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ON THE COVER: Photo courtesy University of North Carolina

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Herschel Walker leads a group in a meeting with Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA).

"I CHALLENGE THE U.S. CONGRESS TO DO THE RIGHT THING AND SUPPORT THIS LEGISLATION ... YOUNG PEOPLE DESERVE THE SAME CHANCES THAT I HAD AS A CHILD."

- HERSCHEL WALKER

SPORTS INDUSTRY LEADERS TEAM UP FOR NATIONAL HEALTH THROUGH FITNESS DAY

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 14th Annual National Health Through Fitness Day proved to be another productive day of advocacy and awareness last Wednesday in Washington, DC, as nearly 150 industry leaders joined forces to ask Congress for support for two pieces of legislation. In all, there were more than 125 Congressional meetings held on Capitol Hill on March 13.

The SFIA, working together with the new PHIT America campaign, arrived on Capitol Hill with an effort that was geared towards helping get Americans more active and becoming healthier by promoting two key pieces of legislation: the Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) Grant and the PHIT Act, which would expand eligible reimbursement expenses from pre-tax accounts to cover physical activity costs.

"I challenge the U.S. Congress to do the right thing and support this legislation," said former NFL star Herschel Walker (Franklin Sports), the honorary chairman of National Health Through Fitness Day. "Having a P.E. class in my hometown of Wrightsville, Georgia gave me the confidence to become a great student. Nowadays, young people deserve the same chances that I had as a child. As a country, we owe it to ourselves to pass this legislation."

The SFIA recognized Congressional members Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA) and Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA) with its

Congressional Health & Fitness Award for their "promotion of healthy and active lifestyles in America." Olympic middle distance runner and 1,500m 2011 World Champion Jenny Simpson (New Balance) was awarded the SFIA's Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her commitment to promoting physical education and active lifestyles in America. The awards were presented at a reception held Tuesday night, March 12.

The celebrity athlete delegation also included former National League MVP Jeff Kent (Easton); current Baltimore Ravens/Super Bowl winning wide receiver Torrey Smith (Under Armour); LPGA great Lorena Ochoa (PING); Major League Lacrosse star Paul Rabil (Warrior); four-time Olympic water polo medalist Heather Petri (USA Water Polo); 2012 Olympic beach volleyball silver medalist April Ross (Mizuno); undefeated heavyweight boxing champion Deontay Wilder (Everlast); four-time NFL All-Pro linebacker Ken Harvey; former NFL defensive back John Booty; and former U.S. Soccer National Team player Taylor Twellman (MC10).

"It's always great when a member of Congress recognizes the importance of physical education and physical activity," said Bill Sells, SFIA Vice President of Government Affairs. "There's no doubt that PEP and PHIT would help to create a healthier country that isn't so dependent on healthcare. The SFIA staff and I are extremely grateful to all the sponsors and member companies that were involved to make this event a success."



TE TeamExpress

ACQUIRED BY INVESTOR GROUP

A group of investors led by Mark Marney, founder and former CEO of The Golf Warehouse and Baseball Savings, has acquired Team Express Distributing, LLC. Team Express Distributing is the owner of the popular BaseballExpress.com, Softball.com, FootballAmerica.com and TeamExpress.com.

Established in 1990, Team Express is a leading multi-channel sporting goods retailer. Its sport-specific entities serve individual consumers, and TeamExpress.com is the exclusive supplier to thousands of schools as well as professional and amateur teams, leagues and sports organizations. A turnkey solution for equipment, apparel, footwear, team uniforms and training aids, the company features the latest in brand-name gear for athletes.

After founding The Golf Warehouse (TGW.com) in 1997, Marney, along with his brothers Mike and Richard, developed that enterprise into the largest online channel in golf before departing in 2009. They also started BaseballSavings.com.

Marney, now CEO of Team Express, shared some of the reasons why Team Express was an appealing acquisition target. "I always thought Baseball Savings [which became Team Express] was a great company, and I kept in touch with the owners and management in case it ever became available, and it did become available," explained Marney, who originally tried to buy Baseball Express, the forerunner to Baseball Savings and



Mark Marney, CEO, Team Express

Team Express, as early as 2001. "I've always thought it had very good fundamentals, and I'm excited about the online space. I think it will continue to grow."

New ownership and management are expanding existing soccer and basketball operations, as well as exploring entry into hockey, lacrosse, rugby and other sports. Marney also told *TEAM Business* some of his immediate plans for growing Team Express. "We've done a little bit of reorganization here," he said. "I think the consumer businesses –

Baseball Express, Football America, Basketball Express – got hidden, from a branding standpoint, under the umbrella of Team Express. We're separating those businesses. We're also redeveloping Team Express as strictly for team institutional organizations and leagues. We're separating the consumer business from the team business. That's our first initiative."

