

Hult, Joan S. and Trekell, Marianna, eds. *A Century of Women's Basketball: From Frailty to Final Four*. Reston Virginia; American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1991. 430 pages, appendix, photographs. \$24.95.

The centennial of American basketball was the inspiration for this book, a much-needed contribution to the growing body of scholarly literature on American women in sport. *A Century of Women's Basketball* was sponsored by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) Archives and the National Association for Girls and Women in Sport (NAGWS), an association of the AAHPERD. The backing of these two organizations is certainly fitting, since the AAHPERD and NAGWS, under various names and guises, were inextricably linked to the development of women's basketball. Consequently, the AAHPERD Archives was able to provide many of the excellent vintage photographs which enhance the book, as well as much of the primary data on which the authors relied when researching their chapters. For this task, Co-Editors Joan S. Hult and Marianna Trekell invited twenty-two individuals including sport historians, coaches, players, and administrators, to contribute their research, expertise, and experiences.

The book is divided into two sections, "Part I-The Early Years of Basketball-1890s-1930s," and "Part II-The Second Fifty Years of Basketball-1940s-1980s." The Appendix contains a "Women's Basketball Time Line." Most of the chapters are thoroughly researched and well written by their respective authors, whose backgrounds are noted in the list of contributors. As a result of the extensive archival research involved, the book provides a wealth of information on primary sources.

Co-editor Hult undertook the daunting task of writing the introductions to each part, giving context to the material by providing cultural background and historical data pertaining to women's physical education and sport, and briefly summarizing the articles that followed. She also noted areas in which additional research is needed. Finally, Hult wrote three of the chapters: one pertaining to governance during the time period covered by each part, and one about the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW). Although some of the material has been published in her previous articles, her chapters are essential to the success of this volume. The history of governance of women's basketball within the AAHPERD umbrella, and most especially the AIAW story, need to be brought into the mainstream of sport literature. Moreover, the history of women's basketball is incomprehensible without some knowledge of the governance.

Two excellent pieces, Betty Spears' biography of Senda Berenson Abbot, and Joan Paul's discussion of the life and contributions of Clara Gregory Baer open Part I. While Berenson needs no introduction to sport historians, Spears is certainly the foremost authority on the woman and her works, and this chapter offers new insights into the pioneer who introduced basketball to women. As Paul notes, Baer has been sorely neglected by scholars, and her inclusion here should help change that, and give long overdue recognition to her achievements. Baer and Berenson both devised women's basketball rules, and Joanna Davenport undertook the unenviable task of recounting the evolution of those rules throughout the years, as well as explaining the rationale for the changes. Other works in Part I discuss medical and cultural issues, and basketball in diverse geographical regions of the country.

Part II is notable for Nancy Wardwell's contribution: "Rachel E. Bryant: Twenty-One Years of Women's Leadership in Basketball-in Sport," and Hult's chapter on the "Legacy of AIAW." This section also includes recollections of players, coaches, and administrators from the period, basketball for special populations, and information about six contemporary governing bodies.

Despite the unquestionable value of this work *A Century of Women's Basketball* suffers from the usual problems of anthologies; uneven style and quality, differing formats, redundancy, and lack of continuity. While some of these may be unavoidable in an anthology, this book does seem to jump around unnecessarily, and this problem is not without solution. Part of the discontinuity stems from the fact that material in several of the chapters in Part I extends beyond the 1930s, while some chapters in Part II discuss developments which occurred before 1940. Greater continuity might have been achieved by putting all of the essentially historical articles together in one section. This would also have allowed all of the information about governance to be covered in one chapter, as is already the case with the history of the rules.

While the above problems are distracting, the absence of an index is a real drawback, and greatly diminishes the value of this book as a reference source. It seems ludicrous that the AAHPERD, having underwritten much of the research and published the book, did not have it indexed. Not only does this make the book more difficult to use, it also diminishes its marketability, as librarians are often loath to purchase books without indexes. Moreover, there are countless individuals, organizations, and institutions which will be buried in the text, particularly since the chapter titles often give no hint as to what gems are contained therein. Few would think to look in a chapter entitled "Title IX, AIAW, and Beyond-A Time for Celebration," for brief biographies of early star players, much less to scour the footnotes to a chapter entitled "Women's Intercollegiate Basketball: AIAW/NCAA," for names of U.S. Olympic team members. In fact, even an index might not reveal data found only in the footnotes. Rather, an expanded appendix would have been a perfect place for Olympic rosters, and other facts such as the winners of the Wade Trophy and other honors, names of women in the Basketball Hall of Fame, and the AIAW,

NCAA, and NAIA national champions. Future editions would certainly be enhanced by the addition of an index and a more extensive appendix.

The book was first conceived by former AAHPERD Archivist Mike Everman, who envisioned it as a way to showcase the Archives' excellent women's sports collection. Under the able leadership of Hult and Trezell, it became much more comprehensive and more significant than originally envisioned. However, it certainly fulfills Everman's objective, and shows the importance of continued funding for the Archives. Thus, despite some problems, *A Century of Women's Basketball* is a very valuable book, and fills a great void in the literature. It should provide the basis for improved coverage of both women's basketball and women's sports generally, in future secondary works, and also inspire scholars to undertake new primary research on the many topics which remain unexplored. Hult, Trezell, and AAHPERD, NAGWS, and the contributors can take great pride in their achievement.

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