

Citizens League Summary Report

Keeping Better Score of Youth Sports

In examining youth athletics in the Twin Cities, a Citizens League research committee found a massive, nebulous mix of programs, involving government, schools, hundreds of volunteers and thousands of children. What it did not find was a coherent set of goals, a broad sense of purpose, or much solid, researched information about youth sports.

The committee decided that the public would be better served if there were more and better information about the system, a greater understanding of what was happening to children involved in youth sports, and more discussion of the issues related to youth sports.

Among the major recommendations of the committee are:

- The establishment of a sports "institute" which would compile and analyze athletics data and supply information and guidance to volunteer sports groups.
- A call to groups operating sports programs to establish written goals and objectives. With written statements, those involved could better decide what they wanted and didn't want from their community programs.
- Maximization of participation. A continuing theme in the report stresses the importance of participation by as many kids as possible. There are various ends to athletic participation, but none of them is enhanced by less-than-maximum participation.
- More training for coaches. Much of the youth sports system rests on the use of volunteer coaches. More training by these key people would help the system.

Overall, the committee found that the area is well served by the present

youth athletics system, with its reliance on volunteer participation and decentralization. The use of volunteers keeps costs down, the committee reported, and the fragmented nature of the system insures a variety of levels of participation.

Because there are many different, overlapping programs, participants have a great deal of choice about involvement in sports. Moreover, because of the small scale of each program, geographic limitations are minimal, further increasing choices among participants.

THE SYSTEM NOW

The metropolitan area has a highly diverse and decentralized youth sports delivery system, which includes schools, park departments, volunteers, and private clubs. They operate a variety of programs which overlap and intersect at various levels.

Many of the volunteer groups are part of national or statewide organizations, and most are organized geographically on a small scale. Government is highly involved through both the schools and parks. Most youth sports take place either in a schoolyard or in a public park. Many park and recreation groups operate sports programs.

Through this system, the committee found, youngsters in the Twin Cities now enjoy a wide range of offerings for athletic activities. Still, the system is not without its problems. Among the immediate problems the committee identified were confusion about goals for youth sports, a lack of opportunities for teenagers, concern about the quality of coaches and officials, a shortage of coaches, the cost of opportunities, and the availability of suitable facilities.

TOO MUCH STRESS ON WINNING?

With respect to the question of goals,

the committee found that there was a great deal of emphasis on winning. The goal of winning sometimes comes at the expense of other desirable goals, such as physical fitness for the many, socialization of children, and the enjoyment of sports.

The report urged that supervisors and parents look beyond the simple question of winning and losing teams, and decide what other goals are important for children-athletes. Implicit in this recommendation is the assumption that different communities would place different emphasis on varying goals.

MORE DATA NEEDED

The report also found that more information was needed about such questions as optimal ages for participation in each sport, the physiological and psychological impact of participation in certain sports, and the risks of early specialization in sports.

The committee felt that the emphasis on winning may be related to the perceived lack of opportunities for teenagers who either do not excel or are not interested in excelling. The committee concluded that programs designed to produce outstanding teams and athletes are acceptable as long as communities provide for children not served by these types of programs.

In order for communities and schools to sort out these types of problems, the committee urged the formulation of written goals by the various administering agencies. The existence of these written statements, the committee

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concluded, would mean that those involved in the sports system could critically evaluate all aspects of their programs, using the written statements as a guide.

GOALS: MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION

One goal the committee thought to be universally desirable is maximum participation. Most people agree that there are many and varied benefits to sports, and therefore it is assumed that greater participation by many children in sports at many levels would be a good thing. The committee said that this goal of participation ought to be paramount when setting goals for sports systems.

Perhaps the other single most important recommendation in the report is that some sort of youth sports institute be established. The institute, for which there is no exact model, would serve many functions.

SPORTS INSTITUTE DESCRIBED

The committee envisions the institute as part of an educational institution or as a private, nonprofit agency, but not as a branch of government. The institute would need startup money from government or through a grant, but it is hoped that its continuing operation could be paid for by fees for services provided.

It is thought that such an institute would fit well with the current decentralized, volunteer-oriented system. The institute would not offer overall administration, but would instead supply information and guidance to the

many organizations now in existence which operate the programs.

The institute would draft a model statement of goals and objectives to guide the local organizations. It would gather and disseminate information about the various aspects of sports and it would serve a valuable function in the training of coaches.

The committee also had much to say about the central role of coaches in the athletics system. It identified a shortage of coaches at many levels and a lack of training for most volunteer coaches. These problems could pose serious hazards for the quality of sports, the report said.

It urged more training of all coaches, as well as standards and evaluation of performance of coaches.

Regarding the question of coeducation in sports, the committee said that the 1980 Legislature had made major revisions in equal opportunity policy and the committee questioned the existing "separate but equal" policy.

The committee assumed that there should be equal opportunities for both boys and girls and pointed out the differing options as to how to pursue this goal. The committee found that there is no consensus on the issues, however, and did not make a recommendation on the question.

In addition, the report identified several factors which could in the future injure sports programs:

- **COST.** Costs do not now prevent children from getting involved in

sports, but, in some sports such as hockey, costs do become a deterrent to developing a high school level skill at sports. Moreover, high skill may be a requisite for participation in high school athletic programs. Consequently, the committee urged that those responsible for operating sports programs should try and keep costs down and make sure that at least some low-cost sports be available so that everyone can participate.

- **FACILITIES.** As interest in sports programs grow—especially with more girls involved—some communities will become hard pressed to offer adequate facilities. Facility access and rental policies should be tailored to meeting the needs of all interested groups.
- **GOVERNANCE.** The current, decentralized, volunteer-oriented administration of youth sports has some critics. It is, nonetheless, the best system. More discussion and more parental involvement could make the system better.

A total of 14 CL members actively participated in the work of the committee.

They are: Larry Laukka, chairman; Jim Christianson; Robert J. Connor; Moria L. Cross; Mary Healy; Eldon G. Kaul; Bob Kojetin; Janie S. Mayeron; Mark McGree; Barbara Nelson; Curtis L. Sippel; and William L. Sulzbach.

Copies of the report are available at the League Office.

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CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORT

KEEPING BETTER SCORE OF YOUTH SPORTS

**A report to expand the awareness and discussion of issues, among
volunteers, school officials, and park professionals.**

**Prepared by
Committee on Youth Athletics
Larry Laukka, Chairman**

**Approved by
Citizens League Board of Directors
March 19, 1980**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	iii
II.	MAJOR IDEAS IN OUR REPORT	iv
III.	BACKGROUND	1
	THE ORGANIZATIONS	1
	THE PARTICIPANTS	3
	THE OPPORTUNITIES	4
IV.	MAJOR ISSUES	
	FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	7
	GOALS	7
	OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEENAGERS	9
	EMPHASIS ON WINNING	13
	QUALITY OF COACHING AND OFFICIATING	18
	THE AVAILABILITY OF COACHES	20
	EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS	22
	EXPENSE	25
	FACILITIES	28
	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	30
	GOVERNANCE	32
V.	FOOTNOTES	36
VI.	TABLES AND APPENDIXES	39
VII.	WORK OF THE COMMITTEE	49

INTRODUCTION

This report represents a first attempt at a systematic review of youth sports in the Twin Cities. It is the first study of this subject by the Citizens League and may be the first time anyone has looked generally at what is a very complex, important part of life for many residents of the metropolitan area.

As such, the report is, in large measure, a description of youth sports; of the organizations, the opportunities, the participants, and the issues involved. The report also offers ideas about 10 key issues in youth sports. By providing this information and these ideas the report should be helpful to people most directly involved in the operation of youth sports programs.

At the same time, however, the report should be interesting for people not directly involved in sports; people concerned more about the finance and organization of schools, and people concerned about health care, transportation, or neighborhoods. Late in their work, the members of the Citizens League committee that worked on this report started to recognize the relationships, or potential relation-

ships, between youth sports and these other systems.

Relationships between youth sports and education are perhaps the most obvious, especially during this period of declining enrollments and school consolidation. Also, interesting relationships between youth sports and health care will become clear as the latter starts to include more emphasis on preventive care and physical fitness. Youth sports also demonstrates the effectiveness of neighborhood volunteers. Their talent could have applications in other service areas besides sports. For example, youth sports groups have developed perhaps the most effective car pool system anywhere.

In summary, this is a report primarily about youth sports programs, participants and organizations. The primary goal of its authors is to **expand the discussion of youth sports issues among people directly involved in sports. None-the-less, readers should consider how youth sports relates to other systems in the region.** These relationships may hold ideas for improving youth sports as well as other aspects of life in this community.

MAJOR IDEAS

Much of what we learned about youth sports is very positive.

- Youth sports, at least for children below age 14, is a great example of American voluntarism. In nearly every community in the Twin Cities, people volunteer time, money, effort and experience to provide sports programs. Government has helped, primarily by building facilities, but the creative strength of volunteers is what makes youth sports work.
- Opportunities are available at relatively low cost. Most children can get an introductory exposure to almost any sport for a very low price. Leaders of organizations, coaches, and officials, work long hours for little or no pay. Thousands of families are the beneficiaries.
- Youth sports involves lots of people directly and indirectly. Our estimation of total participation in the Twin Cities (well in excess of 100,000 people) is rough at best. Still, there is no doubt that youth sports is a popular activity here. For every participant there are others who are spectators at the games or who learn about sports through TV, radio, and newspapers.

Still, youth sports has problems, some immediate and some potential.

This report describes ten problem areas. Although it treats each separately, they could be grouped into three issue areas.

- One set of issues concerns the goals and impact of participation in youth sports. We found no central purpose to youth sports in the Twin Cities. Instead, there are many, at times conflicting, goals. Some people are concerned that some goals (physical fitness and fun, for example) are being compromised for others (such as producing outstanding athletes and high school teams). We found a growing concern about the psychological as well as the physiological impact of competing in sports.
- A second set of issues relates to the availability of oppor-

tunities. The major concern for us in this area is whether there are adequate opportunities for teenagers who do not excel at sports, or are not interested in excelling. Dispute also continues over how to provide girls and boys with equal opportunities. Concern is expressed, too, about whether participation in sports is, or will become, too expensive for some children; whether there are, or will be, enough facilities and coaches for everyone who wants to play; and finally, whether communities are providing opportunities in the right kinds of sports.

- Finally, there are issues related to the governance of youth sports. There is dispute about whether current arrangements give adequate representation to children and parents, especially parents of children that do not excel. There is also concern about whether volunteer groups are doing enough to prepare coaches. There is dispute, too, over the proper roles in youth sports for professionals and volunteers.

Action should be taken to address these concerns and problems.

- We share the concern others have expressed about the goals for youth sports. Specifically, we are not sure that the goal of winning should be emphasized as much as it is today. It seems to us that winning is the primary goal in many programs, although it often is unspoken. There is a growing concern about the impact the emphasis on winning has on individuals and on youth sports generally.

People involved in youth sports, both in schools and community groups, need to think hard about what their goals are, to write these goals down, and make sure their programs are operated in a manner that is consistent with their goals. Most importantly, we think more attention needs to be given to a goal of maximizing opportunities to participate in sports.

- With respect to the availability of opportunities, it seems to us that the youth sports system is not doing a very good job for teenagers that do not make a high school team or are not interested in playing for their school. The as-

. IN OUR REPORT

sumption made by many adults seems to be that, by the time children reach age 14, many lose interest in sports. This may in fact be true, but it may also be true that they lose interest because there are few attractive opportunities for those that do not make their high school varsity team.

We think schools and community groups should test the demand among teenagers for more participation in sports. Our report explains how this should be done, and offers suggestions about how more opportunities could be provided on a continuing basis, should the new demand exist.

- While there are weaknesses to the decentralized, largely volunteer governance of youth sports, this system should be retained. Government would never be able to provide programs as cheaply or effectively as volunteers do today. Still, improvements are needed. They should come partly from getting more people involved in the operation of youth sports programs. This would improve communication between parents and the leaders of organizations. More coaches' training programs are needed both as a way to improve the performance of coaches and to bring volunteers into the system who may have been reluctant to coach because of a preceived lack of knowledge or experience.

What the youth sports community needs most now are more facts and expanded discussion of the issues.

Today, many of the disputes, concerns and questions about youth sports are not, or cannot be, settled on the basis of facts available to the general public. Little is known, for example, about the impact (psychological or physical) of pursuing one or another goal, or choosing one sport over another. Similarly, the definition of an adequate opportunity is for many, a matter of opinion. There are few facts, for example, about how many times children should participate, or what type of experience they should have to benefit from sports.

A large part of the youth sports system is, and will continue to be, operated by volunteers. We think this is good. We

think volunteers can continue to solve many of the problems they face. Still, the capacity of this decentralized, volunteer system to address certain programs is limited. Some problems are very complex. Finding answers to some requires a perspective that few people involved in the daily operations of a system have. Time limitations further reduce the range of issues volunteers can address.

Volunteers, and all people involved in youth sports, would be helped if there were broader public discussion of the issues, and if there were more facts available to the general public. The media has a role to play in generating this discussion, but we think the region needs some kind of central clearinghouse of information . . . or information bank . . . to enhance this discussion.

- Youth sports in the Twin Cities would be improved if an organization were established to generate broader discussion of the issues and gather more facts.

