

WNBA passes racial, gender report

BOSTON (AP) — When the Northeastern University Center for Sport in Society released its annual racial report card, the news wasn't so much the grades as who was in the class.

Data from the WNBA was examined for the first time this year, making it the first women's league to be scrutinized. The title also changed this year from a "Racial Report Card" to a "Racial and Gender Report Card."

"The dimension of diversity has really changed," said the center's director, Richard Lapchick. "For so many years, this was a portrait of black and white. When we look at sports in society today, that is no longer the case."

The 10th annual report indicates that the professional leagues do better than college sports at integrating their executive positions and women are faring better than minorities. Among the pro

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— Richard Lapchick

leagues, the NBA is ahead of the other sports, especially in its spin-off WNBA.

"I think there's a real consciousness in that league more than any other," Lapchick said. "They represent, if anybody does, the whole concept of gender equity."

The NBA received the highest overall grades with an A- for race and a B for gender. The NFL got a B+ for its racial hiring practices but a D+ for gender. Major League Baseball got a B for race, and college sports received Cs for race and gender.

The report also examines the NHL and Major League Soccer for the first time. Leagues in the report for the first time are not given grades.

Other details from the report:

* **Players:** The percentage of black players decreased over the past year in all professional sports, as well as college Division I. In baseball, the 15 percent black participation was a 10-year low.

This decrease can largely be attributed to the increase of Latin players. In baseball, for example, the percentage of Latinos reached an all-time high of 25 percent.

* **Women:** Women fare better than minorities in terms of off-field opportunities. Except in the NBA, though, they are overrepresented in support staff positions and underrepresented in executive positions.

The president of the

WNBA, Val Ackerman, is a woman.

* **International players:** The number of foreign-born players in baseball and the NBA was an all-time high. There were also "extremely large numbers" of international players in the WNBA, NHL and soccer.

* **Colleges:** The percentage of black Division I athletic directors, excluding historically black colleges, is 3.2 percent, down from 3.7 percent a year earlier.

"That's kind of a scary number," Lapchick said.

* **Owners:** There were no black or Latin majority owners in any of the leagues examined by the report. There was one Asian majority owner in the MLS and the NHL, and three women were majority owners, two in the NFL and one in baseball.

The 1998 Racial and Gender Report Card is available at www.sportinsociety.org

Senate OKs bill to clean up boxing

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate approved legislation last week aimed at protecting professional boxers from unscrupulous managers and promoters and cleaning up the tarnished image of the sport.

The bill, long sought by Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., was approved without opposition. A companion bill is working its way through the House.

The measure would require promoters and organizers of major boxing events to disclose more financial information and inform state boxing commissions of charges, costs and fees they take out of boxers' purses.

It states that no boxing contract can extend longer than a year, making it more difficult to tie fighters to long-term contracts. Fighters also would not be required to hire a manager associated with a promoter.

The legislation, named after former heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali, would standardize physical exams that boxers must undergo before each match and make a brain CAT scan every two years a requirement for obtaining a license.

Fight broadcasters would not be allowed to have a direct or indirect financial interest in the boxer's manager or management company.

"When honest and open competition is inhibited, it is the boxers who suffer most," McCain said at a hearing of his Senate Commerce Committee last April attended by Ali. "But millions of ticket-buying fans in America are also hurt by monopolistic practices in boxing."

History

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11-term congressman, he will be the first African-American representative from Pennsylvania.

1936 - Jesse Owens wins his fourth gold medal in the Summer Olympic Games in Berlin.

1963 - Whitney Houston is born in Newark, NJ. She will achieve fame as a singer with her 1985 debut album, which will sell over nine million copies, have three number-one singles and earn a Grammy for the song "Saving All My Love For You." Her 1987 album *Whitney* will debut at number-one on the charts, a first for a female singer.

1984 - British decathlete Daley Thompson becomes the second man in history to win the decathlon twice in the Olympic Games.

1987 - Beatrice Foods, International is sold to TLC Group, a New York investment firm led by Reginald Lewis, an African-American businessman and entrepreneur. It is the largest business acquisition ever by an African-American.

AUGUST 10

1858 - Anna Julia Cooper is born in Raleigh, NC. She will become an influential African-American intellectual, educator, and founder of Frelinghuysen University.

1909 - George C. Crockett, Jr. is born in Jacksonville, Fla. He will become the first African-American lawyer in the US Department of Labor, hearing officer for the newly formed Fair Employment Practices Commission in 1943, active labor and civil rights lawyer, and at 71, representative for the Michigan congressional district left vacant by the resignation of Charles Diggs.

1984 - Olympic athlete Carl Lewis repeats Jesse Owens' record of four gold medals in the L.A. Olympic Games.

AUGUST 11

Independence Day - Republic of Chad

1873 - John Rosamond Johnson is born in Jacksonville, Fla. He will, with Bob Cole, be part of the famous vaudeville team Cole & Johnson but will best be remembered as a composer who, with his brother James Weldon Johnson providing the lyrics, will write "Lift Every Voice and Sing."

1921 - Author Alex Haley is born in Ithaca, N.Y. He will become an award-winning author, most notably for his authorship with Malcolm X of the latter's autobiography and for *Roots*, which will win a special Pulitzer Prize. *Roots* will be his most successful work, selling over 1 million copies and contributing to a new interest in African-American history.

1925 - Carl T. Rowan is born in Ravenscroft, Tenn. He will

become one of America's most outspoken journalists. Rowan will also serve in the A.I.D., as a US ambassador during the 1960's, have a syndicated radio commentary program, *The Rowan Report*, and publish his autobiography, *Breaking Barriers*, in 1991.

1948 - Amanda Randolph appears on the television series "The Laytons" on the Dumont Network. She and Bob Howard of CBS's "The Bob Howard Show," are the first African-Americans to be featured in a national network television series.

1965 - Rioting starts in the Watts section of Los Angeles. In six days of rioting, the death toll will stand at 34, over 1,300 will be injured, and \$35 million in property will be lost.

This Week in History is compiled by Shantee Cooper, intern for the Las Vegas Sentinel Voice.

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