Team Express serves customers in 50 states and 38 countries, as well as Major League Baseball and National Football League players, coaches and teams as ambassadors.

In addition to online stores, products for men, women and juniors are available via catalogs and a retail operation in San Antonio, TX near the company's headquarters. They showcase more than 50,000 SKUs of products from Adidas, Easton, Louisville Slugger, Mizuno, Nike, Rawlings, Schutt, Wilson, Under Armour and other premium brands at competitive prices.



PROTECTIVE STYLE

Sports medicine products tech up and slim down

By Fernando J. Delgado

In the sports medicine category, products continue to get sleeker, lighter and more protective. Manufacturers continue to upgrade technologies and materials in an effort to meet the demands of athletes who want more protection without sacrificing their freedom of movement and performance on the field. The newest offerings in sleeves and accessories reflect that delicate balance.

“Every ounce counts, and that’s never going to change,” said Justin Niefer, VP of business development at EvoShield. “The demand for lightweight protection is only going to increase. Compression is more vital, and we’re also seeing trends towards

flexibility and breathability. We’re also seeing a trend of trying to create a hybrid of protection meets sports medicine. If you’re looking at knee braces or ankle braces, you’re looking at the compression of the sports medicine brace, but also added protection.”

EvoShield has extensively developed sleeves for baseball and football players in particular. Niefer explained that baseball players are using sleeves more for compression and warmth, while football players are more concerned with protecting against heavy hits on the gridiron. “We’re looking into body-mapping and different compression points – whether it’s from a therapy or

performance standpoint – to create blood flow for a baseball player,” he stated. “And then certainly as we look towards football, we’re trying to give athletes the fashion that they’re looking for, but also the strategic protective function they need to protect their arms.”

Brett Markwort, General Manager at Markwort Sporting Goods, has noticed that sleeves are an example of a greater emphasis towards compression that combines protection and performance in the sports medicine category. “In terms of trends, we’re definitely seeing an expansion of compression gear for protection and faster recovery,” said Markwort. An interesting new



sleeve offering from Markwort is the Cool Tac Sleeve, which is unique in that it offers UV protection by blocking up to 90 percent of the sun's rays, while also offering moisture-wicking and a cooling effect. Other sleeves from leading vendors such as McDavid, Shock Doctor, Cramer and Cho-Pat mix cutting-edge lightweight construction with fabrics that manage moisture or help athletes keep cool – all while helping them prevent or recover from injuries.

Markwort added that the annual National Athletic Trainers' Association trade show usually provides sports medicine vendors with a good first look at upcoming trends in accessories. "Two years ago kinesiology tape was all the rage," he observed. "Last year it was concussions and mouthguards. Mouthguards are always a huge deal in the concussion talk." He pointed out that Markwort's Vettex Mouthguard is a top-selling accessory for the company. Other leading offerings such as Shock Doctor's Nano 3D Lower Mouthguard also provides athletes with essential protection against collisions.

Socks have been taking off as another accessory, which has become more synonymous with sports medicine and performance. "Socks are certainly a big trend right now," Evoshield's Niefer said. "I think you're going to see sports medicine and performance functions breathe life into the fashion sock. It's an accessory item that we're looking at as more than just a fashion piece. It's something that can create functional performance."

Niefer added that athletes are also demanding more color in their sleeves, accessories, and other protective apparel. In response, Evoshield has been building out a 3-year plan that answers that demand. "Giving the athlete the ability to express themselves through interesting color schemes and customization allows players to define what kind of athlete they are," stated Niefer. "We like giving athletes something that fits whatever their style of game is - whether it's a leadoff hitter in baseball or a running back in football – so that they can mold their protective gear to their game." ■

CHO PAT



Elbow Compression Sleeve anatomically contours for maximum fit and comfort to help support injuries, improve blood circulation, and maintain body warmth, MSRP \$13.



Dynamic Ankle Compression Sleeve offers knitted support that combines warmth and compression to reduce pain and discomfort while promoting healing. Applies uniform dynamics to the ankle joint and conforms to the configuration of the ankle, MSRP \$38.



Achilles Tendon Strap alleviates pain and discomfort associated with Achilles tendonitis. Developed in cooperation with the Mayo Clinic, the patented strap is widely used by sports/medicine professionals, MSRP \$19.

MARKWORT



Youth Heart-Gard Protective Body Shirt is a compression shirt with a Heart-Gard sewn in. Heart-Gard is a tough, high-density polyethylene dome that absorbs impact energy and forces it away from the heart. It is small in size, measuring 6" x 6, MSRP \$36.



Cool Tac Sleeves block up to 90 percent of the sun's UV rays with a cooling effect and provide moisture control and sweat absorption, MSRP \$18.

Vettex Double Guard Mouthguard is made with pliable thermo rubber for cushioning comfort and available in 17 colors, MSRP \$7.

