Southern Women in the Scrums: The Emergence and Decline of Women's Rugby in the American Southeast, 1974-1980s

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IN 1977 THE *CAVALIER DAILY,* THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER for the University of Virginia (UVA) published a feature on the one-year-old women's rugby team entitled "Women Ruggers Battle Preconceptions, Pain." The article consisted of interviews with several women on the twenty-one-member team and applied the claims of men's rugby as the "child of soccer and the father of football," across genders in arguing that women's rugby could change that conception and become the "mother of football."[1] This report documented the growing trend of women's rugby in the American Southeast, for in the 1970s a group of pioneering women worked without varsity scholarships and little collegiate or community support to establish rugby teams across the region.

In the 1970s, women's rugby emerged in the American Southeast, a region known more for its Southern belle stereotype than its top-twenty women's rugby teams. It spread

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from Reedy Creek, a North Carolina State University-affiliated team in 1974, to at least fifteen teams throughout the Southeast by 1980. Women established teams and recruited for them, facing challenges that ranged from negative stereotyping to scant institutional support. Women's rugby eventually declined in several Southern universities and communities coinciding with cultural changes in the nation as a whole. From the 1970s to the early 1980s, the first Southern women's rugby players fought to establish the sport, dispel stereotypes born of misconceptions about the sport and its full-contact nature, and gain support from college administrations and community members.

The study of women's rugby remains under-pursued by academics. Historians and sociologists, for the most part, have noted the negative impact of men's rugby on women, particularly with regard to its chauvinistic culture.[2] Scholars often focus on male rugby players and the ways in which rugby reinforces masculinity. Sociologists Eric Dunning and Keith Sheard argue that rugby moved from a medieval game steeped in folk tradition to a game considered "appropriate for gentlemen." As elite British schools embraced and modified the game, rugby provided a way for middle- and upper-class youth to show their manliness through feats of courage and strength, using aggression but within tightly controlled situations governed by rules. Although the game did make its way to the working class, competing class issues like paying players versus keeping the sport amateur created a split in the rugby culture of England. The split created the Rugby League of the North, dominated by working-class enthusiasts, and the larger Rugby Union, which still attracts "amateurs" of mainly middle-class origin.[3] In other parts of the U.K. and its Commonwealth, including New Zealand and Wales, the tenets of masculinity and nationalism became entwined in the sport. Education specialist J.O.C. Phillips maintains that in New Zealand, rugby and war provided "heroic models" for young boys, and thus playing the sport became compulsory in school. In this context, Phillips argues, rugby enabled boys and men to practice "manly virtues" in a "controlled environment."[4] Writer and translator David Andrews posits that the growing middle class in Wales used rugby to tie the interests of the working class to industrial Britain during the nineteenth century while simultaneously creating a sense of nationalism. The Welsh linked their success in rugby to ancient Celtic masculine prowess, even though the sport did not develop there.[5]

Hyper-masculine attitudes remain prevalent in British and American rugby today. Eric Dunning's study of the English Rugby Union focused on the chauvinistic songs, the dismissal of women from parties, and the denigration of women and gay men as a reflection of how the sport emerged as a way for men to perform "ritualized fighting." He asserted that the more power women gain in society, the more reactionary rugby men become, and the men's song lyrics include violence against women as a way to voice their own dominance.[6] Education specialists Jan Wright and Gill Clarke concurred with Dunning's assessment of the sport. Their study of rugby in the U.K. noted that the sport had become such a vehicle for male hegemony that "[t]his is clearly a site where women's participation is antithetical to everything that rugby seems to hold dear."[7] Sociologists Elizabeth Wheatley's and Steven Schacht's studies of American rugby confirmed the hypermasculinity of many players. Wright claimed that men's songs and misogynistic rituals "mark" the rugby territory as exclusively male, or as she terms it, "supermasculine." She argued that courage and strength on the pitch and excessive drinking and revelry off of it

offer men a social space in which to reinforce their dominance.[8] Schacht also noted that male players often "tough it out" through debilitating injuries in matches as a way to prove their masculinity. In addition to songs performed at parties, Schacht looked at the language of coaches and players, which often denigrates women as they equate players who make mistakes with weakness and femininity.[9]

In addition to not paying enough attention to women's rugby, few scholars have considered the specific impact of sport in a region that often lags behind the rest of the United States in terms of promoting basic human and civil rights.[10] Women's rugby offers an interesting case study in determining how non-varsity women's teams established themselves in a region that traditionally defined "Southern womanhood" as passive, genteel, and always white and elite.[11] The archetype of the "Southern lady" is prevalent in history, literature, and popular culture. As satirical Southern humorist Florence King noted, "There are ladies everywhere, but they enjoy generic recognition only in the South."[12] This stereotype emerged early in the nineteenth century. The "Southern belle" image was far different from reality—only about twenty percent of Southerners owned slaves, and those women who became plantation mistresses had to manage the health and welfare of their slaves, often working long hours and at grueling tasks.[13] Still, historian Anne Firor Scott noted that "Southern ladies" grew up learning the rules of womanhood at an early age. She argued that "[w]omen were instructed to please their husbands, attend to their physical needs, cover up their indiscretions, and give them no cause for worry."[14] A woman who failed to obey her patriarch, whether father or husband, seriously threatened the power of white men, the implication being that a man who could not control his women would have a hard time controlling his slaves.[15] The image of the subordinate, self-sacrificing "lady" continued long after the Civil War, and it was often women themselves who perpetuated this Southern ideal. Historian Lee Ann Whites maintains that the Ladies Memorial Association, a group that took an active role in providing support to Confederate widows and children, used a language that defended the pre-war gender structure of the South. Members reinforced patriarchy by recalling and trying to reconstruct the Southern chivalric code in their activities and in their discourse.[16]

While many historians assert that Southern women have resisted this idea by definition and through their actions, the concept of the Southern belle seems to be fixed in the national imagination.[17] For example, the humorous bestseller *The Southern Belle Primer, or Why Princess Margaret Will Never Be a Kappa Kappa Gamma* (1991) discusses the ways in which Southern "ladies" are groomed from birth to desire not much more than a debutante ball, a beauty queen crown, a good sorority placement, and a good china and silver pattern for their wedding registry.[18] Whether or not the "Southern lady" ever existed, visitors to the South flock to antebellum homes to see the ideal played out before them, and *Gone with the Wind* (1936) has sparked not only an industry of memorabilia related to the film but also a book sequel that became a miniseries.[19]

It is easy to discount these images as nothing more than harmless cultural icons, but the conception of Southern ladies as frail and subordinate seriously restricted progress for women in the twentieth-century South. In 1920 every Southern state except Tennessee refused to ratify the Nineteenth Amendment to grant woman suffrage. In her study of Southern feminism, historian Jane Sherron De Hart found that these same states

Debbie Lowry sets up a maul for the Iris team, hardly the embodiment of the "Southern belle" stereotype. COURTESY OF JAN SCHAALE, CLAREMONT, VIRGINIA.

overwhelmingly refused to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which simply stated that the rights of citizenship could not be abridged because of gender. In 1972 the only Southern states to ratify the ERA were Texas, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Maryland. North Carolina actually defeated the amendment, and Virginia, Georgia, Arkansas, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina held out until time expired for ratification.[20] De Hart blamed the defeat on "[r]eligiousity and the subordination of women in fundamentalism, traditionalists threatened by the challenge of race/class/gender categories colliding, suspicion of federal intervention."[21] While many Americans shared the sentiments of Southerners, De Hart noted that many Southerners began to see gender equality as a real problem that invited high divorce rates, gay and lesbian relationships, and legalized abortion.[22]

What happened, then, when groups of women throughout the South decided, at the height of the second-wave feminist movement, to start playing full-contact rugby? Many scholars determine that sports enable women to break out of strict gender stereotypes. These scholars note, however, that female athletes often must deal with stereotypes defining them as "mannish" or lesbian because they challenge commonly-held gender norms.[23] The women who pioneered rugby playing in the South countered gender stereotypes on a regular basis. As a result, they often faced challenges from their communities and from some rugby men.

This study focuses on the American Southeast, a region that sported a number of prominent women's rugby teams during the 1970s and 1980s. This region was selected because a number of states along the southeast coast saw the emergence of several nationally ranked teams and future national team players and coaches, most notably in Florida and Virginia and because the teams along the southern coast played and socialized with each other on a regular basis which could be tracked through the few remaining articles in college newspapers. A third and somewhat personal reason for selecting this pool of Southern schools was the contacts the author had made with several former players from the southeast region of the country as a player for the James River Women (Richmond) club team. Finding sources was a challenge. Few rugby clubs maintained records, and USA Rugby has no membership records prior to 1990. In addition, the major rugby publication, *Rugby Magazine*, failed to focus on the women's teams examined in this study. In fact, two rugby women featured in this study, former College of William and Mary (Virginia) player, A. Lee Chichester, and former Florida State University player "K.H." started a women's rugby newsletter because they felt that the national organization did not pay enough attention to the women. Still, enough evidence exists in college newspapers and yearbooks to provide a clear look at women's rugby during this time, and players who started and played on the early teams provided information in surveys and interviews.[24]

The Emergence of Women's Rugby in the South

In order to understand how women's rugby emerged, it is important to look at the national structure of American rugby as a whole. According to USA Rugby, American men began playing the sport in the 1870s, and then the sport grew in popularity because it was an official Olympic event during the early twentieth century. The USA men actually won gold medals in 1920 and 1924, but the International Olympic Committee decided to drop the sport, which caused a decline in the American game. Perhaps sparked by the popularity of British music and culture and the growth of collegiate intramural and non-varsity sports, the men's game saw a resurgence in the 1960s, and by 1975, players got together to organize regionally and create the USA Rugby Federated Union, now known as USA Rugby. The organization created a men's national team in 1976. Women's rugby began in 1972 at the University of Colorado, Colorado State University, the University of Illinois, and the University of Missouri. Women organized the first national club championship in 1980, which Florida State University won. USA Rugby, however, did not create a national women's team until 1987. This lack of focus on the women's game at the national level suggests that women's club play remained highly regional until the mid-1980s, when, in fact, many women's teams in the Southeast struggled or folded.[25]

Contributing to the rise of women's rugby in the South were the feminist movement, the passage of *Title IX*, and the growth and increasing popularity of men's rugby. Enacted in 1972 *Title IX* mandated that all educational institutions receiving federal funding must provide equal access to all facilities, including those used by sports teams.[26] This caused schools throughout the South to expand women's athletics in general, and some of the first women rugby players had originally been varsity players on other sports teams. But *Title IX* did not lead to women's varsity rugby—women's rugby remained a club sport. The growth of feminism and men's teams also helped to encourage women's rugby by providing an infrastructure of support, including a fan base and playing fields, facilities, and even coaches in the early years.