For lack of a better name, we would call this clearinghouse a **youth sports institute**. We do not envision a government department of youth sports. Nor should a centralized organization be established with authority to control volunteers. Rather, the institute would serve primarily as an information and service agency for youth sports organizations. It might be established as a private, non-profit agency. Alternatively, it might be located within an educational setting. Public grants or private contributions would probably be needed to start the operation. Eventually, the operating budget could be funded, at least partly, through fees paid to the institute for services it provides.

The purpose of the institute would be to gather and dispense information about youth sports including things such as the psychological and physiological aspects of competing in sports, and about operating programs. It should also develop model coaches' training programs, and draft a model statement of goals and objectives. In addition, the center could conduct research projects on various aspects of youth sports. In any case it would serve as the vehicle for expanding informed discussion of many of the issues addressed in this report.

BACKGROUND

THE ORGANIZATIONS

Today, youth sports opportunities in the metropolitan area are provided through a highly diverse, decentralized delivery system.

One of the first things to understand about youth sports in the Twin Cities is that there is no single organization or agency, public or private, that sets policy, raises money, hires coaches, registers players, or does any of the other things necessary to give children a chance to play sports. Instead, opportunities are provided separately by many different kinds of organizations.

Some organizations are set up as private non-profit corporations and run almost totally by adult volunteers. They generally adopt the name of the community they serve and call themselves an "Athletic Association" or "Council." Examples include, the Bloomington Athletic Association, The Burnsville Athletic Council, The Southwest Activities Council.

Quasi-public organizations, like the YMCA and YWCA also provide opportunities. The Y instructors are generally professionals. Private commercial businesses, such as the Midwest Tennis Center, which may originally have catered primarily to adults, now also provide programs for youth. Churches were among the first groups to get involved in providing sports for kids.

The government is involved in youth sports too. Some municipal general purpose governments run programs similar to those of the adult volunteer groups. Local school districts are involved in a big way, especially with programs for high school students.

There is no uniform "delivery system" that applies to every community. Each takes on its own particular mix of organizations, depending upon such things as the attitudes, goals, financial resources, and leisure time of the residents in the area.

Historically, the delivery of youth sports has shifted toward non-school organizations, away from schools.¹

The first competitive sport leagues in America for young children were organized by public schools, around 1900. Schools had historically provided competitive programs for college and high school aged children and came under increasing pressure around the turn of the century to duplicate these programs for children in the elementary age levels.

Elementary school competitive athletics grew until about 1930. Starting at that time school officials began to change their attitudes about the advisability of competitive sports for children below age 12. Professional educators were becoming convinced that competitive programs had dangerous implications in terms of the physical and emotional development of children and schools gradually started dropping their sport programs.

By the 1930s, however, the public was convinced that participation in sports had great benefits for children. Sports was seen as a vehicle through which children could learn citizenship, leadership, discipline, cooperation, fair play, and develop character.

These years were marked by a growing interest in child welfare. Child labor laws had been passed. Organizations like the YMCA and Boys Clubs of America found support for their effort to serve youngsters. When schools dropped sports programs parents turned to these non-school agencies to form teams.

It is important to point out that most of the enthusiasm for sports was directed at young boys. Girls programs were not developed on a widespread basis prior to the 1960s.

During the '40s school officials and park and recreation professionals continued to speak out against the emphasis placed on competition in sports programs run by volunteer groups. College courses in the recreation field taught students that these programs were to be avoided wherever possible. As a result some community programs were dropped.

In general, however, the efforts of professionals had little real impact. During the '50s and '60s parents became more involved than ever in youth sports. Some historians attribute this development to the increased awareness of athle-

tics as a viable professional endeavor. Some people suggest that it was due to the growing awareness of the importance of physical fitness. During these years the President's Council on Physical Fitness was established.

In any case volunteer operated youth sports organizations continued to flourish through the 1970s. Schools have retained programs in many sports for teenagers, but some people suggest this was due to the competitive nature of high school programs. Parents wanted competitive sports programs for their children. When elementary schools did not provide them the parents did it themselves.

Today there are two basic types of adult volunteer organizations, and a community may be served by one or both types.

One type, which we call a "general purpose group," provides opportunities in several sports. The Bloomington Athletic Association, for example, provides six sports for boys and five for girls. The second type, a "special purpose group," provides opportunities in one sport. Good examples of this type of organization are the several swimming clubs and hockey associations in the Twin Cities.

In many communities general purpose and special purpose groups operate side-by-side, providing programs in different sports for different age groups. In some communities several special purpose organizations have been formed, each around a particular sport, and no general purpose group exists.

Many local volunteer associations affiliate with state and national associations.

Examples of state associations include, The Minnesota Amateur Hockey Association, Minnesota Amateur Athletic Union, American Legion Baseball, and the Minnesota Junior Soccer Association. National associations include: The Amateur Hockey Association of the United States, The United States Soccer Federation, and the United States Gymnastics Federation. The Minnesota Recreation and Park Association serves as a state association for local park organizations.

These state and national associations establish standardized playing and eligibility rules for local associations. Affiliated local groups can participate in the district, regional, state, or national tournaments that state and national associations sponsor. Local associations also pay registration fees to these state and national associations to receive rule books, coaching manuals, model by-laws, and other

materials related to operating youth sport programs.

Government continues to provide youth sports programs, either through the municipal general purpose government, the school board, or both.

The nature of the general purpose government involvement varies from one community to the next. In some communities, particularly in the suburbs, the municipal park department merely provides administrative assistance to adult volunteer groups. This can involve printing schedules, brochures, and providing registration materials.

In other communities the municipal government gets directly involved in running the programs. Public employees register players, coaches and officiate games. A combination of these two arrangements exists in still other communities. In Minneapolis, for example, the Park and Recreation Board has a professional staff that helps volunteers decide how programs will operate, but the volunteers do most of the actual coaching and other operational tasks in most neighborhoods.

School boards are involved in youth sports primarily to provide opportunities for children in junior and senior high schools. Local schools have formed a statewide organization, called the Minnesota State High School League, (MSHSL), which runs tournaments for the schools, and sets standard eligibility rules for interscholastic play.

In some communities school boards also help adult volunteer groups provide competitive programs for children below high school age. In these cases the school board plays the administrative role described above in reference to some municipal park departments. The main distinction between the two areas of school board involvement is that junior and senior high school athletic programs are delivered by professionals almost entirely, whereas programs for younger children are delivered by volunteers.

The involvement of school boards with volunteer sports programs has grown in recent years due to the development of the "community education" concept. The goal of this program was to encourage the public to use school buildings during evenings and weekends when most buildings had been sitting idle.

The state assists school districts with the expenses associated with this "extra use." School districts are allowed to levy \$2.50/capita today for this program. The state will reimburse those who do so in an amount equal to 75 cents/capita. The program is funded through the state general fund and with federal funds.

Government serves as the primary provider of facilities for youth sports.

Few if any volunteer organizations own athletic facilities. Instead they use facilities owned by schools or municipal governments. Outdoor facilities are usually available free of charge to volunteer groups. In some communities indoor facilities are also available without charge. In other communities a rental fee is assessed.

The way decisions get made about youth sports programs is a concern for many people today. Volunteer organizations, whether general or special purpose, govern themselves—at least in theory—through a Board of Directors drawn from their adult members.

The Board of Directors of a general purpose organization generally includes a president, vice president, and one commissioner for each sport that the organization provides. The Board of special purpose volunteer groups also usually includes positions for a president, vice president, and commissioner of the sport provided.

The members of the Board generally split up the administrative duties necessary to operate the youth sports programs. A board member might be given responsibility in one of the following areas for example, fund raising, publicity, finding and training coaches, issuing and collecting equipment, scheduling facilities, or registering participants.

Board members are also responsible for making policy decisions about the programs. They have to decide, for example, how many games to schedule, how to divide children up into teams (according to age, grade, ability, or weight, for example), which participation fees to charge individual participants, what sports to offer and which ones not to offer. Finally they must decide how to deal with laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex in youth sports.

High school sports are governed by school board members and professional educators. Some decisions are made locally by school boards. Some are made through a centralized state body called the Minnesota State High School League.

Local school boards have the authority to make nearly all decisions about how to run their competitive athletic programs and their intramural programs. They decide which sports to sponsor, what expenditures to make, and who the coaches will be (although the State Board of Teaching stipulates certain licensure requirements for coaches). School

boards also make decisions about whether to offer an intramural program and what it will look like.

Local school boards are empowered by statute to delegate the supervision and regulation of competitive interscholastic athletics and other activity contests (band, speech, music, drama, and debate) to the MSHSL. Nearly all schools in the state have done so.

The MSHSL performs two main functions for the schools; an administrative one—running state tournaments in certain sports; and a legislative function—making rules for eligibility and conduct which apply to schools competing for state championships.

Within the MSHSL, official policy-making responsibility rests with a body called the Representative Assembly. The Assembly includes 90 members who are representatives of member schools. The representatives must be school board members or school administrators (usually a superintendent or faculty member). The general public is not allowed to sit on the Assembly. Instead they are represented by the school officials.

In addition to the Representative Assembly the High School League has a 15 member Board of Directors. The main duty of the Board is to organize and operate state tournaments. In addition, the Board meets monthly to consider rule changes and make rule interpretations. The Board of Directors does not have authority to make rule changes without approval of the Representative Assembly, which meets twice each year.

The League has an annual budget of approximately \$1.5 million, which is financed almost totally by gate receipts from state tournaments in hockey, and boys and girls basketball. Soccer, wrestling and football tournaments contribute some revenue also. Approximately \$77,000 comes to the League through dues paid by member schools (\$75/year + \$5 for each activity).² (See Chart 1.)

THE PARTICIPANTS

Estimates of total participation in youth sports vary considerably.

According to one source less than 10% of this country's students participate in athletics.³ In contrast, some local park and recreation officials estimate that as high as 50% of all kids in school participate in sports. One elementary school teacher from Plymouth, Minnesota reported that she could not think of one student in her class who did not participate in after school sports.⁴

It is difficult to determine just exactly what percentage of the region's school enrollment participates in organized sports. This is due mostly to the fact that neither the schools nor the volunteer groups record the number of children who play more than one sport. Simply combining the number of participants in each sport, as reported by the organizations, would overstate total participation due to double or triple counting of some children. (The High School League's estimate of participation by sport, which reflects this duplication, is included as Appendix 1.)

In order to avoid this duplication we looked at single seasons and did not try to figure out how many children might participate in more than one season. By this method we estimated that approximately 82,000 children (22% of the K-12 enrollment in the metropolitan area) ⁵ played sports during the summer of 1979. This estimate is probably low, for it includes only the children playing soccer, baseball, softball, swimming, and wrestling in organized leagues. There are bound to be hundreds more playing golf or tennis or participating in other sports on an informal basis.

If we assume that 82,000 is anywhere near an accurate estimate, it is probable that at least another 50,000 adults were involved in sports this summer too. They were the drivers who got the children to the games and practices; and the spectators who cheered the kids on and supplied sodas after the game. In any case, then, participation in youth sports this same summer involved close to 140,000 people.

We tried to estimate the percentage of high school students participating in school sports by looking just at the fall sports season. There are about 97,000 students in grades 10-12 in the 82 high schools in the metropolitan

area. ⁶ A recent study of school sports, conducted by the High School League, indicated that the median number of students participating in fall sports at each school was about 250. ⁷ Therefore, the total fall participation in all metro area schools was somewhere close to 20,000, or about 21% of total senior high enrollment. (The League of Women Voters of Minnesota estimated a similar fall sports participation level in their recent study of opportunities for girls in athletics.) ⁸

Undoubtedly, many more students who do not compete in the fall join teams in winter or spring sports, which would suggest that our estimate of participation is probably low.

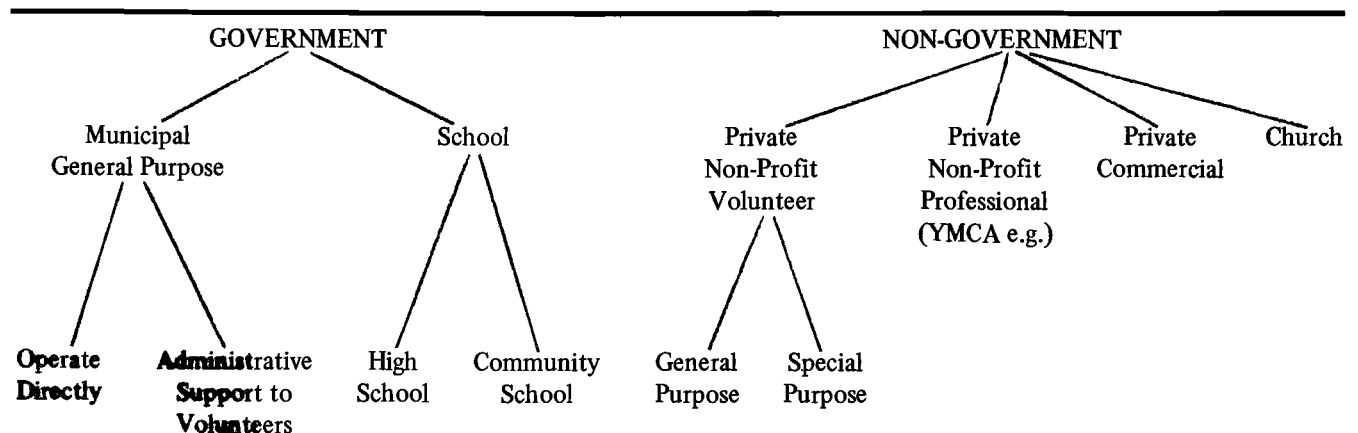
In any case, players and coaches amount to the tip of the iceberg in terms of the total number of people affected by youth sports. Newspapers and radios forecast the seasons for us, give the play-by-play of many games, and parade the champions to everyone in the community. Businesses exist in many communities to supply equipment, rule books, and trophies to the athletes and organizers of playground and school sports. Indeed, it is hard to think of how anyone could escape some form of contact with youth athletics.