EVOSHIELD



Adult Crew Socks feature moisture-wicking fabric, midfoot compression fit, ribbed cuff, and extra cushioning in the heel, MSRP \$15.

Baseball Catcher's Thumb Guard is the only MLB-authentic baseball thumb guard. Designed by top professional athletic trainers, it custom molds in minutes and fits comfortably inside the catcher's glove to brace the thumb and protect the player from jammed



thumb, Gamekeepers Thumb and ulnar collateral ligament injuries, MSRP \$22.

Sliding Wrist Guard protects baseball players sliding into base, MSRP n/a.

Protective Arm Sleeve is football-specific. Compression fabric offers breathability and support for blood circulation and promotes faster muscle recovery.

Nanocell™ pads are placed over the forearm and triceps for added protection, MSRP \$30.

EvoShield's Color Ways offer athletes bold colors to express themselves in a variety of different accessories, including batting gloves, elbow guards, wrist straps and sleeves, MSRP n/a.

SHOCK DOCTOR



Elbow Compression Sleeve conforms to the natural shape of the elbow and arm; provides cooling and flexibility through Lycra binding; and offers convenient finger tabs for an easy grip pull when fitting, MSRP \$20.

Active Ultra Insole is engineered for higher-impact performance and full-foot alignment for all athletes in all sports, MSRP \$40.

Wrist Sleeve-Wrap Support features a close-fitting full dexterity through an anatomical palm for an unobstructed natural grip. Its adjustable single-strap compression wrap offers personal fit preferences, MSRP \$25.

Nano 3D Lower Mouthguard - by incorporating Mora technology, the jaw is correctly positioned forward and down for increase strength and athletic performance, MSRP \$50.

Ankle Sleeve with Compression Fit has a low profile slip on sleeve design. Construction materials includes terry lining with Lycra, non-slip silicone gripper pattern, and N-Tx Compression Neoprene, MSRP \$15.

Knee Compression Sleeve with Open Patella has an anatomical pre-curved design and is made with a breathable mesh window which provides cooling and full-range of motion flex, MSRP \$20.



CRAMER

ESS Arm Compression Sleeve with articulated elbow that does not bunch or restrict joint motion, MSRP \$15.

ESS Calf Compression Sleeve shows proven progress in circulation and benefits mild muscular support. One-of-a-kind knitted design stretches for comfort. Seamless construction avoids pressure points and chaffing, MSRP \$15.

McDAVID



5125R Level 2 Knee Sleeve with 4-way Elastic with Gel Buttress targets soft tissue and patella support, MSRP \$30.


8831 Rebound Compression Socks increase blood flow post-exertion; can be worn for extended periods of time due to Targeted Compression™ Technology, and specialty yarns featuring seaweed and zinc help aid in recovery, MSRP \$40.

5115R Level 2 Ankle Sleeve with 4-way Elastic with Gel Buttress give relief from arthritis, bursitis and tendonitis making it ideal for those with neoprene allergies. The 4-way stretch increases compression and fit without heat retention, MSRP \$25.

MOJI



360 Foot Massager relieves foot pain by stretching and massaging the entire plantar fascia. Available April 2013, MSRP \$39.

A female athlete with long blonde hair, wearing a blue singlet and black shorts, is captured in a starting crouch on a red track. She is looking directly at the camera with a focused expression. The background is blurred, showing a stadium setting.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

PROFILING THE CHANGING
FEMALE ATHLETE

By Fernando J. Delgado



Northwestern University
Women's Lacrosse Team
Uniforms by Under Armour

The female athlete is now better than ever. Young women nationwide are playing a record number of sports in record numbers. Marathons and other competitive citizens' races continue to sell out. The level of competition has never been higher as professional female athletes and Olympians earn accolades in dozens of sports and inspire young men and women alike. The gap between females and males closes by the day.

Most importantly, young women have more opportunities to play sports in school than ever before - something that many females may take for granted these days. It wasn't always easy to start playing a sport or reach the heights of athletic achievement we see today at every age and skill level.

What helped contribute the most to shaping the modern day female athlete? The answer can be found in a sentence issued decades ago:

"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."

That one declaration, representing the federal law known as Title IX of the Education Amendments Acts of 1972, forever changed women's athletics more than 40 years ago.

By ensuring equal opportunities for both genders, and applicable to all educational institutions both public and private that receive federal funds, Title IX has allowed both men and women to take advantage of opportunities to participate in sports. Since women were severely under-represented in sports at the time of Title IX's introduction, female athletes in particular

have benefited a great deal from the law, receiving an equitable amount of scholarships and financial aid to participate.