Title IX and the Rise of Feminism in the South

Historians have noted the sometimes ambivalent impact of *Title IX* on women's collegiate sports. As Mary Jo Festle and Susan Cahn have argued, the legislation had many loopholes. The federal government was lax on enforcement, and universities and men's sports advocates attacked the legislation early and often. Athletic directors opposed *Title IX* on the basis of having to take money away from non-revenue sports to fund smaller programs—so that it would create opportunities only at the expense of men's sports.[27] In addition, once it passed in 1972, *Title IX* had little effect for several years. The government allowed universities six years to comply, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare delayed providing an interpretation of the law for two years, and there were no set punishments for six years after *Title IX* passed. Soon after that, the conservative Reagan administration and the U.S. Supreme Court attempted to dismantle *Title IX*, but Congress intervened.[28]

Nevertheless, *Title IX* had an immediate impact on women's sports in several Southern universities. The University of Virginia, which instituted co-educational undergraduate programs in 1970, created four varsity women's sports in the aftermath of *Title IX*: swimming, tennis, basketball, and field hockey. At Clemson University, a public university in South Carolina, athletic administrators remained skeptical of the benefits versus the costs of women's equipment, travel, and scholarships, but in 1974 they decided to fund several women's teams. Three years later, women's basketball and tennis became varsity sports, and by 1979 cross country, volleyball, and field hockey joined the list of scholarship sports for university women.[29] The growth of women's sports and their coverage in the newspapers helped women's rugby gain university-wide attention in newspapers. Some rugby club teams even managed to induce varsity athletes to leave scholarship programs and join their club squads, as was the case at the College of William and Mary and Florida State University.[30]

The feminist movement also had an impact on women's rugby by challenging gender norms in a way that opened up rugby, a very traditional male sport, to women. Feminists rallied around *Title IX* and all other legislation that provided women with equal societal opportunities. Festle believes that the "women's liberation movement, whether they liked it or not, had influenced everyone who administered sports. Equality was the new watchword—the goal of Congress and the federal bureaucracy."[31] And although most histories of the feminist movement focus on Northern urban centers, Jane Sherron De Hart makes it clear that feminism was alive in the American South. She found that in North Carolina, for example, women wrote to their senators to challenge state laws that necessitated the consent of a husband before a wife could disburse her property, which was finally erased from the books in 1970. In the university town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, women opened a progressive egalitarian day care center and rewrote children's stories to remove gender inequality. National Organization for Women chapters throughout Southern university towns fought for equal scholarship opportunities, joined with female faculty members to secure better pay and promotions, and fought to ratify the ERA. Feminist faculty in colleges established women's studies programs and pushed to hire more female faculty, often initiating sexual discrimination or harassment suits to redress gender disparities and women's mistreatment.[32]

Rugby, a very traditional full-contact male sport, was being played by Southern women. Here, the University of Virginia had the "put in," but Scrum Half Jan Schaale and the Iris scrum won the ball. COURTESY OF JAN SCHAALE, CLAREMONT, VIRGINIA.

In collegiate newspapers throughout the 1970s, students debated the Equal Rights Amendment, *Title IX*, and the necessity for rape crisis and women's studies programs. Women faculty at many universities challenged unequal hiring, promotion practices and low pay, while female students invited feminist speakers to campus. Every college newspaper used in this study from the North Carolina State University *Technician* to the University of Florida *Alligator,* addressed major feminist issues of the day.[33] Whether or not students agreed with the gains made by the second-wave feminist movement, college women found themselves affected by the changes. Women's rugby stood as a signifier of the new feminist movement. At Emory University in Atlanta, medical student Spiros Malaspina recognized this trend. Aware that feminist women planned to organize a women's rugby team on campus, he addressed this issue in the student newspaper, the *Emory Wheel* when he wrote: "To repair the sexist attitudes and traditions still remembered in our democratic society, a women's rugby team will be formed." Malaspina went on to coach the women's team in the early 1980s.[34] UVA's rugby women also embraced the feminist movement, according to their rugby playing descendents in 1995, who claimed: "The Women's Team was founded in 1976 during the age of women's liberation to increase the representation of women in sports."[35]

As helpful as the feminist movement was to the founding of women's rugby teams in the South, *Title IX* and the opportunities it created at universities benefited only a small number of women in the South. Although a myriad of women with different values, needs, and ideologies participated in the second-wave feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the voices that rose to the forefront tended to be those of university-educated, white, middle-class women, whose limited view of women's oppression prevented them from perceiving the universality of the issue.[36] Sociologist Barbara Ryan has argued that the "popular press" defined the feminist movement as white and middle class, thus missing the diversity of feminist issues and actions, particularly ones taken by working-class women and by women of color.[37]

In university settings, feminist gains seemed to come exclusively for faculty and students. Rugby teams at this time were generally homogeneous. University teams could recruit from a pool of graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, and staff. The unique

and physically demanding sport required smaller, quick women to run the back line plays, and larger, often stronger (and slower) pack players to scrum, ruck over balls, maul, and form line-outs on out-of-bounds plays. All players had to run for eighty minutes with one ten-minute half, and everyone needed tackling skills. Theoretically, rugby clubs were entirely democratic—with most players learning as they joined. Anyone with the drive and a modicum of athletic skill could play. Because many universities in the South failed to desegregate until the mid to late 1960s, it was difficult for a women's or men's rugby team to place a diversified line-up on the field. A perusal of team pictures in yearbooks during this period reveal that the teams were overwhelmingly white and middle class.

Outside the colleges, rugby could attract a wider variety of women. The 1982 roster of Richmond Virginia's club team, the Iris, showed the team's diversity. Iris players' careers included: special education teacher, carpenter's apprentice, stay-at-home mom, student, bartender, tax examiner, deputy sheriff, recreation director, medical resident, and certified public accountant.[38] During the early 1980s, the Iris cast its recruiting net out far and wide to attract women from all walks of life. But still, it is not known whether the majority of early club team women joined these teams because they had played in college.

Early Successes

Women's rugby achieved success in the early period and experienced a reasonable rate of growth, enough to field competitive teams in Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Women relied on a number of recruitment methods. Many of the women interviewed found out about rugby through word-of-mouth, as did Betsy Ogburn of the Iris, who learned about the Iris team from "Mack," a friend at Virginia Commonwealth University. Others, like "K.H.," came across the teams practicing and decided to join in. The University of Virginia's club team recruited at orientation, William and Mary's held interest meetings, and other universities made sure to list practices in college newspaper articles about their games. The Iris put up flyers in local bars and posted signs to the practice fields, which attracted Susie Massey, who had just moved to the area from University of Florida, where she played on its college team.[39]

Women's collegiate teams also relied on publicity from university newspapers, which cast the sport as exotic and exciting. They often touted the appeal of the "third half," or obligatory socials that followed each game. William and Mary reporter Susan Malstrom mentioned that the one-year-old team failed to win much on the pitch but reiterated the coach's appraisal of his team's off-field exploits: "'They may lose the games on the field,' the coach declared, 'but they sure win the parties.'" Bill Duxbury also cheered women ruggers in 1977 with a large spread on women's rugby in UVA's *Cavalier Daily*. "There is a lot about rugby that makes it unique," he exclaimed. "But as with more and more of the competitive sports, it is no longer uniquely 'men only.' Rugby has managed to successfully find its way into the arena of women's sports here at Virginia."[40] Emory's women's rugby team received comprehensive coverage in 1976-1977, chiefly because Emory lacked a football team, making rugby the only full-contact sport played by its students. A 1977 article in the *Emory Wheel* reinforced the growing popularity of rugby when it noted that the "great fan turnout at these games is proof that Rugby, women's as well as men's, is the up and coming sport at Emory." Women ruggers thanked two fraternities, Sigma Nu and

Delta Tau Delta, for coming out to support the players at the games,[41] and in the early years student reporters' coverage of women's rugby was generally positive.

By 1978-1979, women's rugby teams had emerged in universities and communities throughout the South. Women's schedules reflected the development of a new rugby culture in the region. Every Southeast state boasted teams: Virginia fielded the most, with James Madison University, William and Mary, UVA, Richmond Iris, and Norfolk Breakers, but teams listed on rivals' schedules included North Carolina's Reedy Creek, which represented women at North Carolina State at Raleigh; the Charlotte Harlots, a North Carolina club team; Clemson University and University of South Carolina in South Carolina; Georgia's Atlanta Valkyries, University of Georgia (UGA), and Emory University; and the University of Florida, Florida State, and Tampa Women's Rugby Club in Florida.

