
SALTER, DAVID F. **Crashing the Old Boys' Network: The Tragedies and Triumphs of Girls and Women in Sports** Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1996. Pp. v, 163. Notes, selected bibliography, reference sources, index. \$35.00 cb.

In life, as in sports, victories are rarely achieved without the efforts of many players' (p. ix). At the outset, David Salter acknowledges the valuable contributions of scores of people; he identifies more than fifty by name. The acumen of such professionals as Donna Lopiano, Billie Jean King, and Mary Joe Fernandez provide an insider's view of the tragedies and triumphs of girls and women in sports. This cooperation provided Salter with a strong foundation, resulting in a work that reflects more than one perspective.

Crashing the Old Boys' Network is presented against the backdrop of Title IX. The symbolic book cover alludes to its contents. A strong, athletic, woman runner is in motion; she looks unstoppable. The background features an abstract, chaotic

melange with confusing boundariesó a fitting symbol portraying the constraints girls and women have had to overcome in sports.

While not a definitive historical work, *Crashing the Old Boys' Networks* is an inspiring and informative beginning. Through nine chapters and 150 pages, Salter coaches the reader through notable dates, eras, and issues. The first chapter reminds the reader that we are "Still Struggling," a fitting title, given the fact that "approximately 90 percent of all colleges and universities in the United States are not in compliance" (p. 5) with Title IX. In part, the struggle continues because, as of 1996, "statistics show the stark reality.... There are only six female athletic directors at NCAA Division 1 schools" (p. 6). Throughout the text, the author uses statistics to effectively strengthen his points.

Chapter two, "Calling All Dads," reflects Salter's own beliefs and conviction that fathers must step up to the plate or the free throw line and encourage their daughter(s) to participate in sports activities. Salter has daughters of his own, and has worked hard to make certain they are not denied fair and equitable treatment. As such, his portrayal of the tragedies and triumphs of girls and women in sport reflects a personal bias. While he is not truly neutral, his book is accurate and fair.

One of the strengths of this book is the way in which problems related to both high-school athletics (Varsity Jackets and Letter Sweaters) and collegiate athletics (Turf Wars) are discussed. Both chapters provide extensive references from broad and diverse sources. The discourse on collegiate athletics is especially well-documented, citing 53 references, including *NCAA News*, *Sporting News*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *USA Today*, and *Achieving Gender Equity: A Basic Guide to Title IX for Colleges and Universities*.

Salter has not written an angry book, though he could easily have done so. Instead, he provides the reader with pep talks and inspirational stories. "Showtime" is a chapter that places a number of stars in the limelight, effectively showcasing the likes of Theresa Grentz, who has one of the most successful coaching records in women's college basketball, and Judy Conradt, winningest all-time coach in women's basketball with more than 650 victories. Despite tremendous successes, Salter reminds the reader that women basketball coaches earned just 59 percent of what their male counterparts earned in 1993. Salter artfully intertwines success stories with harsh realities and progress reports in the face of ongoing, glaring inequities.

One of the weaknesses of Salter's book is the unequal time given to "The Professional Dilemma," one of the few chapters mentioning professional tennis or golf for women. Citing only five references, the chapter is, at best, a quick snapshot of an arena far more deserving of Salter's attention. The chapter that follows, "The Last Male Bastion," provides a behind-the-scenes look into the world of women sports announcers and journalists by presenting anecdotal stories and short case studies of real-life events and struggles.

The final chapter, "Where Do We Go from Here?" is somewhat disappointing. Two key success stories highlight ways in which gender equity can be achieved at both high school and college levels. Salter makes no real attempt

to provide synthesis or to ponder what we can really expect in the future for girls and women who want to participate in sports. Shortcomings aside, Salter has tackled a complex and timely topic. He is to be commended for his creative handling of a difficult subject matter, and for his sensitive and insightful reflections.

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