Committee members.

Gender mainstreaming
The government has developed a policy that seeks to achieve 50% female representation on all public bodies by 2005. Gender mainstreaming is the integration of women into all policies, systems, structures and practices. The Women and Equality Unit, Women's National Commission, Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments and Women's Sports Foundation are all campaigning for public bodies, including sports organisations, to be accountable to their communities by adopting a gender mainstreaming approach.

Best practice solutions: coaching

Coach Mentoring Scheme
The England Squash 'Wot No Women' initiative (supported by the Women's Sports Foundation, England Squash and sports coach UK) was piloted in three counties – Sussex, Kent and Staffordshire. The scheme initially involved 27 potential women coaches, 20 mentors and 22 clubs/leisure centres. The key to the success of this scheme was finding a supportive environment in which the women could practise their coaching skills and develop a productive mentoring relationship. Through this initiative, 22 women have become active England Squash level 2 club

coaches, with 94% having a permanent base from which to coach.

Women into High Performance Coaching
The Women's Sports Foundation, working in partnership with sports coach UK and the four sports of cricket, football, rugby league and rugby union, identified that there was a lack of national sportswomen moving into coaching at the end of their representative careers. Twenty-six women participated in the programme initially, and evaluation after the second year showed a significant increase in the number of women with level II or III coaching awards and those working on a regular basis with national level performance squads. This programme represents the first major initiative for women to move into higher performance coaching environments.

Paralympians into Coaching Project
Sportscoach UK and the British Paralympic Association are working together to develop a project to support more elite athletes with disabilities into coaching and leadership positions. The key aims include the development of a four-year project to provide a structured pathway of support into coaching for retiring paralympic athletes, identifying the key issues in sport which paralympic athletes face when becoming coaches and working in partnership with key organisations to develop clear strategies to overcome perceived barriers to coaching. So far, 15 athletes have signed up to the project, five of whom are women.

Useful websites for further information

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport www.culture.gov.uk
Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management www.ilam.co.uk
Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments www.ocpa.gov.uk
Sport England www.sportengland.org
sports coach UK www.scuk.org.uk
Women and Equality Unit www.weu.gsi.gov.uk
Women's Sports Foundation www.wsf.org.uk

The Women's Sports Foundation has a vision of a society which celebrates the diversity of women and girls, and enables them to benefit from, excel at and fulfil their potential through the sport of their choice.

Supporting women's sport

The Women's Sports Foundation is the only organisation that works solely to increase opportunities for women and girls. We are a small team of five people, campaigning for women's sport. These fact files are provided to you free of

charge to help raise awareness of the issues – and empower you to advocate for change. However, if you would like to make a contribution to cover admin costs, and to support women's sport, please visit our website and follow the links to the 'make a donation' section.

Women's Sports Foundation

3rd Floor, Victoria House, Bloomsbury Square London WC1B 4SE Tel: 020 7273 1740 Fax: 020 7273 1981 Email: info@wsf.org.uk Web: www.wsf.org.uk