According to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) "Trends in Team Sports Fall 2012 Report," female participation in a number of team sports continues to grow even though overall participation has been declining. When combining the 23-team sports for purposes of the report, SFIA found that total participation in 2011 decreased 4.4 percent from 2010, a loss of 1.3 million participants and 6.1 million team members.

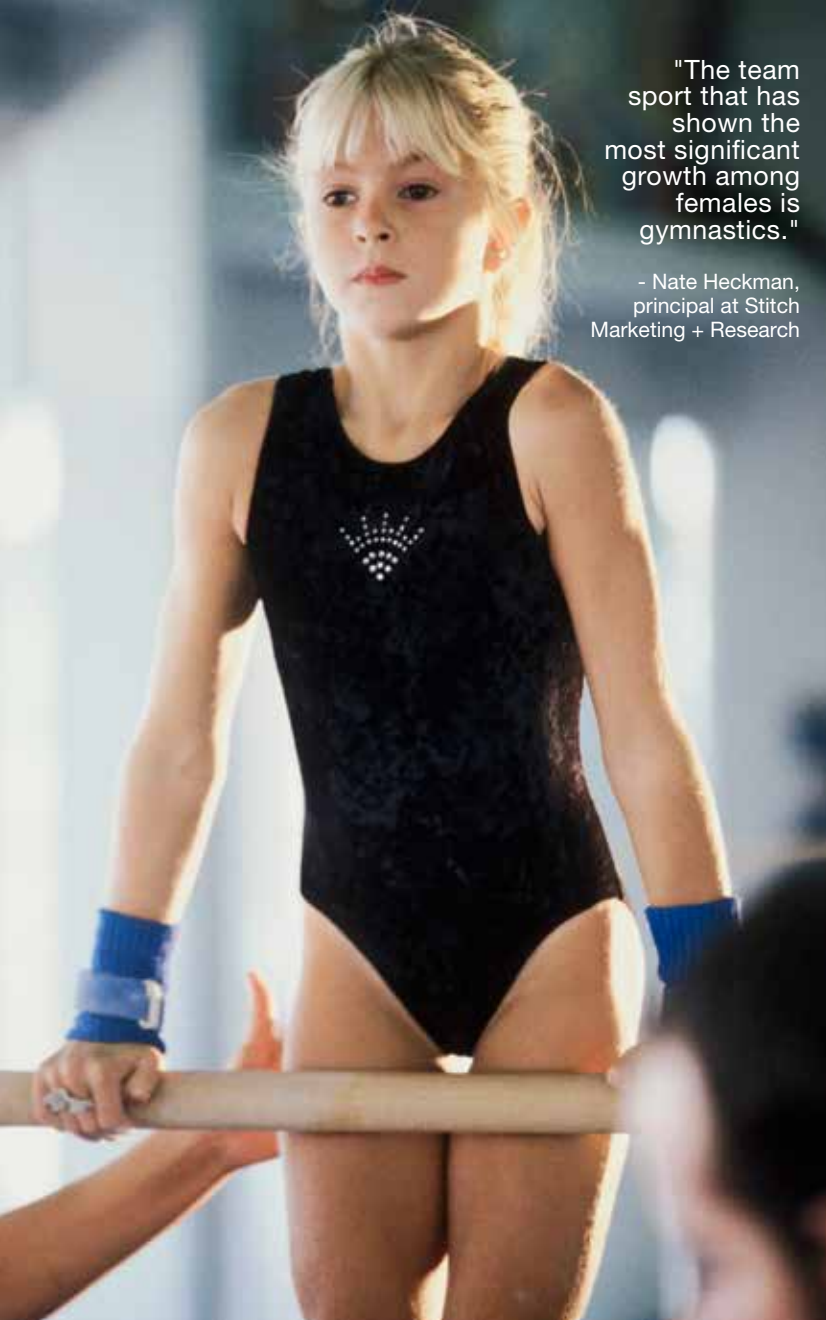
Looking back three years, when all 23 team sports were first tracked, 3.6 million participants and 13.2 million team members have been lost. However, a vast majority of the loss is on the adult side, as youth females in particular have shown strong participation. SFIA and Stitch Marketing + Research shared that female team sports participants aged 6 to 17 grew 14.4 percent from 2008 to 2011 while overall growth was about 10.2 percent.

VJ Mayor, director of marketing & communications at SFIA, has studied the effects of Title IX on team sports participation and shared some observations with *TEAM*. "We're seeing that 6 to 12 year-old girls are adding significant growth," said Mayor. "Participants were up 14 percent over the last five years. Core participation by females is close to half in a lot of traditional team sports including soccer and track and field, and it's as high as 70 percent in court volleyball."

SFIA's "Trends In Team Sports Participation Report" shows increased participation by female athletes, as well as potential growth, in several key team sports. Women's basketball has room to grow in the core sector, with just 22 percent core participants that are female. "It will be interesting to see if the U.S. women winning gold in the 2012 London Olympics will have any effect on participation," said Mayor. "We should know by [this month]."