THE OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities are available in many sports, both through community groups and high schools.

General purpose volunteer groups commonly provide five sports for boys: hockey, soccer, baseball, basketball, and football. The same groups generally provide three sports for girls: softball, soccer, and volleyball or basketball.

CHART 1
DELIVER SYSTEM FOR YOUTH SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES



Single purpose organizations are the providers of wrestling, swimming and gymnastics. There are approximately 40 swim clubs and 23 wrestling clubs in the metropolitan area. These clubs serve about 4,400 swimmers and 4,000 wrestlers respectively.

The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) supervises interscholastic competition in 14 sports. (See Chart 2.)

Football, hockey, soccer and wrestling are sports that are open to boys and girls. For all practical purposes, however, these are boys sports. They have been and continue to be dominated by boys.

Local schools can offer any or all of these sports—or any others that are not supervised by the MSHSL. The policy regarding which sports to offer varies somewhat from one school to the next. Appendixes 2 and 3 indicates the number of schools that provide various sports in the state and the metropolitan area.

In recent years the biggest growth in programs has occurred in girls sports. Since 1970 state tournaments have been started for girls in volleyball, tennis, skiing, gymnastics, golf, cross country running, basketball, and swimming. (Tournaments for swimming were operated between 1924 and 1942). Appendix 4 indicates the growth in the number of schools in the state providing these girls sports.

There are some cases where a school decides it cannot offer a sport, either due to lack of participants or to expense. As a result of a rule change made recently by the MSHSL starting in the 1980-1981 school year, two schools will have the authority to jointly sponsor teams in a sport that neither could sponsor independently. So far, the MSHSL has received applications involving 96 schools for such joint sponsorship. Most applications have come from rural parts of the state, although 14 metropolitan schools are also planning joint sponsorship.

Community groups and schools generally favor team sports over individual sports. There is disagreement about whether this is good or bad.

We did not devote much attention to this subject but were able to clarify opposing positions. Several people expressed

concern about the tendency of youth sports groups and schools to provide team sports instead of individual sports. People feel that organizations and schools should be providing individual sports like golf, archery, tennis, and bowling. After all, they suggest, these are sports children will most likely continue to play as adults; not football, hockey, or basketball.

Others disagree. They contend that people will have plenty of time as adults to learn individual sports. Volunteer groups and schools should sponsor team sports because it is only during their younger years that people can play these sports.

There also is dispute over which environment—team or individual sports—is better for learning leadership, cooperation, discipline and other values attributed to sports generally.

This issue may take on added significance if the expense of participating in sports limits opportunities for many children. Some people suggest that individual sports would be less expensive for schools on a per participant basis, than some team sports.

CHART 2
INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS SUPERVISED BY THE
MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

GIRLS	BOYS
Basketball	Baseball
Cross Country	Basketball
Golf	Cross Country
Gymnastics	Football
Skiing-Slalom	Golf
-Cross Country	Gymnastics
Softball	Hockey
Swimming	Skiing-Slalom
Tennis	-Cross Country
Track and Field	Soccer
Volleyball	Swimming
	Tennis
	Track and Field
	Wrestling

MAJOR ISSUES FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GOALS

FINDINGS: There is no one goal for people involved in youth sports today. People want many different things out of youth sports.

There are goals for communities; for example, championship teams, school spirit, community identity, and widespread participation. There are goals for individuals; for example, athletic success, college scholarships, athletic skill, physical fitness, learning discipline leadership, and having fun.

None of these objectives are considered *the* major goal for youth sports in the Twin Cities. No such goal exists.

The goals most often referred to by people involved in youth sports are having fun and socializing children.

People involved in programs for children below high school generally say their goal is "to help kids have fun." Goals such as winning championships, developing skilled athletes, promoting participation, or teaching discipline are seen as means to the primary goal of having fun.

People involved with high school sports put more emphasis on winning as a goal. High school sports are not primarily for fun. Nonetheless, striving to win is seen by most as a means to the end of teaching students discipline, leadership, and cooperation. The primary justification for school sports is this educational function.

Developing physical fitness does not seem to be the primary goal in youth sports. The youth sports organizations we learned about provide opportunities for competition in sports. They try to teach children the skills of sports and how to compete successfully. They are not in business primarily to improve the physical fitness of children.

Physical fitness, as a goal in itself, is promoted through Physical Education classes in schools. The state Department of Education has set minimum standards for public elementary and secondary schools for this instruction.

Volunteer sports groups generally seem to assume that physical fitness is, and ought to be, the responsibility of schools.

Some people think that some unstated goals, namely winning, being Number One, and producing outstanding athletes have become the primary objectives in youth sports today.

In recent years concern has developed over whether there is too much emphasis on winning as a goal in youth sports. When asked about their goal, coaches and program organizers say the primary goal is to "help kids have fun or socialize children." Some people suspect, however, that winning has become the real objective for many programs.

Our report includes a separate section on this concern about the emphasis on winning. In summary, dispute exists over the age at which children start competing in sports, the amount of time they put into sports, the trophies and the press attention associated with youth sports. Some people think conditions in these areas today indicate an over emphasis on winning. Others disagree. They think most children enjoy the competition they find in youth sports, and that it is good for children to strive to win.

These and other disagreements about goals are due partly to the fact that many organizations do not have clearly defined goals, written down and available for public review. Generally, there is no formal process for setting goals in youth sports. To the extent that goals exist, they are set by individuals and families. Some parents and coaches probably exercise more influence than other parents or children over what goals will be pursued. In most communities there is no board discussion of goals or strategies to achieve them.

These disagreements are also due to the general lack of information available about the impact of participation in sports. Only recently have the psychological and physiological impacts of sports become subjects of scientific research. Little knowledge on these subjects is available to the general public. Consequently, decisions about what goals to pursue and how to pursue them are made based primarily upon opinion and past experience.

CONCLUSION: There is dispute about what the goals for youth sports are and ought to be.

RECOMMENDATION 1: We think youth sports groups and schools should have written goals and objectives that can be made available to parents, children, and other interested people.

The operation of youth sports would be improved if goals and objectives were clearly stated so that everyone interested could review them. Such goals would give people in the same organization a common purpose. It would also allow people to evaluate organizations in terms of goals.

RECOMMENDATION 2: We think the primary goal for youth sports in the Twin Cities should be to maximize opportunities for participation.

We think participation in youth sports can be good for children, of all ages and abilities. Although there is considerable debate over the impact of participation in sports, it is clear that there can be benefits in terms of physical fitness. We think all children should have an opportunity to experience these benefits.

At the same time, there may be many other benefits, such as learning leadership, discipline, and having fun. We think all children should have a chance to enjoy these experiences as well.

We would not want to deny people the opportunity to pursue other goals, such as college scholarships, or developing a high level of skill in sports. These are valuable goals for some people. Nonetheless, we think the primary goal for the region should be to maximize the number of opportunities for participation in sports for children at all ability levels.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Once goals are established youth sports groups should evaluate whether the operation of their programs is consistent with their stated objectives.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The youth sports institute should gather information about the impact of participation in sports, and thereby assist youth sports groups and schools in selecting goals and objectives. (Created pursuant to Recommendation number 2 on page 17.)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR TEENAGERS

FINDINGS: There is growing concern about whether there are (or will be) adequate opportunities for teenagers who do not excel at sports, or who are not interested in developing a high level of skill.

High school interscholastic sports are structured in a way that favors children who excel.

Participation in high school interscholastic sports is based upon ability. The most skilled students are selected for a varsity team that represents the school in competition against teams from other schools. If a school has too many players tryout for the varsity team a coach may "cut" the less skilled players and—if enough students remain—form a second team called a Junior Varsity or B-Squad.

Historically, intramural programs existed in which participation was open to all students regardless of their ability. A primary function of the intramural program was to provide athletic opportunities for children who either were not interested in or unable to make the commitment associated with interscholastic athletics.

As the number of interscholastic teams has grown, some schools have dropped intramural programs.

In recent years there has been substantial growth in the interscholastic athletic programs at many high schools. This is due primarily to the addition of interscholastic teams for girls. Generally speaking, in the last several years high schools have been trying to duplicate for girls the athletic program that has existed for many years for boys. This has occurred partly in response to growing interest in athletics among girls and to the passage of state and federal laws regarding equal opportunities in education for boys and girls.

As the number of interscholastic teams have grown, some schools have dropped their intramural programs. We talked with officials from 17 high schools. Twelve reported having no intramural programs. The others described very limited programs.⁹

High school officials we talked with offered several reasons for the lack of intramural programs. Some suggested that student demand does not exist for intramurals today. More students are working after school jobs than ever before, they said. A lack of facilities is also a primary reason for the absence of the intramural programs. Some

officials reported that facilities are used to capacity by interscholastic teams.

Other reasons for decline in intramurals include a lack of funds, staff limitations, and school busing policies.

General purpose volunteer groups have not generally provided programs for high school students, although this practice is changing in some communities.

Several reasons are offered to explain this situation. First, most volunteer groups see their role as that of providing programs for children in elementary or junior high school. The assumption generally made is that opportunities for high school children are and should be provided by the high schools.

Others have suggested that adults simply are not as interested in or as willing to volunteer to run programs for teenagers as they are to run programs for younger children. Some say teenagers are "more difficult to handle," and are not as "cute" to watch. There is also the contention that, by the time a child reaches grade 9, parents and children can just about predict which children will make the high school varsity team. Some people suggest that parents lose interest if it appears their child will not "make-it" on the high school team.

Some general purpose organizations have started to provide programs for teenagers during the school year. No assessment of ability is involved in forming teams. Children simply sign up, divide themselves into teams, and play. We learned, however, of one case where high school officials discouraged a volunteer group from forming a program that would compete for participants with the school program.

Special purpose organizations that provide individual sports have generally been able to accommodate children with different interests or ability levels. In swimming and gymnastics for example, participants are divided according to age and ability, but can still compete for the same clubs and in the same meets.

The general pattern, however, seems to be that volunteer groups serve children under age 14 or grade 9, primarily. Chart 3, page 12 indicates, for some of the communities we talked with, the number of sports available to children of different age groups.

In contrast, youth sports for children below high school is structured in a way that promotes maximum participation.

Participation in sports programs for children below high

school age is not based solely upon ability. Most children who participate in volunteer and park department programs play in what are called "house leagues." Teams in these leagues are made up of children who live in the same community. The teams are formed sometimes by dividing children at random. Sometimes attempts are made to keep the teams evenly matched in terms of ability.

The same organizations might also sponsor an "all-star" or "traveling" team for a small number of outstanding players. In these teams participation is based on ability. These teams play against similar teams from neighboring communities. Children on the traveling teams play more games, practice more often and are required to make a higher level of commitment than children on the house teams.

In some ways, house leagues might be thought of as the counterpart to high school intramural programs. Traveling teams might be thought of as the counterpart to high school varsity teams.

What this means is that participation in some sports might take on a pyramidal pattern; a broad base of participation exists made up of children below high school age. Participation declines as children who participated as youngsters drop out of sports as they become teenagers.

Appendix 5 indicates how this pyramid is working in some communities.

There are many explanations offered for the decline in the percent of school enrollment participating in these sports. Some children may have moved into other sports. Some children may have dropped out of sports by choice, either to pursue other leisure interests or to take after school jobs.

The number of children who are working is, in fact, quite large. According to the state demographers research, in 1977, 69.2% of the males in Minnesota between the ages of 16 and 19 were in the work force. A slightly smaller percentage of females (66.8%) were in the work force. The numbers increased between 1970 and 1977. In 1970, 53.8% of the males and 48.8% of the females in the 16 to 19 age group were in the work force. This trend may continue, as the birth rate slows if a shortage develops in the teenage labor pool.

Some people have concluded that most high school students who want to participate in sports can do so through their school interscholastic programs. They point out that many schools still provide more than one team, both for boys and girls, in many sports. Participation is, therefore, not limited to only those who can make the varsity

team. The conclusion is that there is neither much need or demand for intramurals.

In contrast, other people we talked with said that one of the most glaring shortcomings of youth sports is the failure to provide opportunities for high school students who cannot make a high school team or who are not interested in playing for the high school. They felt that the demand does exist among teenagers for more athletic opportunities.

Interest in participating in sports seems to be growing among college students, and among adults. The recreational sports program at the University of Minnesota, for example, has expanded rapidly in recent years, despite a relatively modest increase in enrollment. Adult leagues are growing in many communities too. Some people think the same demand for participation would be present among teenagers, if opportunities were available to accommodate those who do not play for their high school.¹⁰

In the future, schools may have difficulty maintaining their athletic programs. This could further limit opportunities for teenagers.