These teams played each other frequently and received coverage in college newspapers and yearbooks. Sometimes, the newspapers recorded nothing more than the weekly schedule and scores, but often, they featured stories from the games.[42] In 1975 Reedy Creek hosted the first East Coast women's rugby tournament in Raleigh. Although the tournament failed to attract the number of teams its planners had anticipated, its program booklet claimed that the "outgrowth of eastern women's teams can, in part, be traced to that warm weekend in Raleigh when so many discovered that they were not playing in a vacuum." And the team hosted the first Michelob N.C. Women's Cup championship in 1979. By that time, UVA, Emory, Iris, William and Mary, and Reedy Creek were frequent competitors.[43]

Rugby Men: Assets and Problems

Title IX and feminism may have increased women's interest in sports, but they could not provide the infrastructure necessary for the long-term success of women's rugby teams. At many schools, male rugby players took an active role in helping women to establish counterpart club teams. Often, founding members learned about rugby by attending men's games. Reedy Creek Rugby Football Club claimed to be the first women's rugby team in the South and the first to be recognized by the Eastern Rugby Union (a regional league of teams). In their team history, they related the first "meeting" of players at a bar in Raleigh. The "hangers-on, rugby widows, [and] rugger huggers" decided to form their own women's team in 1974 and worked with the existing North Carolina State University men's team, sharing the practice fields and travel and social expenses.[44] And at UGA, Mike Crook, a male player, helped to start a women's team after female fans asked to participate. He remarked that "[g]irls have always been pressing the guys on the team to start something for the girls."[45] In 1976 the men practiced side-by-side with twenty women who planned to form their own team. Richmond's first club team also began with a group of women closely affiliated with Richmond's men's team. In the fall of 1977, women played as a side of the male Richmond Athletic Training Side (RATS), borrowing the men's jerseys and playing after the men's games. Janet Moyer Schaale, wife of a male rugby player, was the driving force in establishing the women's side. After a season, the women established their own team, the Iris, named after Richmond's city flower.[46]

Other teams started with the help of specific male rugby players, who often became the first women's coaches. When in 1975 William and Mary players Bill Sharpe, Jack

Russell, and Jim Booker announced the beginning of practices to the law school student body, several women present inquired about joining. Sharpe then scheduled an interest meeting, and fifteen women attended, enough for a full team. The women named themselves the "Mother Ruckers," and Jack Russell became their coach. When female fans attempted to start their own team at Clemson in 1976, the student government refused to recognize them. At that time the men's rugby team was "the most successful team at Clemson," maintaining a better record than the university's varsity sports. The men's team supported the women and helped them to create the "Rugby Boosters Club," which, in reality, was the university's first women's rugby squad. The women's team continued as part of the men's team through 1977.[47]

It is possible that because men's rugby was so new at this point in the 1970s that the male players did not have the opportunity to develop the kind of hyper-masculine tradition that J.O.C. Phillips, Eric Dunning, Kenneth Sheard, David Andrews, and others located in the centuries-old United Kingdom tradition of rugby. American women began to play rugby in the early 1970s, but their counterparts in the U.K. did not pick up the sport until 1983,[48] an indication that there was far more resistance in the country that had formulated the masculine tenets of rugby than in the United States. Because men began playing rugby before women in the U.S., their teams controlled some aspects of the women's sport when the two teams were linked. Timothy Chandler and John Nauright, in their research of countries that have both men's and women's teams, found that women's clubs were coached by men, had to schedule their practices and matches in order to gain access to the men's facilities, and were generally tied to a men's club. Their findings suggest "the continued marginalization of women and promotes [*sic*] male hegemony."[49]

Not all male ruggers were supportive of the women, which created some problems both on and off the pitch. Although some rugby men helped to start teams and defended women's right to play, others resented women's intrusion into "their" sport. Survey respondents often remembered facing hostility from some men. A. Lee Chichester said, "I hate perpetuating generalities, but I'd guess that a southern male would have somewhat more trouble with the concept [of women ruggers] than a northern male, due to the 'southern belle' stereotype." After she graduated from William and Mary and joined the Houston Hearts team in 1980, she found that the Houston men's team either ignored the women or refused to have anything to do with them, which was a distinct change from the strong male support she found at William and Mary. "K.H.," who also played for the Hearts after graduating from Florida State, explained men's attitudes this way: "Male rugby players either admired our love of the game or hated our intrusion. Most fell into the latter category. They hated the way we played the game with talent and courage and they wanted to hold onto the mystique that only brave, muscular men could be warriors."[50]

Gender tension manifested itself in different ways, from overt hostility to teasing. Mike Crook, UGA's women's coach, poked fun at his female players in stating that "the first practice was total confusion," and then he went on to explain that even though many of the "girls" just came out to meet rugby men, "it's amazing how attentive this group of girls is."[51] In using the terminology "girls" to describe not only undergraduates, but also graduate students and possibly even professors, Cook reflected the attitude apparent in some men. Referring to women as "girls" trivializes their status in society by likening

them to children. Often, the women ruggers had to "prove themselves" to the men in order to get respect as serious players. In 1977 UVA team captain Amy Wesley said: "We've proved ourselves now. Women can be an interesting and valuable part of the men's club. . . . Last year, we had a few problems with a small minority of men looking down on us. . . . As far as I can see, it's okay now."[52]

Collegiate players were not the only women to face hostility from men. Once the Iris became established as its own club team in Richmond, it also faced trouble from the men who originally helped to organize the team. Perhaps the men's team displayed hostility because it was losing control over this increasingly autonomous female team. Iris president Jan Schaale's husband actually had problems with his rugger teammates when he supported her team's right to play. And because women were breaking into a sport that had traditionally been male-dominated, sometimes referees were less than enthusiastic about working women's games. Schaale remembered an incident during the first season when a referee got "grossed out" after seeing blood on an Iris player's jersey. Although he was reluctant to referee, he came around when he saw that the women "really could play." In another game, an official thought that Jan was fighting and grabbed her by her jog bra to pull her off of another player. She was so angry she "came up swinging." To this day, the incident "sets [her] off—would he do that with a guy's jock strap?"[53]

These incidents suggest that men who exhibited hostility toward women ruggers might have felt threatened by women's involvement in a previously all-male, fairly aggressive and

Rugby demands toughness of its players, regardless of gender, demonstrated by this Iris team photograph of March 27, 1983, after winning the Commonwealth Cup. Torrential downpours, four inches of standing water in places on the field, and temperatures in the 40s made the win extra special. Iris had winning seasons every year and consistently placed third on the East Coast many times. COURTESY OF JAN SCHAALE, CLAREMONT, VIRGINIA.

contact-oriented sport and perhaps resented women's presence on the field. It appears that women had to negotiate the terrain of gender after the male players realized that the women were serious and meant to play indefinitely. While many men were (and continue to be) supportive of female rugby players, others have viewed the entrance of women into a sport known for its violence, toughness, and post-game antics threatened the very core of their masculinity, which had developed into an important part of American rugby culture.[54] From her study of Canadian hockey, sport sociologist Nancy Theberge concluded that the growing number of women playing sports traditionally associated with masculinity, which include hockey, football, and certainly, rugby, seriously challenge gender norms and point to the "shifting terrain" of gender relations in society.[55] Elizabeth Wheatley argues that this is especially true for rugby. She maintains women's rugby "disrupts the male, heterosexual, hegemony" of the sport by showing that female players are just as physical, capable, and raunchy at their socials as men.[56] As these women took the field in this sport that itself was new to American society, the concern of some men manifested itself in hostility to the women.

"Lesbian Trouble"

While women faced hostility from many male players who resented the intrusion into their masculine domain, they also faced negative stereotyping from the general population. Many scholars discuss how society often defines female athletes as mannish, unfeminine, or lesbian because of their physical activity, strength, and determination to break gender norms. Social justice education specialist Pat Griffin posits that the threat of lesbianism in sports serves as a control mechanism for athletic women. She argues that to challenge a woman's heterosexuality is to control her in ways that will limit her participation in sports.[57] Journalist Marian Betancourt maintains that in spite of the increasing popularity and acceptance of women's sport aggressive women, especially tall, muscular athletes with short hair are assumed to be lesbians.[58]

Stereotyping female athlete did not begin with the passage of *Title IX*. Susan Cahn, tracing that phenomenon from the 1920s and 1930s, attributed it to female athletes who symbolized the growing independence of women in society, an image continued throughout the twentieth century. By the 1960s female athletes not associated with the beauty and finesse sports of gymnastics or figure skating, were "othered" and marginalized by society in general.[59]

While women face and often continue to deal with problematic stereotypes today, women ruggers of the 1970s and 1980s had a more acute problem because of rugby's traditional association with masculinity. Theberge argued that "image problems" emerge in sports like hockey (and rugby) that require a particularly high level of aggressiveness.[60] "In women's sport," she continued, "the lesbian stigma operates as an extreme version of the stigma that all women athletes face for violating conventional gender constructions through their very presence in sport."[61] Sociologist P. David Howe discovered that women rugby players in South Wales are often ridiculed for playing a sport that "embodies masculinity." Often, they have to fight such negative homophobic stereotypes that discourage many would-be players from taking the field at all.[62]

These negative stereotypes could well have been exacerbated in the South, where hostility to homosexuality remains an issue in the early twenty-first century. Every South-

eastern state as of 2006 bans any kind of single-sex marriage or partnerships, often through constitutional amendments. In addition, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Florida had enforceable sodomy laws on the books until the Supreme Court overturned them in the *Loving v. Texas* (2003). Georgia's Supreme Court struck down its sodomy law in 1998.[63] De Hart noted that many Southerners exhibited hostility to both women's rights and homosexuality,[64] so linking women rugby players to lesbianism was a particularly effective way of marginalizing them in Southern culture.

Several rugby players active in the 1970s pointed out that the negative concepts of women ruggers continue to exist. Former Florida State player and national team coach Kathy Flores stated: "The South does not support women doing what they consider 'manly' things, particularly not knocking each other about" so Southerners perceive female ruggers as "dykes on spikes." Former Iris player Betsy Ogburn concurred with this description—"Rough, tough dykes. OR unattractive women who want to play an aggressive game." A. Lee Chichester reinforced the assumption that "we dig tackling each other because we're all lesbians."[65] Clearly, women who played in the South during the 1970s see that not much has changed in the way Americans view the sport today.