Lacrosse core participation is similar to basketball, with 29 percent female core participants compared to 71 percent male participants. Overall participation continues to grow in lacrosse as the sport moves West and maintains a strong presence in the Mid-Atlantic states.

Volleyball is another sport that females are gravitating towards. "As with basketball, we wait to see if there is a post-Olympic bump in court and beach participation," observed Mayor. "Beach volleyball core participation is close to being equal with male participation - 47 percent versus 53 percent - while court volleyball skews heavily toward female participation - 70 percent



"The team sport that has shown the most significant growth among females is gymnastics."

- Nate Heckman, principal at Stitch Marketing + Research



Karen Morrison, director of gender inclusion for the NCAA

Title IX and women's professional development. By considering how the female athlete has evolved as a result of that key piece of legislation, she explained that Title IX has impacted society in ways that transcend sports.

"It's such a world of difference for women in education and in athletics now compared to where it was 40 years ago," said Morrison. "If you're looking beyond the athletics numbers, you can look at our society having seven to nine percent of our doctors and attorneys [that] were females [in the 1970s], and now we're pushing 50 percent or more, and that's because of Title IX. That opened up the door for women to be able to pursue their post-graduate careers as much as it did athletics."

The doors that Title IX opened created an athletic environment in schools today that is drastically different. Now, females in high school and college have unprecedented opportunities and a wide selection of sports to choose from. "I think one of the big foundational differences with female athletes today compared to where we were before Title IX is this complete sense of entitlement to the same opportunities that their brothers or their fathers had with regard to athletics competition and values," continued Morrison. "Forty years ago, we were fighting just to get on the field, just to have coaches, and to overcome society frowning upon women who wanted to be athletes and wanted to be competitive. They were also fighting a perception that there was something wrong with wanting to enjoy those competitive opportunities. It's so different now."

Today's female athletes have their older sisters, mothers or grandmothers to thank for paving the way. "A lot of females will say that they don't know what Title IX is. And most women's advocates will say that's both good and bad," Morrison explained. "You want young men and women to understand how different the world was before 1972, but you also want them to live in a world where that seems like a ridiculous perception because they know that they ought to have the right to pursue their educational and athletic competitive goals."

Morrison still battles misperceptions about Title IX, saying some male athletes believe their opportunities have gone down in the process. "We've come a long way through those 40 years about perceptions and about what commitments we have by our school systems to provide athletic opportunities," she said. "I still think we have a ways to go with fan appreciation for women's sports. We shouldn't compare it to men's sports and find it inferior. I think we're in that phase of cultural change where we need people to appreciate women's sports for what it is."

Nate Heckman, principal at Stitch Marketing + Research, is in tune with the statistics of female athletic participation - both at work and at

female versus 30 percent male." The recent SFIA Volleyball Council meeting focused on keeping the anticipated new participants.

Soccer remains a massively popular sport among females, with 5.6 million participants, behind basketball's 5.9 million. Forty-five percent of core participants are female, compared to 55 percent male. "Being no exception to the rule, we're keeping an eye on female participation post-Olympics after Abby Wambach, Alex Morgan and the rest of the U.S. squad brought home Gold," said Mayor. "With the launch of the new National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) in the spring of 2013, it will be interesting to see if this has any impact on the game at a younger age. Will there be affiliated youth teams to the pro team, similar to clubs in Europe or even MLS clubs? I don't have the answer to that, but if there are, it would be intriguing to see the participation trends in those eight markets where teams will be set up."

Understanding how the past has shaped the current female athlete and the opportunities available today is an important lesson. Without a doubt, Title IX helped lay the foundation for the rapid growth of females participating in sports.

Karen Morrison, director of gender inclusion for the NCAA, is responsible for overseeing the education of member schools, the public and media concerning various women's issues, including sport,

home. "I have a pretty unique perspective because as part of my job, I've worked with a lot of sporting goods companies and I've worked on the manufacturing side," said Heckman. "But I also have three daughters, with the oldest being 10 and two of them playing sports. And in my free time, I also coach club basketball, and I coach all girls."

Stitch Marketing + Research helped compile the 2012 U.S. Trends In Team Sports Participation Report for SFIA, and Heckman shared some of the findings with TEAM. "The data, when it's broken out by gender and age, tells a huge story," he said. "The only group that has increased the number of sports that they're playing is the females 18 and over. I think what's happening there is a result of the Title IX idea where adult females, who during the course of their lives were given more opportunities to play, are now more excited about more different sports."