School enrollments are declining. As a result, school budgets may be constrained and school officials may have to make choices about maintaining their athletic programs. Some schools may choose to reduce their athletic program by cutting back all sports equally (reducing staff, or reducing second and third teams). Some schools may decide to cut entire sports out of their program. A third strategy would involve charging students fees for the use of athletic equipment owned by the school.

In some cases, schools will be combined. Some schools will be closed. These actions could reduce the number of athletic opportunities available.

In any case, if the interest in participating in athletics grows during this time of declining enrollments, schools may have difficulty serving all interested students. If volunteer groups do not fill in for the schools some children may be forced to drop out of sports because programs are not available.

CONCLUSIONS: Teenagers should not be left out of sports now, or in the future, simply because they do not want to play for their school team or do not have the ability to make a school team.

If participation in sports is as beneficial as most people claim, then opportunities should exist for all children to play, including teenagers who do not play for a high school

team. Learning leadership, cooperation, and discipline; having fun and success; developing skill, and an interest in sports that will lead to lifelong activity—these are all valuable ends. Communities should not stop promoting these for children who have reached age 15, who cannot make a school team, or who are not interested in playing on their school team.

Yet today, many communities may be doing just this. Many volunteer groups ignore teenagers. Similarly, high schools do little to promote intramurals. All attention seems focused on the interscholastic teams, and particularly on the high school varsity. As a result, large numbers of potential participants may not be served.

We think that programs designed to produce outstanding athletes and teams are acceptable, as long as communities provide opportunities for children not served by this type of program. Communities should strive to maximize participation in youth sports. They should not be in the youth sports business only to develop outstanding high school teams. As one committee member said, "All roads should not lead to the high school varsity."

RECOMMENDATION: Schools and community groups should *test* the demand among teenagers for more athletic opportunities.

The way to test the demand is to establish and promote attractive, new programs. With respect to schools, establishing new programs would probably mean altering existing interscholastic programs, at least in terms of access to facilities. An attractive program is one that is offered during prime time hours, and today, interscholastic programs are using facilities during these hours. We think intramural programs should have priority access. We doubt this would hurt interscholastic programs. Students involved in these programs would undoubtedly be willing to make the sacrifices necessary to practice during early morning or evening hours.

Non-school organizations should also establish programs for teenagers, where none exist today. Volunteer groups have done an outstanding job in many cases for children under age 15. We see no reason why, in most sports, volunteers could not do the same kind of job for teenagers. Some people will probably argue that it will be difficult to find parents to supervise programs for teenagers. This should not be an excuse for failing to provide opportunities. We think that teenagers, given a little assistance with administrative matters, could run their own programs.

Also, schools and community groups should not assume that the new programs should be in sports now included in

interscholastic programs. Students may, in fact, be interested in other sports like broomball, curling, or rollerskating. Students should be consulted for their ideas. Some creative thinking may be necessary, beyond priority treatment, to encourage more students to participate in sports.

This action is necessary because we are not sure what the demand is for more opportunities. Communities may find that large numbers of teenagers have, in fact, decided to work instead of play sports. This choice ought to be available. But, we are not convinced that this is the case today.

We have not heard of any attempts to accurately determine the demand for opportunities. The lack of programs seems due to an assumption that interest is lacking. We do not accept this assumption. We would rather assume that interest exists which is waiting to express itself. The new programs we recommend should promote this expression, and may, at the same time, create new demand.

DISCUSSION: If the demand for more programs exists, how should they be provided in the long run?

We are not sure, and we are not prepared to make a recommendation on this issue now. We did, however, consider four possible arrangements.

First, schools and community groups both could provide intramural programs for teenagers. We think this should be done to test the demand for more opportunities, and it is conceivable this arrangement could be continued indefinitely.

Secondly, schools could be required to provide intramural and interscholastic programs, instead of only interscholastic programs. It might not be necessary for volunteer and community groups to change their programs. This alternative might be unrealistic. For as enrollment declines and finances become constrained, schools may have difficulty providing both types of programs. A larger role for volunteers may be necessary.

Third, volunteer and community groups could be relied upon to provide opportunities for the teenagers who do not make a school team or are not interested in playing for their school. Schools could simply continue providing the highly competitive, interscholastic program they provide today.

A fourth alternative, would involve relying upon volunteer community groups to provide the highly competitive program for teenagers and relying upon schools to provide an intramural program. This would amount to a gradual

shift of competitive sports away from schools, into the community.

By following this fourth strategy communities could capitalize on the enthusiasm of volunteers for highly competitive programs. At the same time, by relying upon schools to provide intramural programs only, communities could

spread available tax dollars over a larger number of students than can be served in an interscholastic program.

Whatever strategy is chosen we think the primary objective with respect to sports for teenagers should be to provide opportunities for as many children as possible, including those who want to excel as well as those who just want to play for fun.

CHART 3
PROGRAM CHOICES FOR YOUTH ATHLETES

PROGRAM CHOICE*	COMMUNITY								
Number of Sports for Children Below Age 14 /14-18 Years Old	Cottage Grove	Edina	Lakeville	Eden Prairie	Stillwater	Moundsview/Shoreview	Brooklyn Center	Bloomington	Burnsville
Team sports for Boys	5 / 2	5 / 4	5 / -	5 / -	5 / 1	5 / 3	5 / -	6 / 2	5 / 3
Team sports for Girls	2 / 2	6 / 5	3 / -	3 / -	2 / 1	3 / 2	4 / -	5 / 1	4 / 3
Individual sports for Boys	2 / 2	3 / 3	2 / -	2 / 1	4 / -	3 / ?	1 / 1	1 / -	- / -
Individual sports for Girls	2 / 2	5 / 5	- / -	2 / 2	- / -	2 / 2	1 / 1	1 / 1	- / -
Sports with traveling teams for Boys	2 / 2	3 / ?	2 / -	2 / -	1 / 1	4 / 3	2 / 1	3 / 1	2-3 / 1
Sports with traveling teams for Girls	- / 1	1 / 1	- / -	- / -	- / -	1 / -	1 / ?	- / -	? / ?

* Team sports includes baseball, basketball, football, hockey, soccer, softball, volleyball. Individual sports include archery, bowling, golf, gymnastics, swimming, tennis, wrestling.

This chart was compiled based upon telephone conversations with representatives of volunteer sports groups and park departments in the communities noted. (Swimming organizations were not included in the survey.) The survey does not include other organizations, such as the YMCA, or YWCA which might also provide opportunities.

EMPHASIS ON WINNING

FINDINGS: There is concern today about the psychological and physical impact of striving to win in competitive youth sports.

A number of factors are discussed when people talk about whether there is too much emphasis on winning in youth sports today. There is disagreement, for example, over the way trophies are awarded to children, and the number and size of the trophies. Also, there is debate over the style and the significance of the widespread press coverage of some youth sport leagues.

Two factors, however, seem to be of greatest concern: (1) the age at which children start competing, and (2) the amount of time children put into sports.

In recent years there has been a trend toward starting children in organized sports programs at younger ages every year. Similarly, today it seems that the seasons get longer every year, and some children are also specializing in one or two sports instead of playing several sports.

This trend may be due to the emphasis in society generally during recent years, on specialization and excellence. In youth sports this has translated into an emphasis on producing championship teams and developing highly skilled athletes.

Some people are very concerned about the implications for young athletes. Specifically, they feel that the physical and emotional strain associated with starting sports at early ages and playing sports year round can lead to the development of distorted values and to physical injury.

Other people are less concerned. They feel that most children enjoy the competition they find in youth sports and that few are ever injured.

In any case, parents and volunteer coaches are the focus of this dispute. Some people suggest that these adults are responsible for pushing children into sports at early ages and putting undue pressure on youngsters to excel. Others admit that there are a few overzealous coaches and parents in every league, but they contend that most adults are in control of their emotions and do an adequate job supervising children.

Opportunities are available for children to start at early ages and to compete all year round.

Today, children in the Twin Cities can start competing in organized sports at about the time they start school, age five or six. The age at which children actually enroll in sports programs varies somewhat depending upon the sport and the adults involved. In one community, for example, children can start football in grade 5. In contrast, basketball starts in grade 3. Swimming is offered for children in kindergarden. These same sports may be offered to children beginning at other ages in a different community.¹¹

It is possible for some children to participate in sports the year round, either in one sport or by dividing their time between several sports. Most private gymnastics clubs operate 45-50 weeks a year. It is not necessary, however, for all members of a club to participate during the entire year. Only the top performers in each club do so.

Competitive swimmers and wrestlers can also compete year round if they participate in the season sponsored by both the Minnesota State High School League and the one sponsored by the Amateur Athletic Union. Each of the general purpose youth organizations we surveyed provide some sport during every season of the year also.

There is no scientific evidence to tell us precisely the optimal age for children to begin competing in organized sports programs.

According to Dr. Rainer Martens, sport psychologist at the University of Illinois, it makes little sense for parents to expect children to compete against one another until the age of six years. It is not until this time that children develop the motive to compare their skills with those of other children.

The appropriate age to begin participation depends in part upon the sport. Martens suggests that children can start non-contact sports such as tennis, golf and swimming at age six, but that children should wait until age eight to begin contact sports like baseball, basketball, and soccer. Children should wait longer (until age 10 according to Martens) to begin collision sports like hockey and football.¹²

The appropriate time to begin depends also upon the physical maturity of the child, and chronological age is not always the best index of physical maturation. In some cases children of the same chronological age can vary by as much as five years in terms of their physical maturation.¹³

As a result children should be delayed from entering sports if they are maturing physically at a substantially slower rate than their peers. It is also advisable for some children to start sports earlier when they are biologically advanced.

The New York State Public School System is experimenting now with a school athletics policy of matching children according to physical maturity, skill, physical fitness, and prior sports experience. These factors could presumably, replace the traditional factors of age and grade that have been used to determine eligibility for school sports. Some people see this development as an example of favoring children who excel at sports, by giving younger children the right to compete with older children. Others see benefits in this policy in terms of preventing injuries among school athletes that result from competition between children of different size or weight.¹⁴

A successful experience at any time depends in part upon the attitudes of the adults who influence the sports environment.

Mike Cavill, a swimming coach for the Madison, Wisconsin A and W Aquatic Club, contends that if the emphasis is on training rather than success, it doesn't matter whether training starts at age eight or age 12. "On the other hand, athletes who begin their training and competition at a later age are generally more enthusiastic and eager to accept the challenge of improvement."¹⁵

Vern Seefeldt, director of the Youth Sports Institute at the University of Michigan, writes that it is important for coaches and parents to be acquainted with the growth characteristics of the age group with which they are working, so that a realistic outlook on the performance capabilities and limitations which age, maturational level, and body structure are likely to impose.¹⁶

He also noted that the coach of the young athlete should realize that individuals differ markedly in their ability to cope with stressful situations; some respond with poise and emotional balance, others with diminished judgment and skill.

There is little scientific evidence about the consequences of making a year round or similarly extensive commitment to one or more sports.

Opinions vary widely on this question of time commitment. Some people expressed concern that some children are so involved in youth sports that entire family schedules are oriented around the child's participation. For example, family vacations are either postponed until the child's sport season is over or cancelled altogether. Family meal-times are scheduled around when the child must participate in the sport. Some people are thoroughly convinced that the commitment to youth sports has gone too far when the personal lives of every member of the family are dictated by the involvement of one or two members in youth sports.

Other families express great satisfaction and excitement over their involvement in youth sports. The chairman of the State AAU Wrestling Program, for example, related his experience at a summer wrestling tournament in Montana which was attended by several families on vacation. He expressed great enthusiasm over the fact that youth sports was something that brought the members of individual families and different families together.

Some people are critical of a situation in which a child participates primarily in one sport to the exclusion of other sports or participates in sports to the exclusion of other leisure time activities. The hypothesis here is that such an experience would lead a child into a very narrow circle of friends including primarily other athletes. Some people might think this is undesirable.

On the other hand, some people suggest that athletes possess many desirable qualities which can influence the behavior of one another. To this extent friendships between athletes might be valuable.

There are risks to specializing in one sport at an early age, if it is to the exclusion of all other sports.

Several researchers have pointed this out, and it seems to be general common sense. After all, children who specialize in one sport may develop physical attributes or talents at a later age that are not suited to that sport. For example, if a boy or girl specialized in basketball as a youngster, but by high school had grown to be 5 feet 2 inches tall, he or she might not be able to compete on the school team.

Likewise, a child's chances of success in athletics, or simple enjoyment of athletics, may be hindered if after specializing in one sport to the exclusion of all others he later loses interest in that sport or gets injured. He may not have had a chance to develop abilities or interests that would apply to other sports.

There is little scientific evidence about the psychological impact of competition in youth sports.

This seems to be the conclusion of several researchers. Vern Seefeldt writes that little systematic study has been undertaken to determine the psychological and emotional impacts of competitive youth sports upon its participants. Virtually no investigations have considered the psychological effects on those who wished to participate, but were excluded from activity programs for various reasons.¹⁷

Rainer Martens, a sport psychologist at the University of Illinois, suggests that there are no absolute answers to questions about whether youth sports are too stressful for most

children. It is his opinion that critics of childrens programs have made too much of competitive stress. Still, he says that the impact participation will have on a child depends primarily upon the child, or more precisely, the specific situation within sports.¹⁸

Gary Fine, a professor of sociology at the University of Minnesota, has done extensive research on participants in Little League Baseball. In his attempt to add something to the debate over the value of participation in sports he asked the participants themselves what they thought of the programs. Few researchers in the past have used this methodology.¹⁹

His results indicated that, at least in the five leagues he studied, Little League Baseball is highly regarded by those who participate. Even being on an unsuccessful team does not automatically produce dissatisfaction. Though it does, decrease the player's happiness. What Fine basically told our committee was that, while there is little scientific evidence to tell us what, if anything, children are learning from sports, his research indicates that most children are having fun.