A number of rugby players who were surveyed indicated, however, that the female rugger stereotype contained a modicum of truth. Cahn attributed the ambiguity of gender/sexual categories in women's sports for enabling lesbians to find communities in which they were accepted for whom they were.[66] Griffin, too, noted that in the 1960s and 1970s, many college women's sports teams provided a safe haven for lesbians. Because society had so little interest in women's sports and even less regard for female athletes as a whole, lesbians created a social network that actually supported them in the face of a society hostile to their lifestyle.[67]

While lesbian athletes in other sports often remained closeted,[68] lesbian rugby players appeared to embrace their sexuality more freely. A. Lee Chichester said that the William and Mary team actually had a reputation for being one of the few "straight" women's teams in the 1970s. When she went on to play for the Houston Hearts, at first she found herself one of a few, and then later the only, heterosexual woman on the team. Former Iris player Nancy Broaddus claimed that sometimes at socials Iris "could be very gay," which upset some male rugby players. Iris's Deb Lowry and Betsy Ogburn remembered that many players "came out" while on the team because of the supportive environment. It was also no secret that Babe's, the iconic lesbian bar of Richmond, was the major financial supporter of (and site of socials for) the team.[69]

The stereotype of the lesbian rugger made many male rugby players react even more negatively to their female counterparts. Some men called the players "dykes" and studiously kept their wives and girlfriends away from them. Kathy Flores believes that women's sexuality created much of the tension. Because women were defined as lesbians for playing a "physically tough sport," men felt threatened and gave women a hard time. Nancy Broaddus also remembered how "we went through many phases with the men"—from awe at the women's talent to upset over the lesbian members.[70] Obviously, the diverse sexuality of female players, coupled with rugby's traditional exclusivity of women because of its perceived violent nature and aggressive play, threatened some men who saw their all-male, highly heterosexual (if homosocial) world drifting away.

Most Iris team members in this study recalled facing many problems with men, particularly because of "lesbian" overtones ascribed to their team. Vicky Hester remembered trouble at socials, and Jan Schaale said that some men wanted to kick lesbian players out of the Virginia Rugby Union because "rugby was a family sport" and they "couldn't have all those lesbians."[71] These men quite possibly feared being branded as deviants themselves because of existing societal stereotypes about "lesbian" players.

Dealing with the Lesbian Stereotype

Players, sports reporters, and other supporters of rugby had different ways of addressing the stereotype of the "aggressive lesbian rugger." Collegiate newspapers talked around the stereotype by focusing on the "unusual" phenomenon of women participating in the aggressive sport. None of the newspapers examined for this study discussed possible "lesbian overtones"—and indeed, few university newspapers of the late 1970s even mentioned gay/lesbian issues. However, many debated the reality of the female rugby stereotype. Even when reporters tried to counter the negative image of female ruggers, their very language and approach simultaneously brought up the stereotypes over and over again. During an interview with journalist Bill Duxbury, Suzanne Timberlake, UVA women's rugby team president said: "A lot of people ask 'What's a nice girl like you doing in a place like this?'" Although Duxbury supported the women's team, he believed that "the bone-jarring contact of rugby seems out of place for women." Emory newspaper reporter Steve Mackie disclosed that the women's team was irritated by "the stigma that many people attach to women's rugby. Rugby, after all, is a contact sport, and men's rugby is characterized by its rugged and sometimes even violent play." Even "Lesa," a Clemson rugby player, admitted during an interview for the college newspaper that "when you tell someone that you play rugby, they really think you're a little strange if they don't know you."[72]

Some sports reporters focused on the "humorous" aspects of the women's game. UGA's Swann Seiler wrote: "It is hard to believe that twenty women could participate in one of the world's roughest sports and walk away with only a few broken fingernails."[73] Bob McKellar at UGA also wrote a piece upholding a woman's right to play rugby but started with the fact that the formation of a woman's team "struck me as a rather ridiculous idea, since women's bodies are not at all suited. . . . Since real sports call for real women to stay on the sidelines cheering for real men, I decided to check into the subversive-sounding game."[74]

The way college newspapers portrayed women rugby players mirrors the findings of sociologists. Michael Messner classified four ways in which the sports media deals with female athletes in general: "silence, humorous sexuality, backlash, and select incorporation of standout women athletes."[75] These patterns were prominent in the collegiate stories about women's rugby. Jan Wright and Gill Clarke's analysis of news stories covering female ruggers in Australia and Great Britain reaffirmed the conception that rugby is considered to be a male-dominated game, which cause the media to reassure readers that female players are both feminine and non-threatening to the men. Stories highlight attractive players and often mention their boyfriends, body types, and femininity. They also ignore lesbians and describe the game as somehow "different" from the men's, although the rules are the same. The stories also cast female players as anomalies, thus retaining rugby's primary status as a masculine endeavor.[76]

Displaying a less traditional type of femininity, the Iris team wins a line-out. COURTESY OF JAN SCHAALE, CLAREMONT, VIRGINIA.

Rugger women reacted to these challenges in different ways. Often, they tried to negate the stereotypes by playing into concepts of "Southern belledom," including focusing on their proper manners and good looks, which were more familiar to readers. These activities were not new to women athletes, as Susan Cahn, Mary Jo Festle, and Pamela Grundy have noted in their histories of women in sport. Cahn argued that by the late 1950s, many women had to assume an "apologetic stance" to explain their athletic prowess. No matter how competitive and talented they were, female athletes tried to maintain "outward signs of femininity in dress and demeanor."[77] Festle reported that this apologetic behavior continued to manifest itself throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1970s professional women tennis players and golfers had to prove their femininity against innuendos about their sexuality and behavior. By the mid 1980s, as *Title IX* increasingly came under attack, players, coaches, and even promoters of women's sport tried to deflect criticism by employing this "apologetic behavior."[78]

In the South, women's apologies for their athletic talent were particularly entwined with the stereotype of the "Southern lady." Pamela Grundy's study of female basketball players in twentieth-century North Carolina revealed that women had to accommodate itself "deep seated cultural assumptions about appropriate behavior."[79] This behavior manifested in the dress codes that included gloves, hats, and heels, as well as entering the

"beauty queen contests" in which female basketball players competed for crowns during tournaments. Ultimately, women's basketball declined as cheerleading emerged as a dominant "sport" for women, one that supported gender difference and distinction in a way that basketball did not.[80]

Women who chose to embrace traditional stereotypes of femininity were merely trying to change the image of female ruggers in the eyes of the public. Emory rugby players disagreed with the female rugger stereotypes. "They insist that the game is different," asserted Steve Mackie. "In fact all of the women on the Emory squad are small and well-mannered and appear to be incapable of playing the brutal male game." Reedy Creek women, who often wrote their own sports stories for the newspaper, attributed their win over William and Mary in 1975 to "the dainty, but powerful forwards winning all the scrums, mauls, and, of course, rucks."[81] Unfortunately, those women who tried to negate the female rugger stereotype exacerbated the issue by applying it universally to women players. Rugby women were on the defensive, attempting to use more commonly understood ideas about Southern "ladies" to justify their existence.

Rugger women, nevertheless, refused to allow talk of their sexuality or "mannishness" to affect them. Wheatley discovered that female rugby players' songs are as sexual and crude as men's songs and are meant to shock audiences, retaliate against men's misogynistic songs, and embrace both heterosexuality and homosexuality in an empowering way.[82] Even the names of some club teams reflected their sense of empowerment, as for example the Atlanta Valkyries, the William and Mary Mother Ruckers, and the Charlotte Harlots. Names like Mother Ruckers and the Harlots poked fun at stereotypes that often disempowered women by denigrating their sexuality. Descendants of these early teams continued the trend to deflate stereotypes with such club names as Richmond's Blue Ridge Athletic Training Side (BRATs), Charlotte Mayhem, Raleigh (N.C.) Venom, and Eno River (Durham, N.C.) Rage.[83] In addition to their songs and team names, rugby women actively claimed their empowerment. Earlier work by the author found that most rugby women are proud of their physicality, their unique talents, and the reaction they get from non-rugby players. They welcome the attention and the opportunity to "set straight" misinformed non-ruggers by explaining how the game works. For the most part, they either disregard or find humorous the negative reactions they encounter.[84] These contemporary studies, however, focus on women who have benefited from being the "descendants" of pioneering women ruggers, who had to deal not only with female sport stereotypes but also with the general unawareness of women even playing rugby at all.

Women sometimes fought back by refusing to acknowledge any effects of negative stereotypes or by confronting those who tried to stop women from playing rugby. Even today, when "a friend or colleague admonishes a friend to 'watch out she played rugby,'" "K.H." wants to scream out "yes, I did and it was the greatest freedom I've ever known." Her Florida State teammate "Suzi Q" said that she "didn't and don't really care what someone else thinks." Chichester tried to "enlighten people" about the joys and triumphs of the game, but if she failed, she reasoned, "I pretty much ignore what other people think of me."[85] Schaale, however, had a different reaction—she penned an article in 1977 that was reprinted in *Rugby Magazine* and every subsequent Iris game program. It contained the following message:

> The great majority of men, and unfortunately, women, don't believe in the ladies' game. The general consensus is that it "takes leather balls to play rugby," and women don't fit that prerequisite in the least. Those few who do stand as observers generally aren't truly interested in women's rugby as a sport . . . it's only an amusement to see whose chest will bounce the highest or how much hiney will show when the scrum comes together. . . . Popular opinion is not only the aspect to consider. What about the players? Are they all dykes or just frustrated and rowdy feminists? Typical questions are: "Aren't you afraid of what people will think?"[86]

In challenging the motives of those who watched women play for their own personal amusement, Schaale also attempted to deconstruct the negative stereotypes that women ruggers encountered on a regular basis. A married woman with small children, she clearly failed to fit the stereotypical image of women engaging in aggressive play, and she also questioned the motives of those who tried to fit rugby women into neat (and negative) categories. Proclaiming that women enjoyed the athleticism and challenge of the game, Schaale questioned the irony that men never had to "answer" for their love of the sport. She exuded as much love of the sport as men had, and that women's play meant "serious business" out on the pitch. She concluded her statement with a premonition that has become true today at the national level, where the women's national team far exceeds the men's in terms of international success:

> So look out, men. . . . [V]alid critics have complimented women's rugby by saying that the ladies' game is closer to "true" rugby because there are no football stigmas to overcome. The overall quality of American rugby is improving. Instead of criticizing the women for not adhering to the norm of social standards, perhaps the men should work on the quality, the speed, of their game, or they may be surpassed by some tough little women who aren't afraid to ruck for their rights.[87]

Schaale spoke for many women who resented the insinuation that their presence in the sport was either an intrusion into the men's game or an amusing anecdote for collegiate newspapers. Clearly, the early pioneers of women's rugby did not hesitate to justify their desire to play, but the very fact that they had to fight for recognition and respect and work around negative stereotypes suggests the dedication of their efforts in merely playing the game.