"Outdoor soccer continues to grow for females with participation declining for males."
- Nate Heckman, principal at Stitch Marketing + Research



"From a basic number's standpoint, it's easy to see that Title IX has had an impact because more girls are playing sports. But the problem is that it's coming from a much smaller base," Heckman said. "From the big industry standpoint, you can't count on female consumers to make up for all the losses of the male consumers and players."

Heckman also said that, along with increased participation, a trend toward more specialization is happening with female athletes, starting at a younger age than ever before. "As they're getting older, they're taking up new things and they're adding sports," he explained.

"Whereas with kids - both females and males - there's this whole area of specialization which is controversial. Some people say it's great, that you should specialize in order to be better, others say it's bad because you could get hurt if you're only doing one sport all year long. But it's happening with both female kids and male kids because it's the way of the culture now and they're being coached that. It's interesting to see that all this growth from 2008 to 2011 comes from the female side."

"We're seeing young girls coming to team sports in huge numbers, but they still have a relatively low number of sports that they play because of the specialization factor," Heckman said. "Meanwhile, we're seeing adult females branch out into more sports because I think what's happened is that they were exposed to more opportunities."

According to Heckman, the team sport that has shown the most significant growth among females is gymnastics. "You cannot underestimate the impact of the Olympics," he continued. "We love our women's Olympic gymnastics team. But gymnastics was growing already, and it's really taken off. When the team performed amazingly well at the Olympics, we've seen significant interest and participation growth from females as a result."

Lacrosse is a sport where females are fueling growth, while field hockey has seen some growth with females despite its relatively smaller participation numbers. "Outdoor soccer continues to grow for females, even though participation has been declining for males," said Heckman. "The females have been making up for that."

TODAY'S HIGH SCHOOL FEMALE ATHLETE

The high school female athlete today offers a glimpse into women at a vital stage in development, both scholastically and athletically. It is during their freshman year that many females pick their sport or sports of choice, and dedicate themselves more seriously to athletic pursuits.

Terri Moeser, who has served as athletic director at Maryvale Preparatory School since Fall 2003, reflects fondly on the advancements



Terri Moeser, has served as athletic director at Maryvale Preparatory School since 2003.

made by female high-school athletes and believes they are in a better position to succeed than ever before. "There's more opportunities for the female athlete," said Moeser. "There are more sports available to them in the high schools. This is my tenth year at Maryvale, and in that time we've started outdoor track, and we're starting a badminton team this year. Even 40 years ago, our school only had soccer, basketball and lacrosse. And now we have 24 teams in various sports."

Moeser said a big difference today is the extent to which a sport becomes part of their lives after high school, and in many cases even after college. "The increased variety of sports allows girls an opportunity, who might not otherwise participate in a sport, and encourages them to go out and try out for something," she said. "I think having the wide selection available is great. We have some girls who say, 'Hey, I might give this sport a try,' who might not have ever played it before or participated on a team sport."

"After they go to college, they might even come back and volunteer with our coaches to help, or they might come back during winter or

spring break to hang out with the team,” continued Moeser.

Of course, any given high school athletic department has a unique situation, including student body size and budgets. Maryvale, as a small all-girls private school with a student to faculty ratio of 1:9, can offer its students chances to play on varsity teams that larger public high schools may not have.

“In the past, when I first started here, you only heard about lacrosse scholarships. Now it’s opened up,” Moeser said. “I’ve got girls who are top contenders in track and field, whereas five or six years ago, that wouldn’t have happened.”

MEETING THE NEEDS OF A NEW GENERATION

For schools overseeing the athletic departments charged with offering programs for female athletes, as well as the manufacturers providing products they use every day in their sports, understanding the demands of the evolving young woman is essential, and physical and philosophical considerations remain which make females unique.

For many brands, including giants such as Under Armour, Nike and Adidas, innovation drives product.

“For [Under Armour], innovation is critical when meeting the demands of female athletes,” said Adrienne Lofton Shaw, senior marketing director at Under Armour. “It’s about getting that product that helps her be the best she can be. Innovation on the women’s side can be anything from performance fabrics that can control body temperature and get her ready to play or cool down faster, you name it. I can’t underscore enough how important a sports bra is. That helps her with her every move.”

Athletic apparel that can double as lifestyle pieces has also become more important. Once again, the sports bra proves to be a vital item. “Con-

vertibility for women is also essential, because the wearing occasion for her is more extensive than on the men’s side,” explained Shaw.

“For us, the team sports females are demanding products that are in line with participation,” she said. “We continue to see volleyball trending up. It’s one of those grassroots sports that we’ve been in for many years now. Same thing goes for soccer and basketball.”

“Our goal is to have girls grow up in our brand,” shared Shaw. “We have many grassroots activations across all of our 14 sports. We’re seeing her and the coaching staff buy uniforms from us, but we’re also seeing training apparel trending up for the age groups of 13 to 17, and our run and footwear apparel are also trending up. When we start to see those numbers continue to move on an upward trajectory, we know that she’s not only playing in our gear when she’s participating in team sports, but she’s also working out and living in our gear as well.”