With respect to physiological effects of participation, youth sports can help produce physical fitness, and evidence does not exist to indicate widespread incidence of injury to participants.

According to Dr. Lela Stoner, an assistant professor in physical education at the University of Minnesota and director of the University's biomechanics laboratory, "the literature clearly supports the role of vigorous physical activity as a stimulator of bone growth. All the running, jumping, hanging, pushing, and pulling of children stimulates the skeleton to make maximum use of the bodies nutrients and thus to grow."²⁰

Vern Seefeldt has summarized the literature on the physiological effects of physical training in young children. He writes, "there is abundant research evidence to suggest that physical activity is essential for the harmonious development of children. Physical training beginning as early as ten years of age for girls and boys may enhance such things as heart volume, lung volume and muscle functioning of children beginning as early as ten years of age."²¹

Dr. Alan Ryan, editor of Physician and Sports Medicine a monthly publication with a national circulation in the medical community of approximately 142,000, feels that most children can handle both the psychological and physiological implications of youth athletics.²²

He observes, however, that no one really knows whether

participation in youth sports is harmful to young people. Generally speaking, he has concluded that we cannot have sports without having some injuries. The actions that are characteristic of some sports, high speed collisions for example, are simply unsafe by themselves. But sports can be made safe through the use of proper equipment, training, and supervision.

Still, injuries can occur in situations of high stress or where extreme repetition of an exercise is required.

Seefeldt notes, for example, "it should be pointed out that occasionally negative results have been reported from high stress programs." He says more research is needed to substantiate the findings of earlier studies, especially on children younger than ten years of age. In addition, more research is needed to assess the beneficial and detrimental effects of early physical training on growth and development.

Stoner has also examined the potential hazards that exist as a result of participation in programs requiring prolonged, intensive exercise. According to Stoner the concerns can be divided into four areas:

1. Prolonged use of one or two muscles may lead to localized excelleration of bone growth (for example, Little League Baseball players have been identified who have experienced tramatic changes on the outer edge of their elbow joint and in the shoulder joints due to throwing curve balls and throwing forcefully).

2. The limb on one side of the body could demonstrate greater growth than its counterpart and the opposite side of the body (for example, a distinct difference in bone size has been found in the dominant arm or leg of tennis players and in soccer players.)

3. Actions of highly repetitive nature may lead to inflammation or fatigue fracture due to constant stress and strain to the bone (for example, long distance back-stroke swimming drills.)

4. Fracture to the epiphyseal center (or bone growth center) may disrupt growth and prevent a return to normal growth once a fracture is healed. The growth center is particularly wide in children and narrows as bones grow.

According to Stoner, this evidence should lead us to question the age at which a child should *seriously* begin working in a sport or activity and the quality of supervision available to young children.

Stoner recommends that "young children need to partici-

pate in a wide variety of activities using the large muscle groups on both sides of the body equally. Any serious effort to learn the skills which over-use one side of the body should be postponed."

The most talked about injury in youth sports is "little league elbow," and researchers disagree widely on the incidence of this injury. For example, one study reported that 76 of 80, 9-12 year old baseball pitchers had some degree of elbow damage due to pitching. In contrast, another study reported that, for boys under age 15, only 1.7% of all injuries involved elbow damage.

Two other studies of youth sports, one of baseball and one of football, showed a relatively low incidence of injury. Creighton Hale reported that only 2% of the 771,810 boys he surveyed sustained injuries severe enough to necessitate medical attention. R. W. Godshall compiled an injury report for 1,700 boys in Pop Warner football over a 12 year period. He found that, although there were a number of minor injuries (bumps and bruises), there were only two major injuries, both leg fractures.²³

CONCLUSION 1: The growing concern about the psychological and physiological impact of competing in youth sports, combined with the concern about opportunities for teenagers, indicates that there may be too much emphasis on winning and being *Number 1* today.

Some children start competing in organized sports programs earlier than some researchers recommend. Injuries have been reported that are related to the stress experienced by these youngsters. Similarly, some children specialize in one or two sports to the neglect of other sports, and some play sports year round. They thereby risk not learning about sports they may be better suited to, and getting exposure to other leisure time activities.

Furthermore, we are convinced that the emphasis on winning in sports for children below high school age, effects participation among and opportunities for teenagers. Some children get burned out by the time they reach high school. Some develop the attitude that there is little real value in playing sports in high school if they cannot make the varsity team. In addition, we think some adults are too interested in children that make the varsity, and not interested enough in those who do not, or who are not interested in playing for their school.

Little scientific research has been done on the psychological or physiological impact of youth sports on children. Without further research we hesitate to conclude that

children are being pushed too hard today, or that they cannot handle the competition they find in sports. We do not suggest that competition, by itself, is harmful or bad.

Still, we cannot ignore the testimony we received indicating the concern about the emphasis on winning. We do not want to wait for scientific evidence of harm to children before concluding that attention to this issue is warranted. The way competition is structured today may be harmful.

CONCLUSION 2: More information is needed about the psychological and physiological impact of striving to excel in youth sports.

The Twin Cities community does not know very much about the implications of competing in youth sports. Yet there is growing concern about just what is happening to the children involved in sports, especially in the most competitive programs.

In several locations in the nation, research is being done on this and other youth sports issues. The results are starting to appear in different forms (reports and films), but most of the information remains in the educational and medical communities. This information needs to get to the people here who are most directly involved in youth sports, parents and youth coaches.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Adult supervisors of youth sports programs and parents should take action to guard against putting so much emphasis on winning and excellence that other benefits of youth sports are compromised.

Youth sports organizations should try several things. Each organization is undoubtedly in the best position to decide what action to take. We have heard several suggestions: The number of games could be reduced; seasons could be shortened; rules could be instituted that require equal playing time, or alternatively, equal time "riding the bench." Finally organizations could give out fewer trophies than they do today, or make other attempts to establish a reward structure that recognizes more than just the final outcome of games. Rewards that recognize individual efforts or improvements would promote the self esteem of children who are not victorious in games.

Parents should get involved in the sport programs their children participate in. Today, it seems that many parents have abdicated this responsibility to other adults. We think youth sports is a more important influence on the lives of children than many parents realize. Consequently, we

urge parents to join local associations, accept administrative jobs, go to games, talk over with others the philosophy, objectives and operations of programs, and volunteer to coach and officiate.

In all cases, the goal should be to help children understand the many values of participation in sports and encourage participation throughout life.

RECOMMENDATION 2: A “youth sports institute” should be created in the Twin Cities. One of its primary jobs should be to gather and distribute to the Twin Cities community, information on the impact of competing in youth sports.

A broad educational effort is needed to promote awareness and discussion of all issues related to youth sports, especially the issues concerning the impact of competition. A “youth sports institute” should be the vehicle to get this effort started. The Major Ideas section of our report describes how we think this “institute” could be structured.

Its job should be to gather the information on youth sports issues (for example, coaching, impact of competition, pros and cons of different sports), which is now being generated at several locations in the nation, and package it for volunteers and others involved in operating youth sports programs here.

The first places to start gathering information should include: the Youth Sports Institute at Michigan State University, the University of Illinois at Urbana, the University of California at San Jose, and the New York State Department of Education.

The institute might also coordinate and conduct research here.

The media, libraries, and schools should help in the distribution of this information. Cable television also has the potential to help get this information to parents and volunteer supervisors. We could envision, for example, coaching seminars broadcast to people all over the metropolitan area. This type of effort could only improve the operation of youth sports in the Twin Cities.

QUALITY OF COACHING AND OFFICIATING

FINDINGS: The quality of coaching, both in volunteer and high school programs, is a concern for some people. The issues are somewhat different for paid high school coaches and volunteer youth coaches.

According to committee testimony and the available literature, coaches and officials need to have ability in four major areas:

- **Sports Psychology:** They should be sensitive to the feelings of youngsters, both in times of success and frustration. They should understand that each child is different in terms of emotional make-up.
- **Technical Skills:** They need to know the rules of their game and the skill of their sport. They need to be able to organize team practices and teach skills.
- **Physical Aspects of Children:** They need to know something about the growth characteristics of children so they will have a realistic outlook on performance capabilities and limitations of children.
- **First Aid:** They need to know how to care for and prevent athletic injuries.

Most of the concern over the ability of high school coaches relates to the ability to teach technical skills.

Especially since the growth began in girls sports, some schools have had difficulty finding experienced coaches. This is due partly to the requirement that all head coaches must be certified teachers, which prevents schools from going out into the community and hiring someone who is an experienced coach, but not a teacher. The shortage of female coaches is magnified by the fact that many women have never played sports.

This shortage of people qualified to teach sports skills is of concern to people for at least two reasons. First, some people, especially swimming and gymnastics enthusiasts, think that skills are the most important thing for coaches to know because of the specialized nature of their sports and the potential for physical injury. Second, some people really want to win, and learning skills is obviously an important part of trying to win.

With respect to volunteer coaches, people are most concerned about their ability to understand the emotional and psychological needs of children.

The complaints most often heard are that coaches push the children too hard, they treat children like miniature adults and expect them to perform skills not suited to their size or physical ability.

Some people contend, however, that the majority of youth coaches do an adequate job and should be commended for volunteering their time. Clearly, there are strong differences of opinion on this subject.

At least one group of researchers has found that volunteer coaches can be trained to relate more effectively to their players.

Dr. Frank Smoll and Dr. Ronald Smith, researchers at the University of Washington, spent seven years developing and applying a coaches effectiveness training program for amateur youth coaches. The project was started because, as Dr. Smoll writes, "although controversy remains concerning the merits of highly organized sports for children, there is general agreement that the manner in which programs are structured and supervised is a critical determinant of their ultimate effects."

Smoll and Smith analyzed the relationships between coaching behaviors and children's attitudes. These results formed the foundation from which they established behavioral guidelines for an experimental training program designed to enhance the ability of coaches to relate to children.

The subjects for the training program were 18 Little League Baseball coaches. The training session was conducted during a two hour period. A control group, consisting of coaches who were not trained also was formed.

The program turned out to be highly successful in its effects on coaching behaviors and on the children's perception and attitudes. While there was no significant difference between the mean won-loss percentages of the two groups of coaches, there were strong attitudinal differences between the youngsters who played for them. In summary, Smoll writes, "players who played for the experimental coaches indicated a higher degree of enjoyment in having played for them and a greater desire to play for them in the future. They also rated their coaches as more knowledgeable and as better teachers of baseball skills and

rated their teammates as liking one another more." Finally, they found the trained coaches had the greatest positive effects on children who were low in self esteem.²⁴

There are several examples, of training programs aimed at improving the ability of volunteer coaches.

Canada has a coaches' training program that is highly publicized and extensively organized by the national government. Clinics are offered for volunteer coaches in all sports to come together to discuss the psychology of coaching. The program is based on the idea that psychological factors are common to many sports. Secondary clinics are available where coaches can learn about the skills of their sports.²⁵

The Minnesota Amateur Hockey Association is in the process of developing a training program to be provided on a statewide basis for hockey coaches.

The University of Minnesota has also provided clinics in the past.

Currently, however, there is no formalized training program for all coaches in the Twin Cities. Generally speaking, today each sport and each community attends to the training needs of its own coaches. In some cases there are very extensive training materials available to volunteers, as well as occasional clinics. Sometimes clinics are provided by a local organization. Sometimes they are sponsored by a state or national group affiliated with a particular sport.

Some sports tend to rely primarily upon playing experience as the best training group for coaches. Swimming and wrestling are two sports where this is true.

A common observation made by people who operate training clinics for coaches is that most of the time is spent teaching coaches about sports skills. Little time is spent discussing how to relate to children or understand the emotional and psychological aspects of coaching.

The availability of qualified referees and officials also is a problem for volunteer youth programs.

During our discussions of the quality of coaching in youth sports we heard many complaints about the quality of officiating. In some cases officials are used who have little or no training in the sport they are supervising. Often the officials are teenagers who want to earn money. Some-

times a parent who came to watch a game is pressed into service as an official.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that some people complain about poor officiating. Officials also complain about the harassment they are subjected to from coaches, spectators and, sometimes, players.

The worst problems with officiating seem to occur in house leagues and leagues for teenagers that are not playing on a high school team. Leagues for the highly skilled young players generally use officials who are trained, either through state or national training programs. These may be the same people that officiate games between high school teams. House leagues cannot attract or afford to pay these officials and usually end up with less skilled ones.

CONCLUSION: The performance of coaches and officials is a major factor in the success of youth sports programs, for the following reasons:

- Performance affects the quality of the experience for parents and children.
- Performance affects the level of participation.
- Performance affects the incidence of physical injuries

RECOMMENDATION: Schools, municipal recreation departments, and volunteer community groups should establish standards for the performance of coaches and officials, provide more training opportunities for them, and make periodic evaluations of their performance.