Challenges

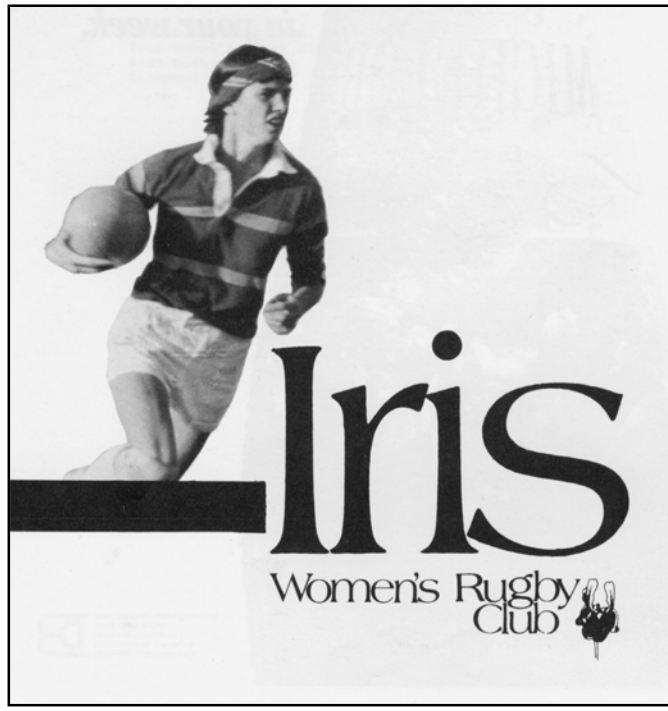
With increasing coverage in the newspapers and a growing network of teams against which to play, it seemed that women's rugby was becoming an established sport in the South. The women players, however, faced a series of challenges that left some teams struggling for survival. These problems included a lack of knowledge about the sport, which hindered recruitment efforts, and a lack of institutional support for the teams, which often left the women's teams in financial straits.

In early 1980s few people recognized that women could play the sport. As Nancy Broaddus maintains, even today, "Most people don't know rugby much less women's rugby."[88] Even positive coverage of women's rugby in newspapers failed to spark massive waves of new recruits, and once the novelty of women's rugby wore off, university newspaper coverage dwindled. In 1981 William and Mary's yearbook stated the basic problem

for women's rugby at the school: "Injuries and anonymity were the demons of the Women's Rugby Team as they struggled to a 2-6 record. . . . [The] team had very little depth due to their anonymity among the college community." So William and Mary went from being recognized as fifth out of 200 teams in the country in 1978 to struggling for existence just a few years later.[89] In 1987 the yearbook noted that the women's team began the year with sixty women but soon dwindled to twenty-five.[90]

William and Mary was not the only team facing numbers problems. Barely three years after fraternities had come out strong in support of Emory's women ruggers, the team struggled to gain recruits. The university newspaper reported that "the Emory women's team is sadly floundering due to a lack of players." With only eight players the team had to cancel a number of games. Although a "big recruitment push" in 1982 led to a new batch of temporary rugby "rookies," Emory struggled with finding players for the long haul. In 1983 rugby player "Moore" stated that she wanted to see more collegiate involvement, but that rugby was "a new game to women and I'm sure most girls don't know about it."[91] Even the original Southern women's team, Reedy Creek, fought for recognition. North Carolina State's *Technician* quoted a player who opined, "[T]he number of people who actually watch the sport, much less understand it, is small."[92] Rugby's small fan base and non-scholarship status led to inconsistent team performances. UGA's club team, for example, went from the first Georgia team to win a Southeastern Conference women's tournament organized by clubs in 1977 to a team "plagued by injuries and inexperience" in 1978.[93]

In addition, women's teams often struggled to find the financial and institutional support to continue playing. Because women's rugby was a club sport, it usually received its funding from student government. University athletic departments, therefore, had no stake in supporting the teams. William and Mary's team struggled for institutional recognition and funding as early as 1978. Although the team ranked fifth in the country in 1978, the university administration and student government recognized, but refused to fund, women's rugby. In that same year, the university allowed local youth soccer teams to use the rugby practice fields and built tennis courts on the rugby game pitch. This action forced the women's and men's rugby teams to play "musical fields," leading to confusion and a decline in the number of players. In 1982 the women's team received a small women's intramural grant, but the bulk of the funding for travel and uniforms came from team members' dues.[94] Emory's team faced a similar problem in 1979. Women's rugby appealed to the student government for a bigger budget and won, but when the student government heard rumors that the university president had set aside money for hockey and rugby, the student government's joint budget committee drastically reduced the team's budget allocation. The women protested—the president's money went directly to the physical education department, which had no authority over the rugby team at that point—but to no avail. The women received only $275 from the student government, even though they asked for a mere $475.[95] Clemson women also found themselves on the losing end of student government budget cuts. In 1981 the men's team asked for $4,610 and received $2,521; women asked for $3,226 and received $1,465.50. The following year, men requested $5,598 and received $3,240, but women requested $2,648 and received only $960. The cuts reflected a complete lack of concern for travel and equipment expenses incurred by both rugby teams, but the paltry sum given to women who had to



Franny Usher graces the cover of the 1982 program for the Iris team. COURTESY OF JAN SCHAALE, CLAREMONT, VIRGINIA.

travel to the same sites as the men signified the beginning of the end of women's rugby at Clemson.[96]

Even community teams faced challenges. Iris had to raise money by finding sponsors, selling advertisements in its yearly programs, and planning events. When several of the founders "retired" from the team, new members proved less willing to hustle for money. This eventually led to the team's demise.[97]

While financial constraints restricted teams' abilities to travel and purchase essential equipment, the Iris's Deb Lowry thought that *Title IX* actually *hurt* their team. Initially, Iris offered the only recreational team sport available to women in the Richmond community, but as more women participated in a variety of sports, recreational soccer and softball teams formed in the city and siphoned away both potential players *and* rugby veterans who needed to retire from full-contact sports. A women's flag football team program also emerged, which continues to compete with current Richmond rugby teams to this day.[98]

Although this situation explains the current trends among community teams, does this assertion hold true for university teams as well? Sociologists and historians have noted that in some ways, the effects of *Title IX* was problematic. Festle has argued that *Title IX* never had the overall impact that was intended because of the lack of specificity in guidelines, which allowed colleges to drag their feet on implementing equality for women athletes. It also faced a serious backslide in enforcement in the late 1980s, partly because of a

hostile presidential administration. This inhibited progress for women and lessened the number of sports programs available to them as specified by law.[99] Sports sociologist Michael Messner points out that *Title IX* actually reduced women's opportunities in several areas, including coaching and administration. Within a decade after passage of *Title IX*, the NCAA took control of women's sports, subsuming women's activities into a male-dominated space. In addition, the percentage of female coaches dropped from 90 percent to less than 50 percent, and by 2000 the percentage of female athletic administrators dropped from 90 percent to 17 percent.[100] Messner and Shari Dworkin concluded that *Title IX* moved women towards the male domain of sports, causing them to work within a masculine hierarchy that rewarded winners and profits—in effect, women had to play by men's rules as a result of *Title IX*.[101]

While these scholars examined some of the problems associated with *Title IX*'s failures, this legislation, in actually *providing* more opportunities for female collegiate athletes, cut into the available pool of rugby recruits. In 1978 UGA increased the women's varsity sports budget by 50 percent, offering women twice as many athletic scholarships as had been available before. At Emory, the college newspaper failed to mention a women's rugby team in 1984 but featured large weekly spreads on the intramural flag football league, which involved women from sororities, dormitories, and other social groups. Even if varsity sports failed to draw players away from collegiate rugby, the increase in intramural sports surely had an impact on rugby recruitment.[102] While more research needs to be done to explain the decline of women's rugby in the 1980s, the decline in institutional support and the rise of other sport opportunities for women definitely had an effect on the game.

By the mid 1980s women's rugby actually ended at many universities and in several communities. Several women's rugby teams died out quietly—their presence faded in newspaper coverage and yearbook recognition, plus several teams folded in the mid 1980s. UGA's team disbanded in 1978, the Clemson team failed in 1982, and Iris folded in 1985. Emory's team disappeared from the newspapers in 1984, and Reedy Creek was omitted from the yearbooks in 1980 and the newspapers in 1981. Several other community teams, including the Norfolk Breakers and the Charlotte Harlots, also disappeared sometime during this time period, as their names dropped out of tournament and regular schedules of the rugby unions. Other teams, including Florida State, Florida, UVA, and William and Mary, continued, but at some universities, women's rugby coverage in newspapers and yearbooks was drastically reduced.[103] Even though UVA's team was ranked sixteenth in the country in 1984,[104] its appearance in the yearbook moved from the sports to the club pages (as did the men's), and it was not listed in the 1982-1983 yearbooks. William and Mary's team received no coverage in the 1980-1982 newspapers, and it did not appear in yearbooks from 1983 to 1987.