Core items for Under Armour team sports include the Sonic line of baselayers and the *Armour Bra* family of high impact sports bras. “When you win the female athlete in sports bras, you win her with the brand in total,” pointed out Lofton Shaw.

Another critical piece for team sports players and runners is the running shoe. Under Armour’s *Spine Venom Women’s Running Shoe*



Core items for Under Armour include the Under Armour bra family of high impact sports bras. Photo courtesy of Under Armour



Under Armour Spine Venom



Under Armour Charge RC 2

is built for the team sports athlete wearing a running shoe to train or practice in, while the *Charge RC 2 Women’s Running Shoe* has a silhouette for the long distance runner.

Adidas offers several apparel and team sports options. The *Adidas Women’s Ultimate Fleece Collection* offers warmth and performance for running, training and team practices. Amy Mason, product manager at Adidas, highlighted the women’s *Quickset Volleyball Jerseys*, *miCrazy Fast Basketball Collection* and *Fast Pitch Diamond Queen Collection* for softball in which Adidas expects the most business.

Meeting the demands of young female athletes requires athletic departments doing whatever is necessary to make the lives of young



Adrienne Lofton Shaw, senior marketing director at Under Armour



Adidas Women’s Ultimate Fleece Collection Jacket

For Softball, Adidas Women’s Fast Pitch Diamond Queen Jersey and Pant

women balancing academics and athletics easier. "Time management is definitely one of the things athletic departments can offer," Moeser said. "[In our high school], we have classes from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., practices from about 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. - or sometimes later - so making sure that they manage their time to get their schoolwork done is important. A lot of our athletes get honors academically because they know how to manage their time."

Looking after the health and safety of athletes is also a priority for athletic departments. "Preventing and treating injuries is important," continued Moeser. "We're seeing a lot more injuries now because a lot of girls will be doing club sports outside of high school sports, and that's a demand on them. During the week they are playing for their high school team, but on the weekend they might be doing travel, club or AAU activities. It's a lot for them and we want to make sure that they're not overdoing it and risking injury to their bodies."

THE NEXT 40 YEARS

How will the female athlete and the opportunities available to her evolve? Answers change based on how long into the future we look.

The NCAA's Morrison sees continued gradual progress. "I think in the near future we're still working through some acceptance and still battling the myths a little bit," she said. "In tight economic times, when we're trying to allocate resources, we still see people blaming Title IX every now and then if a sport is cut or individuals make the suggestion that women aren't as interested in participating in sports as men are. The numbers don't prove that to be correct."

The dominating performance by female athletes at the 2012 Summer Olympic Games was also monumental, both reflecting the progress women have made competitively and offering a chance for young women to become more interested in a variety of sports. "When people this past summer talked about the fact that the U.S. Olympic team had more women than men, and that we had more medals and Gold medals on the women's side, and that they called it the Title IX



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Performance



Equestrian disciplines are enjoying emerging status.

Olympics, that might be something that 20, 30, 40 years from now we look back and say, 'Well that was a moment in history when the tide began to shift.' I think that women are going to keep exploring new sports," Morrison said.

To foster such exploration and encourage more female participation, the NCAA has established the Emerging Sports Program. The NCAA attempts to identify sports that girls and women want to participate in. In the past 15 years, some have become championship sports, while others have been added to or removed from the list. Bylaws require that emerging sports must gain championship status (minimum 40 varsity NCAA programs for individual sports and 28 varsity programs for team sports) within 10 years or show steady progress toward that goal to remain on the list.

Four sports have gone through the process and have become championship sports: rowing, ice hockey, water polo and bowling. Rugby, sand volleyball and equestrian are the three sports that currently have emerging status, with triathlon poised to join them. "I think we will keep looking for women to expand their competitive interests and opportunities into new places where they're not yet gaining those opportunities at the scholastic level," said the NCAA's Morrison. "There's always going to be new sports that pop up that we didn't think about, and I don't know which ones will become NCAA sports, but if you look at some of the X-Games' events, which are just phenomenal, there are both men and women competing in those games and they've moved

past a little of the notion that women aren't going to be participating in the same level of competition as the men."