We support the efforts some groups are making today to improve the ability and performance of coaches and officials. We think, however, more people need to be involved and more opportunities need to be provided.

A subject which should be given special attention is the psychology of sports. Training sessions should be held where coaches from several sports get together to discuss common experiences and share knowledge related to this subject. In addition, separate training sessions could be held, to provide instruction in skills of particular sports.

One of the jobs of the youth sports institute could be to develop a model training program for coaches and officials, which local groups could administer.

THE AVAILABILITY OF COACHES

FINDINGS: There is concern today about the availability of coaches for schools and for some volunteer groups.

Today the demand for high school coaches is at an all time high, due primarily to the growth of womens' sports. Yet student enrollments are declining, which means that schools have difficulty adding faculty members. Some schools are also finding that older teachers who once coached have now decided not to coach. Coaching takes up considerable time and the stipend is comparatively small. The result is a very tight supply of qualified coaches.

Since the early 1950s both the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota State High School League have required training for public school coaches.

Historically, the Department and the League have had slightly different requirements for coaches. All head coaches are covered by the League rule which states that all must have a teacher's license. Head coaches in the six major interscholastic sports for boys (football, hockey, baseball, basketball, track, and wrestling) are required by the Department of Education to be teachers, and also to have completed professional training in physical education, or to have completed a special coaches training program.

Assistant coaches are not required to have training or teaching certification.

With respect to private schools, the High School League requires that a coach must be eligible to teach in the school by the standards of that school. The Department of Education has no authority to regulate coaches in the private schools.

In response to coaching shortages, coaching requirements are being reexamined in many states, and sometimes changed.

Jack Roberts, assistant to the executive director of the National Federation of State High School League, reported that the general trend across the country is to relax the requirements of certification for high school coaches. He said the common response to coaching shortages has been to remove the coaching certification requirements. Most schools are trying to retain the requirements that coaches have teaching licenses.

In Minnesota, the Department of Education established a

task force, to rewrite the certification requirements for coaches. They have not completed their work yet, but a public hearing was held on an initial proposal which would have increased the training requirements for coaches.

In the meantime, we learned that some schools in the Twin Cities are subverting the spirit of existing requirements. In cases where schools cannot find teachers who are knowledgeable in certain sports, schools have hired assistants who are not teachers. These assistants take over head coaching responsibility for the teams while a designated teacher performs secondary duties.

Volunteer groups often complain about a lack of coaches, but they have been able to make adjustments in most cases to preserve opportunities for children.

Nearly every representative of volunteer sports groups we talked with said that they "could never find enough coaches." They admitted, however, to be somewhat overstating their problems. In fact, we did not hear of any cases where teams were not provided for because the organization could not find coaches. Organizations have simply found ways of making programs possible.

Some organizers said that they have formed teams, and then found coaches by asking parents who brought their children to the first practice. Other organizations have turned to high school and college students to coach. This practice seems particularly popular in neighborhoods where there are many single parent households. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board has hired professional staff people to coach some of its teams, instead of relying on volunteers.

It was particularly interesting to learn about the reliance upon high school students to coach. Some people felt organizations were sacrificing too much in terms of quality when they turned to these younger coaches instead of using adults. Other people reported that using teenagers had worked out well. Organization leaders and park professionals commented that they were able to control the behavior of younger coaches better than that of adult volunteers.

The one area where coaching shortages do seem to be a real problem for volunteer organizations is with programs for teenage athletes. We heard several times that adult volunteers are reluctant to work with teenagers, particularly if the adults do not know a great deal about the sport involved.

Volunteers have expressed different views about whether training of coaches would limit the availability of coaches.

Many volunteer coaches and many people involved with volunteer organizations feel that mandatory training would reduce the number of volunteer coaches. They explain that coaching is a time-consuming job during the season, and few adults would submit to additional pre-season training. The Canadian national sports organizations have recognized this issue and have left the decision about whether training should be mandatory or voluntary to the local communities. Most Twin Cities organizations that provide training make it available on a voluntary basis.

We talked with one volunteer leader, however, who felt strongly that training should be mandatory. He has had success with the training program he operates. He felt that the training period gave coaches a good idea of the importance of their job and of the commitment they would have to make. He would much rather have coaches learn this prior to the start of the season than on the job. Finally, he suggested that a coach who is unwilling to go through 10 two-hour training sessions is also unlikely to put out much real effort for the children once the season starts.

CONCLUSION: There is a shortage of coaches, especially in programs for teenagers.

RECOMMENDATION: The following actions should be taken to expand the supply of coaches.

Youth sports groups should provide training programs in an effort to attract more adults into coaching. (A special effort should be made to attract women into coaching.)

We heard several times that some adults are reluctant or unwilling to coach because they feel unprepared. This seems particularly true with women.

Volunteer groups and community groups should use more teenagers and young adults (people in the 16-and-over age

group) as coaches in programs for children in the under-12 age group.

Young adults and teenagers may represent a coaching pool that has gone untapped in many communities. Many people in this age group have athletic experience which could be useful to adult coaches. It might be appropriate in some cases for teenagers or young adults to share coaching duties with adults. In other cases teenagers or young adults could run their own teams. In any case, coaches training should be available to teenagers and young adults as well as to adult coaches.

The Minnesota Board of Education and the Board of Teaching should permit schools to hire people as head coaches who do not hold a teaching license, provided these people have been certified to coach, through a program recognized by the local school board.

We think the requirement that all head coaches hold a teaching license is unreasonable. In some cases it prevents schools from hiring the individual most qualified to teach sports skills. In some cases it makes it difficult for schools to find enough coaches, irrespective of quality.

While there is no assurance that teaching licensure qualifies a person to teach sports skills, there is also little assurance that a person without a teacher's license is prepared to understand the psychological aspects of coaching and teaching. Schools have a responsibility to hire people that are prepared in both aspects of coaching.

A reasonable policy for school coaches, therefore, would involve a requirement that coaches be certified through a coaches' training program that the local school board recognizes as adequate in its treatment of both the psychological and technical aspects of coaching. This would mean that schools might hire people that do not hold a teaching license. This is acceptable to us, provided these people have been certified to coach, in the opinion of the local school board.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS

FINDINGS: There is dispute over how to provide girls and boys with equal opportunities in sports.

Few people argue over whether girls and boys should have equal opportunities to participate in sports. They disagree over the best way to achieve equality.

Some people think the best way is to separate programs for girls and boys and try to provide both with equal treatment in terms of budgets, number of sports offered, equipment, and facilities.

Others do not accept the separate-but-equal concept. They feel that boys and girls programs should be combined; this being the only way to achieve equality. For children under age 12, combining means that girls and boys practice on the same teams and play against one another. For high school students, combining programs results in girls and boys practicing together, but competing separately in some sports (golf, tennis, gymnastics, and swimming, for example). In other sports, where physical attributes, like size and weight, play an important role in practice and competition, girls and boys would practice and compete separately. This would apply to sports like hockey, football, and basketball.

In 1975, the Minnesota Legislature decided that, for children below age 12 or grade 6, equality meant boys and girls should play on the same teams. This law applied to programs conducted by public agencies and to programs conducted on public property. Many, and perhaps most, youth sports groups (including public agencies) violated this law.²⁶

Nearly all the people who appeared before our committee agreed that, generally speaking, people organizing youth sports programs did not accept this law. We talked with some volunteer leaders who said they had never tried to implement the law. Others said they had tried to organize co-recreational teams (with boys and girls playing together), but went back to their original policy of separate teams. Appendix 6 indicates some of the policies followed by agency representatives we contacted.

The main reason for violation of the law seemed to be a concern that combining girls and boys programs leads to a decline in participation. Some people suggest that combining programs has dangerous implications for the health and safety of boys and girls. Finally, some say children just do not want to play together.

Some people strongly reject these arguments and point to examples of organizations that have successfully operated co-rec programs. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, for example, reported that a decline in participation did occur when the co-rec policy was first introduced in 1975. Once people got used to the idea, however, participation among girls started to increase, at least in some parts of the city. According to park officials, the programs worked best in areas where parents and adult supervisors expressed confidence in the policy and encouraged children to accept it.

There are additional examples of other communities that have successfully operated co-rec soccer and softball programs. Volunteer groups that sponsor swimming programs have, for many years, operated programs for boys and girls of all ages jointly.

Despite these examples, officials of several organizations continue to contend that combining boys and girls programs is unworkable. They can offer examples of declining participation to support their claims as well.

Many volunteer organizations continued to provide separate programs for girls.

Without question, the number of girls participating in sports today is greater than it has been for many years, and perhaps ever. Many volunteer groups and park departments are operating leagues for girls. As we have pointed out, however, most of these programs are run separate from boys programs.

In 1975 the Legislature also said that high school students could be separated on the basis of sex in athletic programs, but only when "it is necessary to provide members of each sex with an equal opportunity to participate in the athletic program."

The regulations for implementing this law were never completed. It was generally assumed that schools would continue to operate separate teams for boys and girls in sports such as football, basketball, and baseball, where physical differences between girls and boys would be an important factor in participation. Some people expected, however, that schools would start fielding coed teams in other sports such as tennis, swimming, and track and field, which could accommodate these differences.

Schools have continued to operate separate programs in most sports, and there has been a continuous growth in girls sports as schools have tried to equalize the number of opportunities available for the sexes.

Some schools have started to combine girls and boys programs. According to a study by the Minnesota League of Women Voters, "in junior and senior high school sports, coed practices, joint training, and joint meets with separate sex competitions are beginning to take hold in cross country, golf, and skiing." The High School League now sponsors joint tournaments in these sports and in track and field.

Schools have not, however, combined boys and girls programs in tennis, swimming or gymnastics. Instead, they offer these programs in different seasons for boys and girls. The High School League tournaments in these sports are also operated in different seasons. The primary reason offered for this by school officials is that facilities are not available to handle both boys and girls teams in the same seasons.

A recent court battle occurred over whether the operation of boys and girls teams in different seasons constituted unequal treatment of girls. The issue was settled temporarily out of court when the League's Board of Directors agreed to submit to its Representative Assembly, a proposal to operate tournaments in these sports during two seasons of the year. Tournaments would include a boys and girls division. Local schools would be left with the decision of when to offer their programs. The Assembly rejected this proposal however, and schools continue to operate programs in different seasons. The issue was never settled, however, and remains unresolved.

The 1980 Legislature made important revisions and clarifications in the policies regarding equal opportunities in sports for girls and boys.

With respect to children below age 12, the new law permits schools and public services to operate separate teams for girls, (something the 1975 law prohibited) but only when there is a demonstrated interest by girls to participate on teams restricted to girls. Where this interest has not been demonstrated teams cannot be restricted on the basis of sex. In any case, schools and public services must permit girls to try out for teams composed of either sex.

With respect to high school sports, the law permits schools to operate separate programs for girls and boys, provided that girls are permitted to try out for boys teams. Boys, however, do not have to be permitted to try out for girls teams. The law also permits schools to continue providing opportunities in the same sports in one season for girls and in another season for boys.

Our committee did not determine how to provide boys and girls with equal opportunities.

Throughout the time our committee was meeting, state law prohibited the operation of separate programs for boys and girls below the age of 12. It was not until after we had completed our work that the 1980 Legislature changed this law.

Our major finding was the violation of the 1975 law regarding equal opportunities for boys and girls. We concluded that violations should not be tolerated and that the law should be made to work. We felt it particularly reprehensible for public agencies to violate the law, but were also concerned about violations among private organizations. Although we did not make a thorough evaluation of all arguments for and against the 1975 law, we did find that it had been implemented with success in some communities, and some people felt it was a good law.

This was enough evidence for us to make a conclusion about this issue. We did not go further, to make a thorough evaluation of whether the separate programs for boys and girls were providing equal opportunities to both sexes. Table 1 and Appendixes 6 and 7 indicate information we did gather which should help others make such an evaluation. Table 1 describes the sports offered to boys and girls by volunteer and park department groups in several communities. (It is important to know that, in some cases, boys and girls are playing on the same teams in some of these sports. The table indicates only the number of sports offered.) The policies in several communities with respect to co-recreational participation are indicated in Appendix 6. Table 1-4 in Appendix 7 indicates information about the opportunities at four high schools in the Twin Cities.

A thorough evaluation of whether separate programs are equal would also involve consideration of:

- The number of sports during each season.
- The financial support for each program.
- The number of male and female participants and coaches.
- The number of teams in each sport.

CONCLUSION: We are moderately concerned about how the new law will affect opportunities for some high school students.

We think that boys and girls should be provided with equal opportunities to participate in sports. We have not determined how this should be done, and are not prepared to recommend specific action. We do know, however, that some people think the best way to provide equal opportunities is to combine girls and boys programs. Yet the new

were to drop their B-squad or junior varsity teams in these sports, high schools would end up serving only the wealthy students who had been able to afford to become highly skilled.

Other strategies also exist for schools. They could cut back the programs in sports that would most likely be offered by community volunteers. Swimming and baseball are two programs with strong volunteer organizations in many communities. Schools could cut back entire sports. The ones that are most expensive to operate should be the first cut, according to some observers.

There are advantages and disadvantages to all these strategies. It does not appear, however, that any of the strategies have been implemented on a widespread basis yet. That is to say, all the schools we talked with have a 'fee waiver' policy for children who cannot afford the athletic fees charged. Most schools have been able to maintain their athletic programs. Some schools have added sports, at least for girls.