Feminist Backlash and the Decline of Women's Rugby

The lack of recruits and institutional troubles plagued women's rugby in the 1980s, but there may be another explanation for the decline of the sport in this particular era. Although it is impossible to link directly the decline of women's rugby in the 1980s with the growing conservative political and cultural climate of the decade, it is more than coincidental that women's rugby emerged at a time of great progress for women and faltered in

the decade journalist Susan Faludi defined as a "backlash" for women.[105] Although the "new right" had been mobilizing politically since the 1968 election, historians Michael Schaller and William Berman consider the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 as the first time this group gained national prominence. The movement, led by evangelicals who had a strong base in the South, was responsible for introducing conservative ideals into mainstream American culture.[106]

The South is generally considered the seat of the evangelical counterrevolution. Baptist minister Jerry Falwell of Lynchburg, Virginia, founded the Moral Majority in 1979 in an attempt to counteract what he and many conservative Christians viewed as the secularization of society. He and his followers sought to halt the progress of gay rights, abortion rights, and the ERA, as well as to censor pornography and other "morally questionable" materials. They fought for prayer in schools and for the teaching of creationism as an academic subject in public schools.[107] By 1980 the Moral Majority had constituents in eighteen states located almost entirely in the South and Southwest.[108] The movement continued to grow through the 1980s, and many political pundits attributed Reagan's success to this conservative evangelical movement.[109]

For women, the backlash against their progress came from this conservative movement and from the general culture itself. Beverly LaHaye, wife of a top Moral Majority operative, founded Concerned Women for America in 1979 and mobilized right-wing women against the gains of the feminist movement. She and her constituents fought against abortion, the economic and social gains made by women in the 1970s (including their increasing job opportunities), the "gay lifestyle," and for other issues advocated by the Moral Majority. This group, along with other conservative activist organizations, blamed feminism for "undermining the family." They claimed their agenda to be "pro-family," and their goals included getting women to move out of the workplace and back in their place as submissive wives in the home. The "pro-family" activists believed that women gained power only when they claimed their proper place in the household, and so they sought to roll back the ERA and other legislation that would continue to support a woman's right to gainful employment, abortion rights, and other issues they saw as a threat to the traditional family structure.[110]

The backlash against feminism moved beyond conservative evangelical activists and into mainstream culture in the 1980s. Susan Faludi's influential book *Backlash: The Undeclared War against American Women* (1991) documented the explosion of faulty "scientific" studies that claimed women suffered physically and psychologically when trying to juggle wage earner's work and their family, extremely negative cultural images of female achievers depicted in such movies as *Fatal Attraction* (1987) and *Working Girl* (1988), and the watering down of feminine empowerment from true political and economic gains to the freedom to choose between different consumer products. This backlash against women came at a time when the feminist movement struggled to articulate its goals, so progress for women during the 1980s stalled out.[111] The symbol of this backlash was the final demise of the ERA, which failed in 1983 when time ran out and not enough states had ratified it.

The failure of the ERA marked a significant shift in American society. Feminism became defined as something radical, dangerous, and lesbian. According to political scientist Penny Weiss, college students began to define themselves against feminism, supporting

many of feminism's goals but associating the word with man-hating lesbians.[112] Women's Studies and English Professor Lisa Hogeland wrote an article for *Ms.* magazine in 1994 that linked college students' fear of feminism with fear of reprisals from others, fear of making ideas too complex, and fear of being associated with lesbianism.[113] Considering the negative stigma of lesbianism already attached to women's rugby, it is possible that the backlash of the 1980s hindered women rugger's ability to recruit new women and continue to grow their sport. This could be especially true in the South, where a large number of right-wing Christian activists reside.

The women who pioneered rugby teams in the 1970s worked hard to gain a foothold in a traditionally male enclave. They faced challenges from society's lack of knowledge about women's rugby, negative stereotypes from both non-players and rugby men, and institutional and financial constraints that ultimately hastened the demise of several teams. The decline of feminism in American culture also could have contributed to the downfall of several teams in the 1980s, as women rugby players' association with "lesbianism" might have taken on new and more radical meanings as backlash occurred.

Postscript

Even though several of these women's teams folded and others struggled through the 1980s, women's rugby faced a great resurgence in the early to mid 1990s. Clemson and UGA revived their teams, North Carolina State University women's rugby emerged in the place of Reedy Creek, Blue Ridge Athletic Training Side (BRATs) and James River Women followed in the footsteps of Iris and represented the Richmond community, and myriad other collegiate and community teams surfaced during the 1990s. While more work needs to be done to explain the resurgence of women's rugby, it is possible that *Title IX* came full circle and assisted the sport once again. Many women cited in a study of current players had played other sports in high school. They suggested that rugby provided a physical and psychological challenge that other sports could not. Some even noted that they wanted to play football, and that rugby finally gave them an outlet to play a contact sport.[114]

In 2004 USA Rugby listed 117 active women's teams in the South, including five for high school women. This represents a 22 percent increase in the number of Southern teams registered with USA Rugby in just a year.[115] Several of the 1970s players went on to play and coach at national levels, and many are still active in coaching and as rugby supporters. The women who played on the first Southern rugby teams challenged aspects of a sport often defined as "too masculine" or "too tough" for women. They created a new and unique, albeit small, sporting culture that empowers women. As a result of their efforts, in 2004 the South boasted three top-twenty collegiate teams.[116] One can see just how far women's rugby has come when looking at the February 2005 cover of *Rugby Magazine*, which shows two collegiate women's teams engaged in competition. The Southern women rugby pioneers faced setbacks, but their success at claiming space in an all-male sport domain reflected an era when feminism and increasing opportunities for women athletes enabled the sport to establish a temporary foothold in the region. While many of these early teams failed, their introduction of the sport to women represents an important moment in Southern women's history, and their legacy lives on in the women's college and city teams located througout the region.

[1]Bill Duxbury, "Women Ruggers Battle Preconceptions, Pain," *Cavalier Daily* (University of Virginia), 21 April 1977, p. 5.

[2]Very few scholars focus on women's rugby at all. Jennifer Hargreaves mentions that British women rugby players are "actively redefining the concept of women's sports . . . blurring of traditional ideas of masculine and feminine in sports." See her *Sporting Females: Critical Issues in the History and Sociology of Women's Sports* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 274. Mariah Burton Nelson discusses the ways in which women rugby players reclaim chauvinist songs in *The Stronger Women Get, the More Men Love Football* (New York: Avon Books, 1994). Susan Cahn describes rugby as extremely aggressive and a challenge to gender norms in *Coming on Strong: Gender and Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Women's Sport* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 218. Michael Chu *et al*. looks at the activities of the elite New Zealand National Team in "The Black Ferns: The Experiences of New Zealand's Elite Women Rugby Players," *Journal of Sport Behavior* 26 (2003): 109-120. None of these authors address a history of women's rugby. Most studies of rugby explore how rugby creates a sense of hyper-masculinity and extreme chauvinism in male players because of the aggressiveness and the homosocial aspects of the sport. These studies include John Nauright and Timothy J.L. Chandler, eds., *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity* (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1996); and Steven Schacht, "Misogyny On and Off the 'Pitch': The Gendered World of Male Rugby Players," *Gender and Society* 10 (1996): 550-565.

[3]Eric Dunning and Keith Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen, and Players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), 74, 84, 88.

[4]J.O.C. Phillips, "Rugby, War, and the Mythology of the New Zealand Male," *The New Zealand Journal of History* 18 (1984): 94, 99.

[5]David Andrews, "Welsh Indigenous! and British Imperial? Welsh Rugby, Culture, and Society, 1890-1914," *Journal of Sport History* 18 (1991): 335-349.

[6]Eric Dunning, "Sport as a Male Preserve: Notes on the Social Sources of Masculine Identity and its Transformations," in *Women, Sport, and Culture*, eds. Susan Birrell and Cheryl Cole (Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, 1994), 166, 170.

[7]Jan Wright and Gill Clarke, "Sport, the Media, and the Construction of Compulsory Heterosexuality," *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 34 (1999): 229.

[8]Elizabeth Wheatley, "Subcultural Subversions: Comparing Discourses in Men's and Women's Rugby Songs," in *Women, Sport, and Culture*, eds. Birrell and Cole, 195, 207. Wheatley also argues that women change the sport when they perform these rituals and claim them for themselves. Her work, as well as the work of other scholars who deal with female rugby players will be discussed later in this article.

[9]Schacht, "Misogyny On and Off the 'Pitch,'" 554.

[10]Pamela Grundy's excellent book, *Learning to Win: Sports, Education, and Social Change in North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), discusses the importance of women's sports, particularly basketball, in North Carolina's educational system, but she notes that by the 1960s and 1970s, the popularity of men's basketball eclipsed women's to such an extent that it really hurt women's programs.

[11]Many writers and scholars focus on the meanings of the "Southern lady." Cynthia Kierner looks at the origins of the Southern lady image in "Hospitality, Sociability, and Gender in the Southern Colonies," *Journal of Southern History* 62 (1996): 449-480. Florence King writes about the regional uniqueness of the Southern belle stereotype in *Southern Ladies and Gentlemen* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975; reprint ed., New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1993). Catherine Clinton traces the origins and maintenance of the Southern plantation woman image (and deconstructs the images with depictions of reality) in her books, *The Plantation Mistress* (New York: Pantheon, 1984); and *Tara Revisited: Women, War, and the Plantation Legend* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1995). Ronda Rich, author of best-selling *What Southern Women Know (That Every Woman Should)* (New York: GP Putnam's Sons, 1999), also perpetuates this stereotype in her "advice book" that promises success if women live by the standard of the "Southern belle."

