

Local 'Women's Rights' Asserted in Athletics

Putnam County Vidette – Kaye Palte – March 29, 1973

Were you aware that in the state of Ohio it is illegal for women to play organized scholastic football? Women's rights have yet to attack this stronghold of 'male supremacy' but already the movement has hit some aspects of the traditionally male-dominated varsity sports.

Columbus Grove High School Girl's Athletic program will soon participate in the first statewide tournament sponsored by the Ohio High School Athletic Association, the organization which sponsors tournaments for male participants.

Deb Kaple will be participating in the state gymnastics tournament sponsored by the OHSAA in April. The tournament has been in existence for almost three years but in past years has been sponsored by a Division of Girls' and Women's Sports. Finally the women have taken a step into an association ruled by men for men.

Mrs. Emma Pleiman, Columbus Grove High School physical education instructor, feels that in the near future the OHSAA will take over more and more of the rule making in girls' varsity sports. At the present time the DGWS makes the rules and the OHSAA adopts them.

She also feels that if varsity sports were to become co-ed, a limited amount of students would be able to participate. But with the present organizational set-up the boys can have their own teams and the girls theirs. The only sports in which boys and girls could participate without "segregation", she feels, would be such sports as golf and swimming.

In Columbus Grove the girls' sports program is part of the high school athletic program. The girls must attain the same eligibility standards as the boys in order to participate in the various activities.

This year girls at Columbus Grove have participated in intramural badminton, tennis, shuffleboard and recently a co-ed volleyball team was formed. The girls participate in inter-scholastic archery, volleyball, basketball, gymnastics and track.

Mrs. Pleiman states that Columbus Grove will probably not expand their girls' sports program until additional help can be obtained. She is the faculty advisor – coach for all of the present sports programs.

The lack of qualified teachers and coaches is the greatest problem in girls' athletics; a larger athletic department for woman's sports would be the answer to this. If women could take advantage of the large athletic departments in high schools that men have, for example five or six football coaches for one team, their organized sports activities would see a great deal of expansion.

Mrs. Pleiman is not in favor of women coaches for men's sports. However she sees no objection to women acting as referees or officials at male sports activities.

The girls at Columbus Grove High School are allowed to have the gym one night a week during the winter months. In the fall and spring the gym is available to them at anytime because most of the male activities are held outside.

Girls organized sports at Columbus Grove involved just fewer than 100 girls competing in six sports. The newest activities offered to girls are gymnastics, archery and track.

Both the girls and boys use the same equipment for most activities. When money is appropriated for new equipment the males often have priority.

The day has not yet arrived when a father will be heard proclaiming "that's my daughter out there, the fullback."