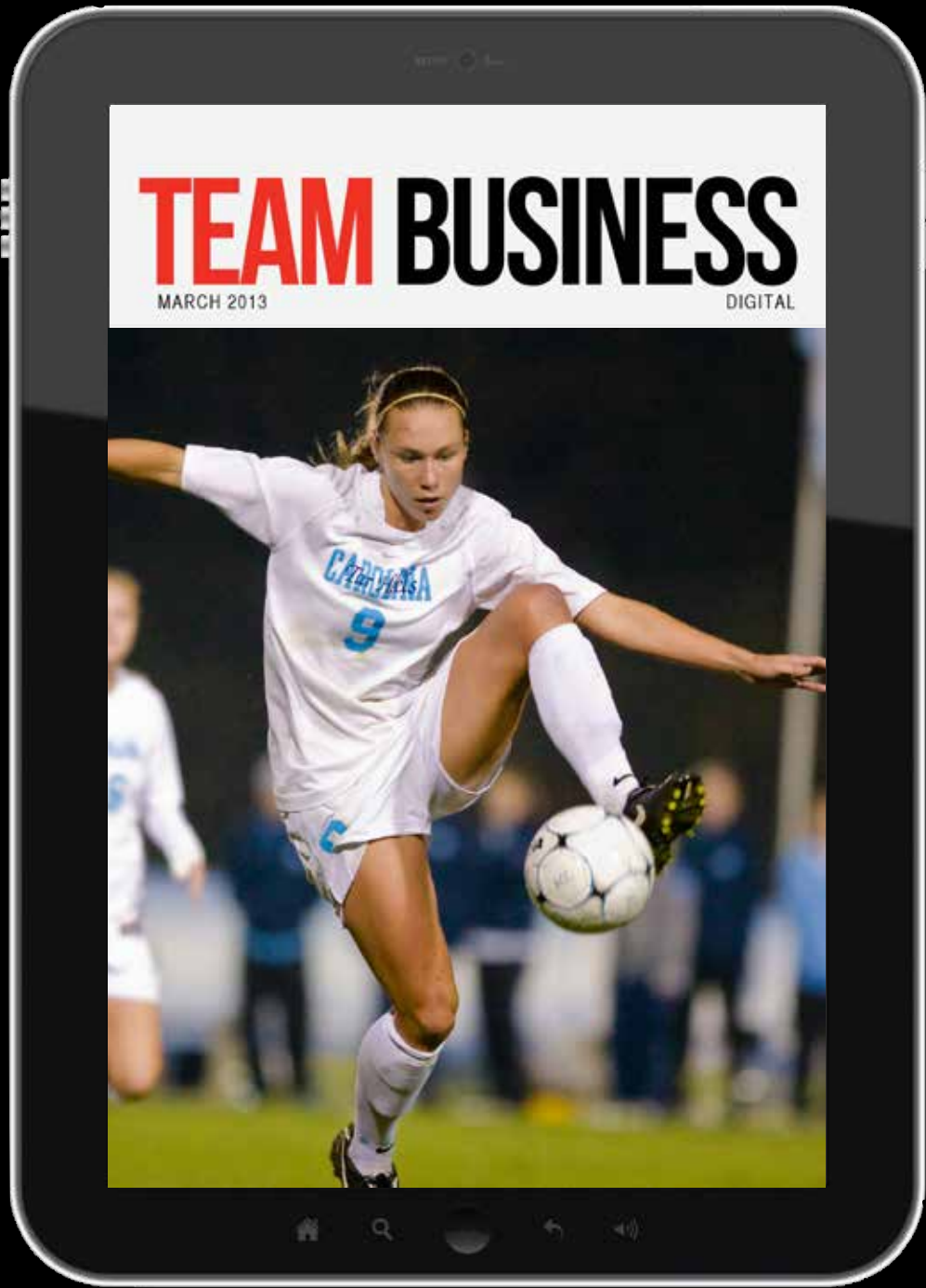
Morrison pointed to women's ski jumping as an example of a non-NCAA sport that was recently accepted for inclusion into the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games after a hard-fought battle. "Detractors claimed that women weren't participating in big numbers in that sport, or believed that the sport was dangerous. I think in the short-term we're still getting past some of that thinking," Morrison said. "I think the more successful that women are in a variety of sports, the more it improves their interest and their ability to be great competitors. I hope in 40 years we look back at this time and say, 'Why were we even talking about that?'"

Morrison also expects the competition gap between men and women to narrow. "Someday, long after I'm gone more than likely, there will be a lot more men's and women's competitions where they're competing against each other in more sports," she said. "We're evolving there, but we had to start from nothing - no training and no physical research attention to female athletes. We're still working through that practical cultural change."

Stich Marketing + Research's Heckman agreed that the future will see a more even playing field. "I think the female athlete at the high school and college level is going to look like the male at those levels," he said. "Because these girls now, they don't come into high school saying, 'We shall overcome,' and, 'We're going to win our way into letting us play a sport.' They just assume that they're allowed to play any sport they want to, and they don't feel held back in any way. That's why you see specialization in the young girls just like you see specialization in the young boys. They're pursuing scholarships, they're pursuing excellence, they're pursuing extra coaching - they're doing all the same things that the boys are. I think you're going to see a lot of leveling out between the males and the females." ■



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