Appendix 7 includes seven charts that indicate the expense of providing high school sports. Table 1-4 were compiled with data supplied by individual schools and by the State High School League. Tables 5-7 were compiled based on data supplied by the State High School League.

CONCLUSION 1: Neither participation fees for children below high school age, nor athletic fees for high school students are a barrier to participation in sports. Increases in expenses could lead to higher fees, however.

We found, with respect to children below high school age, participation fees for nearly all sports are relatively low, \$5-\$20, for example. We are confident that most families in the Twin Cities can afford these fees. Many youth sports organizations have scholarship programs for those who cannot. Some sports are more expensive than others, due to the cost of equipment, but efforts are made by public and private organizations to help provide equipment in some cases also. In summary, the system of financing athletic opportunities for these children, which is largely private, is working well.

Similarly, high school athletic fees, charged by many schools today, are relatively low. It appears that most and probably all students who want to participate in high school sports can afford the related fees.

These conditions may not always exist. The cost of operating sports programs is going up, both for volunteer groups and for schools. Parents and volunteer groups are faced

with rising costs for equipment, facilities (where indoor facilities are used), and transportation. Declining enrollments and rising expenses may also make it difficult for schools to continue financing athletic programs. Fees may increase as a result.

CONCLUSION 2: Expense can be a barrier to developing a high level of skill at some sports, and consequently, be a barrier to participation in high school athletic programs.

Participation in high school sports is based upon ability. It is very expensive to develop ability in some sports. Children below high school age must spend long hours training in specialized facilities, sometimes with private instructors, to develop a high level of skill. In some communities, children who cannot afford this training have little or no chance of making the varsity team at their high school. They are relegated to second or third teams.

Expenses associated with developing skill could further limit participation if, in response to budgetary constraints, schools reduce the number of teams they sponsor in some sports. If schools decide to drop second or third teams children who cannot afford to develop a high level of skill may not be able to participate in a high school program.

CONCLUSION 3: The expense of operating high school athletic programs is likely to increase in the future.

The costs of heating school gymnasiums, hiring coaches, buying equipment, and transporting teams are all going up at a time when school enrollment is declining, which could lead to reductions in revenue. Schools could be forced to make hard decisions about how to provide athletic opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

- Volunteer groups and parents should make every effort to keep participation fees as low as possible.

Volunteer groups and parents should resist efforts to expand athletic programs in ways that would lead to increased expenses to families and participants. For example, increasing travel, games, or equipment demands.

- Local school boards should monitor on a sport by sport basis, the fees charged in high school athletic programs.

Schools should not charge athletic fees that prevent some children from getting a chance to participate. Schools should consider dropping sports where fees are prohibitively expensive for large numbers of students.

RECOMMENDATION 2: School boards should carefully monitor the expense to individuals for developing a high level of skill in sports.

One way to do this would involve taking testimony from parents who have elementary school age children in various sports programs.

If schools find the expense of developing skill does, in fact, severely limit access to high school programs, schools should consider dropping sponsorship of these sports, or provide opportunities in these sports on an intramural basis rather than an interscholastic basis, which would eliminate the need for children to develop a high level of skill.

All children, regardless of the economic situation, should

have a chance to participate in programs sponsored in public high schools. Schools should not sponsor programs that are effectively closed to large numbers of students because of their inability to pay expenses associated with participation.

RECOMMENDATION 3: As schools adjust to budget constraints in the future they should follow a policy of providing the sports which are least expensive in terms of tax dollars per participant and in terms of costs to participants.

In the future schools may find they cannot provide some sports. In a previous section of this report, Opportunities for Teenagers, we discussed the possibility of relying upon volunteers to provide highly competitive programs for teenagers that are now provided by schools. This would involve a general shifting of competitive sports away from schools, into the volunteer community. We are not prepared to recommend this policy, but we think it is one policy that should receive further discussion.

FACILITIES

FINDINGS: There are at least two important questions facing the community with respect to facilities.

One question is: how should communities allocate the use of facilities among all interested groups?

Generally speaking, today the programs that are operated by the owner of the facility have first priority for use. This means that school teams and park department teams get favored treatment. Volunteer youth groups get third priority. Adult programs follow.

It is important to note that in some cases the existing supply of facilities is adequate to meet existing demand. Sometimes, there is even a surplus of facilities. In Minneapolis, for example, the city closed a number of outdoor skating rinks, because their limited use did not justify their operating expense, according to the Park and Recreation Board.

Nevertheless, there are other communities today that do not have enough facilities to serve all interested groups, when they want to be served, and in the sports they are interested in.

In some cases conflicts exist between volunteer youth groups for access to facilities. For example, in one community, two soccer leagues were competing for use of limited fields. One group gained favored priority by becoming part of the park department league. This strategy has been adopted by other groups in other communities. The Saint Paul school district recommends that volunteers become part of the community school program in order to reduce their facility expenses and get favored access.

Another area of conflict exists between youth groups and adult leagues. There is a growing popularity for participating in some sports among adults (particularly softball), which put pressure on limited facilities; especially when volunteer and adult leagues are both trying to operate during early evening hours.

There is competition among high school interscholastic teams for limited facilities. The growth in the number of girls sports had lead schools into operating programs in the same sport during one season for boys and another season for girls. Some people feel this separation amounts to discrimination in athletics on the basis of sex.

Finally, there is competition for facilities between inter-

scholastic and intramural teams. We have already explained how schools give varsity teams first priority and tend to neglect intramural teams.

Another question is how much should schools charge for the use of school facilities?

The rental policies of school districts vary from one community to the next, and people disagree on whether fees that do exist are fair.

Some communities make their buildings available to youth athletic groups free of charge. For example, neither Minneapolis nor Lakeville charge a fee for using school gymnasiums. Likewise, Saint Paul schools are open weekday evenings until 9:30 p.m. during the school year at no charge to youth groups.

In contrast, Bloomington schools charge \$15 per hour for use of elementary school gymnasiums and \$12-24 per hour for senior high school gyms. Minnetonka schools charge youth groups \$16 per use (the normal use lasts about 2 hours).

Some people told us that the fees in their community were too high. For example, the Bloomington school board recently proposed an increase in their facility rental charges which some members of the Bloomington Athletic Association opposed. They contended that because the school buildings were paid for with public funds schools should not be trying to make a profit from public use of facilities.

Others suggested that the fees were too high in some communities, but, generally speaking, most communities charge a minimal fee. This was the report of the chairman of the state AAU swimming program. He said that the conditions varied depending upon the relationship between the school district and the local AAU club, but that most clubs did not have much trouble obtaining pool time at reasonable rates.

There are a number of other issues related to the availability of facilities which we did not address.

Some people are concerned about the accessibility of facilities to handicapped people. Many people believe that if sports can be beneficial for everyone, then handicapped people should have equal access to facilities.

Other people are more concerned about the availability of facilities for particular sports. For example, some people feel the metropolitan area should improve the supply and quality of facilities for badminton, gymnastics, and speed skating, to name just a few sports.

We have not devoted careful consideration to these concerns and are unable to make any conclusions about the importance of the issues.

CONCLUSION: If interest in athletic participation grows, as we hope it does, more communities will be faced with facility access and rental questions.

There are a number of factors which are likely to lead to an increase in the demand for athletic facilities: growing participation among adults; growing participation among girls, more concern about opportunities for handicapped people. There is also potential for much broader participation among teenagers.

We have heard that some communities are unable to provide facilities in some sports for all the groups that need them, when these groups want them, and at a price they can afford. Increased demand will only aggravate these problems.

RECOMMENDATION: Schools, volunteer groups, parents, and children should decide jointly about facility access and rental policies.

We are not prepared at this time to recommend exactly how facilities should be allocated among competing interest groups, or what rental policies should exist. These matters should be decided jointly by all interested groups.

We do feel, however, that participation should be encouraged among teenagers. This means that facilities should be made available to them at preferred times (probably after school, in the afternoons). This might mean that varsity teams would be displaced to other times.

Part of the solution to supply problems might rest in finding ways to encourage participation in sports where an abundance of facilities exists. We have heard that some communities have an abundant supply of facilities in some sports, but a shortage for other sports.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

FINDINGS: There is concern about whether opportunities are available in all communities.

Geographic location does not appear to be a major barrier to participation.

During our study we heard that several factors related to geographic location might be preventing some children from participating in youth sports. Low incomes, high family mobility, a shortage of facilities, and a lack of volunteers were among the possible barriers. We listened to several representatives of suburban organizations and did not find a shortage of opportunities in their communities.

We decided, however, to make a short review of opportunities in North Minneapolis to see if shortages appeared in this area. Historically this area has been characterized by low income and high family mobility, compared to other city neighborhoods. We assumed that the factors mentioned as barriers to participation might be at work there.

Somewhat to our surprise, we found that these and other related factors are not preventing children from playing sports. In fact, there are a substantial number of programs available. The city government has built facilities and assigned staff to operate programs. In addition, there are many private agencies in business for the very purpose of serving youth. The existence of these organizations does not necessarily mean adequate opportunities exist, but there is no doubt that the structure for providing opportunities is in place. There are a lot of agencies there, looking for youth to serve.

There are six playgrounds on the North Side of Minneapolis operated by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The Park Board's downtown office serves as a coordinating agency for the youth programs which take place at these and other parks in the city.

There are at least nine private youth serving agencies on the North Side. At least four of these provide organized team opportunities. Others provide opportunities for pick-up play, but organize few teams.

Facilities are available too. In North Minneapolis there are at least 24 baseball diamonds. There are 11,512 children in grades K-12. That amounts to about 480 children per diamond. In Edina, a community we assumed would have an abundance of youth opportunities, there are 18 ball diamonds and 8,240 children in grades K-12, (458 children per diamond).

There are five swimming pools in Minneapolis owned by the Minneapolis Public Schools. Two of these are on the North Side. The YWCA operates a third pool there. All of these are indoor facilities. There are three publicly owned pools in Edina, one of which is outside.

There is one indoor ice rink in North Minneapolis; two in Edina.

The availability of coaches and adult supervisors would probably be a real barrier to participation, if the North Side had to rely entirely on volunteers. There are a large number of single parent households in the area, compared to other communities in the city. Today, however, coaches are available either through the park board staff, or the professional staffs of the private agencies. Many of the agencies have also used high school and college aged youth to coach teams.

Admittedly, our review is no where near a complete evaluation of the opportunities in all geographic locations in the region. There may, in fact, be communities (in the city and the region) where programs are not available. And some people are concerned that the programs in the inner city are of a lower quality than those found in the suburbs.

We have talked with representatives of many organizations, however, and we did not find any areas where sports opportunities are completely absent. And quality is clearly a matter of opinion. Some people think the professional staff people and high school students coaching in the inner city, for example, do a better job than some adult volunteers in the suburbs.

Perhaps the key thing for people to be thinking about are factors related to location that will affect the continued availability of these opportunities.

One of the major differences between city and suburban programs involves the use of professionals. In the two central cities, private agencies rely heavily upon professional staff people to administer programs, because of the shortage of volunteers. As with other program expenses, the salaries of professionals are paid through revenue raised from private contributions, and donations from the United Way, foundations, and corporations. The ability of agencies to continue to raise funds this way will, in large measure, determine the continued availability of their youth programs.

The funding of private agencies is based partly upon the number of people an agency serves. Some people are concerned that the decline in the youth population may lead to a reduction in funding for agencies, and consequently, a

reduction in programs. Some suggest it could also lead to competition between agencies for children, which might, in turn, lead to duplication of services and inefficient use of limited funds.

Other people do not think these conditions will develop. They are concerned about the increasing costs private agencies face, but they do not think funding will be reduced due to declining numbers of youth. They point out that most agencies have never been able to serve all the young people in their areas anyway. The declining youth population may give agencies a chance to serve a higher percentage of the population. Furthermore, they suggest that funding is only partly based upon numbers of people served. Other factors, such as programs offered, and financial management, influence decisions of contributors.

A more significant factor that will affect the fund raising ability of youth sports organizations is the growing number of senior citizen groups, created to serve this population. New funding sources may have to be found to keep all these organizations operating.

In contrast to the situation in the central cities, with private agencies, suburban youth sports groups generally do not use professional staff. Most youth sports programs are run by adult volunteers. Consequently, the availability of programs in the suburbs may depend primarily upon the ability of organizations to recruit volunteers.

CONCLUSION: While most communities seem able to provide youth sport programs today, the

continued availability of these programs is not automatic.

The programs provided by private youth serving organizations may be particularly vulnerable. These organizations may find it increasingly difficult to raise funds needed to pay the professional staff used to operate the programs. Factors contributing to this difficulty might include: declining youth population, increasing expenses, and more groups competing for funds from the same sources. These conditions could lead to a reduction in programs.

RECOMMENDATION: Funding agencies, private groups, and public agencies should work together to ensure that opportunities are available in the future.

The major objective should be to deliver services in the most efficient manner possible. With limited funds and competition among many agencies, efficiency is more important than ever. One possible strategy could involve joint purchasing of equipment and supplies. (Perhaps the municipal government's central purchasing agent, for example, could handle this function for several private agencies.) It might be advisable for agencies to jointly sponsor programs, or to deliver different programs through different agencies, and thereby avoid duplication of services.