[12]Florence King, *The Florence King Reader* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 211.

[13]Anne Firor Scott traces the origins and development of the Southern woman image in *The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), and Catherine Clinton deconstructs that image in *The Plantation Mistress*.

[14]Scott, *The Southern Lady,* 15.

[15]Ibid., 16-17. For more information on the concerns of white men and their ability to dominate women, see Victoria Bynum, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Sexual and Social Control in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

[16]Lee Ann Whites, "'Stand By Your Man': The Ladies Memorial Association and the Reconstruction of Southern White Manhood," in *Women of the American South: A Multicultural Reader*, ed. Christine Farnham (New York: New York University Press, 1997), 133-149.

[17]Whether this image is reality often sparks much debate in the historical community. Scott also traces the origins and development of the Southern woman image in *The Southern Lady* and discusses ways in which white women deconstructed the Southern lady image. Jacquelyn Dowd Hall maintains that white women reacted against the Southern lady image in their fight to stop lynching in the early twentieth century in her work *Revolt against Chivalry: Jesse Daniel Ames and the Women's Campaign against Lynching* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979). Some white women could not be Southern ladies and maintained different images of the ideal woman. Stephanie McCurry discusses this issue in *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeomen Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). LuAnn Jones discusses the ways in which women of the twentieth-century rural South were both producers and consumers in the economy as well as agents of change in *Mama Learned Us to Work: Farm Women in the New South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002). Of course, African-American women were definitionally excluded from the "Southern lady" image, as Tera Hunter argues in *To 'Joy My Freedom: Black Women's Lives and Labor after the Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998).

[18]Marilyn Schwartz, *The Southern Belle Primer, Or Why Princess Margaret Will Never Be a Kappa Kappa Gamma* (New York: Main Street Books, 1991).

[19]Catherine Clinton, in *Tara Revisited,* argues that the "belle and mammy images, so persistently yoked, will continue to shape our views of southern women, exerting great influence whether we confront them or not" (p. 213).

[20]Jane Sherron De Hart, "Second Wave Feminism(s) and the South," in *Women of the American South: A Multicultural Reader*, ed. Farnham, 275, 279.

[21]Ibid., 275.

[22]Ibid., 282.

[23]Much of the scholarship on sports focuses on the ambivalent relationship between women's empowerment and constructions of women as aggressive, manly, etc. All works discuss how athletics deconstructs gender norms in society. Cahn, *Coming on Strong*; Hargreaves, *Sporting Females*; Burton Nelson, *The Stronger Women Get*; Mary Jo Festle, *Playing Nice: Politics and Apologies in Women's Sports* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Nancy Theberge, *Higher Goals: Women's Ice Hockey and the Politics of Gender* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000); and Marian Betancourt, *Playing Like a Girl: Transforming Our Lives Through Team Sports* (New York: Contemporary Books, 2001), all explore these issues.

[24]A. Lee Chichester Survey, October 2003, in possession of the author. This project originally began as a sociological study of women's rugby players, past and present, throughout the South. The author contacted team captains from collegiate and club teams in every Southern state asking for participation, and she mailed and electronically mailed over 120 surveys. She does not know how many surveys ultimately went out, as many players copied them and sent them on to friends. She received seventy-four responses from every Southern state, as far north as Maryland and as far west as Texas. Everyone who participated was allowed to claim anonymity if they chose to do so, and they were also allowed to choose a pseudonym so they could recognize themselves in the survey. Several of the respondents in this study chose to use the pseudonyms. The results of this project can be found in Megan Shockley, "Debutantes, BRATs, and Mayhem: Women's Rugby and the Creation of an Oppositional Culture in the South,"

Women's Studies Quarterly 33 (2005): 150-169. While this study simply places all female ruggers together, the author was intrigued by the number of responses she received from "old girls," or former rugby players. She decided that a study of the origins of this intriguing Southern subculture was necessary, so she contacted several of the respondents. Ultimately, she used surveys from nine players who were active on teams along the southeast coast: three from Florida State, one from William and Mary, and five from Iris. Because of her Richmond connections (Iris players came out to support the James River Women's team, so she made contacts there), she was able to follow up with this team and conduct an interview with five of the former players at Babe's Bar, their major sponsor. This team's captain and president, Jan Schaale, had kept a significant amount of their historical materials, which is why they are the only non-collegiate team in this study. Because there are no membership rolls from USA Rugby for this period, it was not possible to track down players from the Charlotte Harlots and Norfolk Breakers.

[25]This information comes from the websites of two major organizations: USA Rugby and Scrum.com, a major international outlet for rugby news: <http://www.usarugby.org/about/history.html> and <http://www.scrum.com/womens/country/usa/history.asp> [17 February 2005].

[26]*Title IX* originally called for equality in all facets of collegiate life and provided institutions only five years to comply with the ruling. Institutions that failed to comply with providing equal access to clubs, sports, and academic programs stood to lose their federal funding. In the 1990s, *Title IX* shifted its focus from providing equal access to providing proportional access based on the numbers of men and women at the institution. For more information, see Festle, *Playing Nice*; and Cahn, *Coming on Strong*. For an excellent overview of *Title IX* implementation, see Susan Ware's *Title IX: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2003).

[27]Festle, *Playing Nice,* 109-141, 199-227; Cahn *Coming on Strong,* 254-259.

[28]Festle, *Playing Nice,* 186-227; Mary Boutilier and Lucinda SanGiovanni, "Politics, Public Policy, and Title IX: Some Limitations of Liberal Feminism," in *Women, Sport, and Culture*, eds. Birrell and Cole, 97-111. One of the most egregious cases of backsliding occurred in 1984 with the Supreme Court decision in *Grove City College v. Bell*, in which the court decided that the college only needed to provide equity in programs that directly received federal financial aid, which exempted athletic programs. As a result, many schools cut women's athletic programs. The situation did not become rectified until Congress passed the Civil Rights Restoration Act in 1988, which re-enacted the original basis of *Title IX* by broadening the meaning to include all programs in general, whether or not they received direct federal aid. Ware, *Title IX: A Brief History with Documents*, 14-15.

[29]"Title IX Aftermath: Four Varsity Sports for Women," *Daily Cavalier,* 4 September 1974, p. 10; Catherine Fain, "Women's Rugby at Clemson," unpublished manuscript, 2004, pp. 3-4, in possession of author; Lynn Jarrett, "Women's Athletics: Women Look at the Past," *Tiger* (Clemson University), 1 February 1977, p. 18.

[30]"K.H." Survey, October 2003; Chichester Survey, both in possession of author. Both individuals left varsity sports to play rugby.

[31]Festle, *Playing Nice,* 141.

[32] De Hart, "Second Wave Feminism," 277-278.

[33]The newspapers used were *Cavalier Daily* (University of Virginia), *Flat Hat* (College of William and Mary), *Emory Wheel*, *Red and Black* (University of Georgia), *Technician* (North Carolina State University), *Tiger* (Clemson University), and *Alligator* (University of Florida).

[34]Spiros Malaspina, "Women's Rugby Club to be Formed at Emory," *Emory Wheel,* 9 November 1976, p. 10.

[35]Amy Sarnoff, "Intense Fun," *Corks and Curls*, yearbook, University of Virginia, 1995, p. 184.

[36]Jane Gerhard, *Desiring Revolution: Second-Wave Feminism and the Rewriting of American Sexual Thought, 1920-1982* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 173.

[37]Barbara Ryan, *Feminism and the Women's Movement: Dynamics of Change in Social Movement Ideology and Activisms* (New York: Routledge Press, 1992), 125-129. For more information on the dynamics between liberal white feminists, radical feminists, lesbian feminists, and feminists of color, see

Benita Roth, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black, Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); Estelle Freedman, *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women* (New York: Ballentine Books, 2002); and Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women's Movement Changed America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000).

[38]Richmond Iris Mid-Atlantic Playoffs Program, 1982, in possession of Jan Schaale, Claremont, Virginia.

[39]Shelley Wagner, "Ruggers Begin Year Two," *Cavalier Daily*, 13 September 1977, p. 5; "Campus Briefs," *Flat Hat* (College of William and Mary), 13 February 1976, p. 9; Kathy Flores, Chichester, Nancy Broaddus, Betsy Ogburn, "K.H.," Susie Massey, and Jan Schaale Surveys, October 2003, in possession of author.

[40]Susan Malstrom, "Outlook Good for Women Ruggers," *Flat Hat*, 16 April 1976, p. 12; Duxbury, "Women Ruggers," p. 5.

[41]Andy Stoll and Sue Curley, "Over Clemson Women Ruggers Roll," *Emory Wheel,* 7 February 1977, p. 10.

[42]Examples of this abound. A look at the newspapers in the 1970s and 1980s reflects this trend. While Clemson's paper listed relatively little information, North Carolina State University's paper is more indicative of the support women received: "Women Ruggers Drop Opener," *Tiger* (Clemson University), 30 September 1977, p. 22; Jimmy Howard, "Rugby," *Tiger,* 26 February 1981, p. 18; "Women Ruggers Top W&M," *Technician* (North Carolina State University), 10 February 1975, p. 9; "Women Roll On," *Technician*, 7 April 1976, p. 5; "Rugby Club Set for Weekend Matches," *Technician*, 24 October 1975, p. 7; "Motherruckers Defeat Reedy Creek 3-0," *Technician,* 6 October 1976, p. 7; "Stingers Overpower Reedy Creek 16-7," *Technician,* 2 November 1977, p. 4; "Reedy Creek Rugby Club Blanks Fayetteville Twice," *Technician,* 1 March 1978, p. 5; "Reedy Creek Wins 42-14," *Technician,* 14 April 1978, p. 6; Elisa Hampton, "Reedy Creek Ruggers Ready for a Weekend Event," *Technician,* 11 April 1980, 6.

[43]Reedy Creek Rugby Program, 1978-1979 season, Rugby File, box 1, Student Organizations Collection, North Carolina State University Archives, Raleigh, North Carolina.

[44]L.E. Babits, "A History of the Reedy Creek RFC," Reedy Creek Rugby Program, 1978-1979 season, Student Organizations Collection.

[45]Swann Seiler, "New Rugby Team Braving Broken Fingernails," *Red and Black* (University of Georgia), 19 September 1976, p. 1.

[46]"History of Iris Women's Rugby Club," Iris Mid-Atlantic Playoffs Program.

[47]Steve Bennett, "Women's Rugby: A New Attempt at an Old Sport," *Flat Hat*, 31 October 1975, p. 10; Fain, "Women's Rugby at Clemson," p. 5.

[48]Hargreaves, *Sporting Females,* 272.

[49]John Nauright and Timothy Chandler, "Conclusion," in *Making Men: Rugby and Masculine Identity*, eds. Nauright and Chandler, 245.

[50]"K.H." and Chichester Surveys.

[51]Swann Seiler, "New Rugby Team," *Red and Black*, 19 September 1976, p. 1.

[52]Wagner, *Daily Cavalier*, p. 5.

[53]Interview with Iris team members by Megan Taylor Shockley, 6 July 2004, at Babe's Bar, Richmond, Virginia, notes in possession of the author. Present at the interview were Betsy Ogburn, Vicki Hester, Jan Schaale, Deb Lowry, and Nancy Broaddus.

[54]Schacht, "Misogyny On and Off the 'Pitch,'" 550-565; Wheatley, "Subcultural Subversions," 193-195, 198-200, 207.

[55]Theberge, "Higher Goals," 70.

[56]Wheatley, "Subcultural Subversions," 207.

[57]Pat Griffin, *Deep Closets: Lesbians and Homophobia in Sport* (Champaign, Ill.: Human Kinetics, 1998), 18-19, 48.

[58]Betancourt, *Playing Like a Girl,* 178.

[59]Cahn, *Coming on Strong*, 171-178, 218-222.

[60]These works include Cahn, *Coming on Strong* and Marian Betancourt with a forward by Nancy Lieberman-Cline, who discuss the concept of the "aggressive female athlete" making society uncomfortable by breaking gender norms in *Playing Like a Girl*, 139, 176-178. Also see Griffin, *Deep Closets*, 19, 27, 48; and Theberge, *Higher Goals,* 87-91, 110.

[61]Theberge, *Higher Goals,* 110.

[62]P. David Howe, "Kicking Stereotypes into Touch: An Ethnographic Account of Women's Rugby," in *Athletic Intruders: Ethnographic Research on Women, Culture, and* Exercise, eds. Anne Bolin and Jane Granskog (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 228, 235.

[63]Information about current laws, amendments, and Supreme Court decisions can be found at the Human Rights Campaign website, <http://www.hrc.org> [10 December 2006].

[64]De Hart, "Second Wave Feminism," 282.

[65]All from surveys collected by the author in October of 2003 are in possession of the author.

[66]Cahn, *Coming on Strong,* 185-206.

[67]Griffin, *Deep Closets,* 183.

[68]Cahn, *Coming on Strong,* 203-204; Festle, *Playing Nice*, 155.

[69]Chichester, Broaddus, and Ogburn Surveys; Iris team member interview.

[70]Flores and Broaddus Surveys.

[71]Iris Team member interview.

[72]Chik Jacobs, "Women's Rugby—The New Sport's Not Too Rough," *Tiger,* 25 February 1977, p. 18.

[73]Steve Mackie, "Women's Rugby Kicks Mud and Stigma to Win," *Emory Wheel,* 10 January 1978, p. 12; "Women Ruggers Top William and Mary," *Technician,* 29 October 1975, p. 9; Kristina Anklam, "Rugby Writeup," *Corks and Curls*, 1985, p. 142; Seiler, "New Rugby Team," p. 1.

[74]Duxbury, "Women Ruggers," p. 5; Mackie, "Women's Rugby,"p. 12; Bob McKellar, "Rugby a Subversive Attack," *Red and Black*, 13 October 1976, p. 4.

[75]Michael Messner, *Taking the Field: Women, Men, and Sports* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 13.

[76]Wright and Clarke, "Sport and the Media," 231-233.

[77]Cahn, *Coming on Strong,* 181.

[78]Festle, *Playing Nice,* 155, 224.

[79]Grundy, *Learning to Win,* 150.

[80]Ibid., 247.

[81]Mackie, "Women's Rugby," p. 12; "Women Ruggers Top W&M," *Technician*, 29 October 1975, p. 9.

[82]Wheatley, "Subcultural Subversions," 196-200.

[83]For a discussion of team names currently in use among Southern rugby players, see Shockley, "Debutantes, BRATS, and Mayhem," 152-153.

[84]Ibid., 157-160, 163-165.

[85]"K.H.," Chichester, and "Suzi Q." Surveys, October 2003, in possession of the author.

[86]Jan Schaale, "The Ladies Game," originally printed in the Porter Cup 1977 program and reprinted in Iris Mid-Atlantic Playoffs Program.

[87]Ibid.

[88]Broaddus Survey.

[89]While this information comes from the William and Mary yearbook *Colonial Echo*, by this time USA Rugby established rankings for all collegiate and club teams.

[90]"Rockin and Sockin Rugby: Rugby Teams Struggle for Recognition," *Colonial Echo*, yearbook, College of William and Mary, 1981, pp. 128-129; Rita Clagett, "William and Mary Rugby: Scrummers Struggle for Recognition," *Flat Hat*, 24 March 1978, p. 19; Chris Foote, "Just One Big Club," *Colonial Echo*, 1987, pp. 182-183.

[91]Lindsay Macgregor, "Women's Rugby Wants You!" *Emory Wheel*, 8 April 1980, sec. A, p. 14; Steve Becker, "Women Ruggers Are Very Hopeful," *Emory Wheel,* 9 February 1982, sec. B, p. 6; Karen Ogle, "Women's Rugby Club," *Campus*, yearbook, Emory University, 1983.

[92]Elisa Hampton, "Reedy Creek Ruggers Ready for Weekend Event," *Technician*, 11 April 1980, 6.

[93]Fred Oliver, "Women Ruggers Win SEC," *Red and Black*, 20 April 1977, p. 7; Perry McIntyre, "Ruggers Win SEC," *Red and Black*, 18 April 1978, p. 8.

[94]Clagett, "William and Mary Ruggers," p. 19; Kari Guillen, "Rugby Clubs . . . No Experience Needed," *Colonial Echo*, 1982, pp. 78-79.

[95]Sophie Cramer, "SGA Clarifies Budget Policy," *Emory Wheel*, 1 May 1979, p. 1.

[96]Fain, "Women's Rugby at Clemson," pp. 7-8.

[97]Iris team member interview.

[98]Ibid.

[99]Festle, *Playing Nice,* 186-227.

[100]Messner, *Taking the Field,* 71.

[101]Shari Dworkin and Michael Messner, "Just Do . . . What? Sport, Bodies, and Gender," in *Re-Visioning Gender*, ed. Myra Ferree, Judith Lorber, and Beth Hess (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1999), 348.

[102]Bruce Hunter, "Women's Sports Gaining Status at UGA," *Red and Black*, 14 January 1978, p. 6.

[103]The Virginia Rugby Union retains records of the Ed and Sandy Lee tournament, and for a period between 1985 and 1995, there were *no* women's entries on the club side. The original women's teams like Iris just disappeared. Evidence suggesting rugby's decline can be found when the newspapers and yearbooks dropped coverage altogether. Also, Rich Saunders, professor at Clemson and former rugby player, pegged the end of Clemson's team; the women of Iris pinpointed the date of its demise in the interview; and Georgia's team lists the year on the website <http://www.uga.edu/rugby> [16 December 2004].

[104]Clubs and Teams Section, *Corks and Curls*, 1984, p. 138.

[105]Susan Faludi, *Backlash: The Undeclared War against American Women* (New York: Anchor Books, 1992).

[106]For more information about the political and cultural changes that occurred during this era, see William C. Berman, *America's Right Turn: From Nixon to Bush* (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994); Michael Schaller, *Right Turn: American Life in the Reagan-Bush Era, 1980-1992* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Dan Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich: Race in the Conservative Counterrevolution, 1963-1994* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994).

[107]James Guth, "The New Christian Right," in *The New Christian Right: Mobilization and Legitimization*, eds. Robert Liebman and Robert Wuthnow (New York: Aldine Publishing Company, 1983), 31-39; E.J. Dionne, *Why Americans Hate Politics,* 2nd ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004), 209-242.

[108]Guth, "The New Christian Right," 32-33.

[109]Dionne, *Why Americans Hate Politics*, 239-242.

[110]Sara Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* (Boston: South End Press, 1989), 83-84, 106-108; Faludi, *Backlash*, 229-280.

[111]Ibid. Ruth Rosen's *World Split Open* discusses the demise of an institutionalized feminist movement. Part of the problem was the fact that it was fragmented to begin with, and part of the problem was that once original second-wave reformers actually made gains, their achievements were taken for granted by the women who benefited from them.

[112]Penny Weiss, "'I'm Not a Feminist, But. . .': Popular Myths About Feminism," in *Conversations with Feminism: Political Theory and Practice*, ed. Penny Weiss (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).

[113]Lisa Maria Hogeland, "Fear of Feminism: Why Young Women Get the Willies," *Ms.*, November/December 1994, pp. 18-21.

[114]Shockley, "Debutants, BRATS, and Mayhem," 153-154.

[115]USA Rugby website, <http://www.usarugby.org> [17 February 2005]; 2003 Yearbook, *Rugby Magazine*, 2003, p. 1.

[116]Alex Goff compiles top-twenty lists of college rugby: <http://www.goffonrugby.com> [16 December 2004].