In any case, funding agencies and municipal governments should think of ways besides providing money, which will help private agencies continue to provide programs.

GOVERNANCE

FINDINGS: There is dispute over whether governing bodies adequately represent and respond to the public.

Parents and volunteers are at the heart of the dispute concerning the governance of programs for children below high school age.

Some people suggest that in volunteer organizations, most decisions are made in private, by parents of the best athletes. These critics also point to the fact that many volunteer organizations have little or no accountability to local elected officials. The result, they suggest, is that the interests of coaches and parents who are not in leadership positions, and of children, are not represented.

Other people disagree. They suggest that whatever their shortcomings, most volunteer athletic groups are no worse than any volunteer group in society. In any such organization there will always be a few people committed enough to do the bulk of the work. They feel most groups were originally formed and still strive to serve the interests of the majority of participants. When they fail, their members are free to try to change things, or quit the organizations and go elsewhere for service.

It is difficult to generalize about the nature of democracy in volunteer and park department youth sports groups. Some examples indicate the variety of conditions that exist.

In some organizations a very formal process exists for board elections and for parents and coaches to participate in policy-making. In other groups, decisions are made by a few people without much formal structure. It appears that children are rarely if ever involved in policy-making in any of these organizations.

In one community we surveyed a general purpose athletic council exists with a board of directors of about twenty members. The board meets once a month and meeting notices are published in the community's newspaper. Anyone who attends three board meetings in a year can vote in board elections. According to the board president, the average attendance at board meetings is about eight to ten people, in addition to board members.

There is some concern that the public is not aware of when meetings are held or of their voting privileges. The board president agreed that his organization is a little hard to find. Nonetheless, new programs have been started by the

board when volunteers come forward to help with the additional work they require. A hockey program for teenagers was started this way in 1978.

In Minneapolis, where the municipal government is directly involved in providing sports programs, policy authority formally rests with the city's elected Park and Recreation Board. In practice, however, policy is determined by a city-wide youth sports committee, consisting of two representatives (usually adult volunteers) from each of four athletic districts in the city and a member of the Park Board staff. The committee meets prior to the start of each sports season to discuss possible policy changes based upon experience gained during the previous year.

According to Park Board staff, most of the changes which have been made in recent years have been the result of suggestions made by volunteers working at the parks. Examples of these changes include a mandatory participation rule, and a 3-inning-rule for Little League pitchers.

The Minneapolis Park Board has taken an active role in promoting this state's law with respect to co-recreational participation in youth sports. The way it is enforced is that in order for a single sex team to be allowed to play in a league, the coach must provide the park director in his neighborhood with a list of five names of people from the opposite sex that have been contacted about participating on the team. If five people have been contacted and none are interested in participating, then the single sex team is allowed to join a league.

Another policy which has come up in discussions of the advisory committee concerns the age grouping for park athletic teams. If a parent feels that a child is not physically mature enough to participate with other children of the same chronological age, the parent can request that the child be permitted to play with younger children.

The advisory committee requires the parent to submit the request along with two testimonials from other people in the community, such as a doctor or community school director, concerning the child's physical size, school grade, handicap, or other factors related to maturity. Based upon this request the advisory council makes a decision.

A similarly formal arrangement exists for members of the Moundsview Junior Football Association. This volunteer group has divided its community into three districts, and governs itself with a twelve member Board consisting of three representatives elected from each district plus three members (president, vice president and treasurer) elected at-large from throughout the community. The Board meets three times during the year with the Association's entire membership. In addition, the Board meets once prior to

the beginning of the season and at least once every two weeks between February and May each year. A resident can express opinions about the program to the Board at any of these meetings.

In contrast to some formal decision-making arrangements, the governance of the Eden Prairie Gymnastics Association is quite informal. The Association was started by four mothers, who served as self appointed Board members for the first six months of the Association's existence. They then notified the parents of all children in the program and held a formal Board election.

Originally this Board held meetings on a regular basis. When the turnout by non-board members continued to be small the Board decided to discontinue meeting. Now they simply consult their membership by mail when major policy decisions must be made. According to the current Association president, this governing arrangement seems to be working to the satisfaction of the group's membership.

In summary, it is difficult to generalize about how well these organizations have responded to the needs of the public. In some cases, people that have become disenchanted with an existing organization have brought their complaints to their representatives and tried to effect change. In other cases, disenchanted people have left one organization to form their own, or withdraw their children from programs offered by one organization and entered them in programs offered by another organization.

The latter alternative may not always be available. For example, if a child starts a season in one league, the child usually is prohibited from joining another league until the next season begins. While some communities permit children from outside their geographic boundaries to participate in their programs, other communities restrict participation in some programs to residents of the host community.

With respect to the governance of high school sports, some people object to the process; some disagree with the policies that school officials have adopted.

The process for making policy about high school sports was explained generally in the Background section of this report. Some people object to the fact that parents and children are not allowed to sit on the MSHSL Representative Assembly or to bring proposals for policy action to that body. They feel the existing process of working through local elected school boards leaves individuals far removed from the decision-making arena.

The school officials we talked with defended the League's decision-making process. They suggest that, although in-

dividuals cannot serve on the Assembly or present proposals to it, individuals are represented in their local school districts. They point to the Representative Assembly's policy of accepting proposals for rule changes at one of its two annual meetings and voting on these proposals at the next meeting. Presumably this allows local school officials several months to discuss proposals with their constituents prior to board action.

Three league policies have been the focus of controversy in recent years.

- The policy of working toward equal programs for boys and girls.
- The policy of protecting high school students from non-school sports programs.
- The policy of directing activities of students when they are off the playing field.

Debate on the first policy has been described already. Disagreements exist primarily over whether schools are fulfilling their mandate to combine girls and boys programs where possible and establish separate but equal programs in other sports. Currently, state regulations pertaining to this issue are being rewritten.

With respect to participation in non-school programs, two rules have raised concern among some people. First, the High School League has stipulated that high school coaches should not be allowed to coach their own high school athletes during the summertime. The thinking behind this policy, according to League officials is that students should be protected from undue pressure to compete during the summer from their school coach.

This rule has been of particular concern to the swimming community, **because many AAU swim clubs rely upon high school coaches. Today, while the rule remains in effect for some sports, there is a court restraining order which makes swimmers exempt from the rule.**

A second rule that has raised the ire of some deals with the participation of high school athletes on non-school teams or at non-school sports camps during the summer. For a number of years the League prohibited any participation during the summer months in such programs. Again the reasoning behind this policy is that students need to be protected from outside pressure to compete.

A few years ago the League amended this policy. Today, the League rule book states that "it is the philosophy of the High School League that during the summer months students should have the opportunity to engage in training at

camps and clinics and to participate with non-school teams provided that these summer activities are voluntary and not influenced or directed by school personnel."

The League goes on to include specific regulations concerning non-school summer team play in football, basketball, hockey, volleyball, and soccer. The rules relate primarily to coaching (as mentioned above) and the number of players from any one high school that can participate on a non-school team. The League's definition of non-school teams includes any student or group of students who receive coaching, training, uniforms or equipment and who compete in games, meets, or tournaments other than those activities under the jurisdiction of the League or sponsored by the member school. Spontaneous, recreational activity is not included in this definition, but the rule would apply to most summer league teams that exist.

The League has also established rules about students participating on non-school teams during the school year. The general rule is that "student shall not participate on a non-school team in an organized game, meet or tournament in the same sport during the school year." (Baseball and softball are exceptions to this rule.)

The League provides that limited competition in non-school events during a school year for an outstanding student athlete may be approved by the Board of Directors of the High School League.

The High School League currently has rules which apply to the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs and marijuana by student-athletes. The rules include penalties of suspension from participation in League activities from 9 to 36 weeks, depending upon the violation. Some people feel these rules represent an unnecessary and unwarranted involvement by the League in the private lives of students.

Recently, the League amended the rules that apply to the use of drugs and alcohol to reflect the concern of some people, that problem users should be encouraged to come forward to get help, rather than be penalized for revealing their problem. Today, students-athletes who enter a recognized drug or alcohol treatment center can return to participation in League activities upon receiving approval from the center director. The League's suspension penalties continue to apply however, to students who violate the rules that apply to tobacco.

Several proposals for policy change were made at the meeting of the League's Representative Assembly in November 1979, which reflect other concerns of school officials and the philosophy of the League.

First, a proposal was made by the state Coaches Associa-

tion to amend League rules to increase the number of games in basketball from 18 to 20 during the season. The proposal's failure to pass reflects the concern of school officials about the amount of competition students should engage in.

Another proposal was made to establish girls soccer as a League sponsored activity, which would mean that state tournaments would be conducted in this sport. This suggestion passed.

Finally, an amendment was passed, and will take effect for the 1980-81 school year which allows member schools to jointly sponsor teams in a sport that neither could sponsor separately. This policy may be attractive to more schools as enrollments decline and revenue constraints increase.

CONCLUSION 1: There are weaknesses to the decentralized, volunteer arrangement of governing youth sports for children below high school age.

There is a continuous turnover of leadership in volunteer organizations. Typically, adults volunteer only as long as they have children in the programs. New leaders sometimes make the same mistakes their predecessors did.

There is no centralized group in the region that serves all the volunteer groups which exist. There is no natural or formal line of communication between organizations. Each operates quite separately and independently from organizations in other communities or sports. Different organizations sometimes make the same mistakes.

Another potential problem is that organizations can become far removed from the people they serve. This becomes especially dangerous when people who are dissatisfied with the service they are getting feel they have no realistic alternative to their existing organization. They cannot simply take their children out of one program and go to another organization for service. They feel forced to accept the decisions of one group, or go without service. They generally have no recourse to some outside body, such as a city council either. Youth sports groups operate independently of city government in most communities.

CONCLUSION 2: Despite these shortcomings, volunteer organizations are extremely valuable to youth sports, and communities should continue to rely on volunteers to deliver youth sports programs.

Government could never provide the high quality, low cost service of volunteers, and no attempt should be made by government to replace volunteers with public employees.

CONCLUSION 3: The governance of high school sports will continue to require the performance of administrative duties by a centralized organization, such as the Minnesota State High School League.

As long as we have competition among schools on a state-wide basis, there will be a need for a centralized body to write uniform eligibility and playing rules, and generally oversee competition. At this point we are not prepared to go further in analyzing whether these functions are being adequately performed today. We heard conflicting opinions about the performance of the State High School League, but remain convinced that it is performing an important function.

RECOMMENDATION: The following actions are needed to improve the governance and operation of youth sports groups:

- **Leaders of volunteer and park board sports groups should get together with leaders of other organizations to discuss common problems and experiences.**

Youth sports leaders should get together periodically to discuss issues such as training coaches, providing equal opportunities for boys and girls, and setting goals and objectives. This would undoubtedly reduce the mistakes made due to leadership turnover in volunteer organizations and help organizations benefit from diverse experiences.

- **Volunteer and park department leaders should periodically bring parents and players together to discuss the operations of youth sports programs.**

This would be a good way to recruit more adults into the operation of programs. Most importantly, however, it would help improve communication among program leaders and people who utilize the programs.

Parents need to know what they are getting into when they

register their children for youth sports programs. Organization leaders should inform them, for example, about the goals and objectives of their organizations. Parents should be informed of their own roles and obligations as parents and spectators, both financial and in terms of time. They should also know the number of games and practices their children will play, and any information about team travel during the season. By informing parents about these matters youth sports leaders will experience fewer problems with parents and attract more parents into helping provide programs.

As part of this effort to inform parents, youth sports groups should also consider conducting an annual public review of their programs. This might take the form of a public meeting, open to everyone in the community. It might also take the form of a published statement of the organization's operations for the year, which could be open for public review and comment.

- **Parents should get involved in youth sports programs with their children.**

As was pointed out in the section on the Emphasis on Winning, today, it seems that many parents have abdicated their responsibility to help provide youth sports opportunities. We think youth sports is more important than many parents realize. Consequently, we urge them to join local associations, volunteer for administrative or other positions, go to games, talk over policies of the program and generally play a role in deciding what type of program be offered. This personal involvement is probably the best way to insure that organizations are responsive to the public, the people they serve.

- **The youth sports institute should take a leadership role in assisting volunteer organizations in their operations. It should gather information about the impact of participation in different sports and different kinds of programs. This would allow the institute to draft goals and objectives that volunteer groups could adopt. The institute should also assist organizations with information about training coaches and officials.**

FOOTNOTES

¹Jack W. Berryman, "The Rise of Highly Organized Sports for Preadolescent Boys," *Children in Sport: A Contemporary Anthology*, ed: Richard A. Magill, Michael J. Ash, and Frank L. Smoll (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinectics Publishers, 1978).

²Minnesota State High School League Balance Sheet, July 31, 1979.

³Bonnie Parkhouse, "To Win What Do You Have to Lose?," *Journal of Physical Education and Recreation* (June 1979).

⁴Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Jack Gauze, Minnesota Amateur Athletic Union, July 11, 1979.

⁵"Number of Pupils in Membership on October 1, 1978" Metropolitan Council, Office of Public Information (Saint Paul).

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷"**Study Report** on the Cost-Impact of Interscholastic Programs," Minnesota State High School League (April 6, 1979).

⁸"What's the Score in Minnesota?, Equal Opportunity for Girls in Athletics," A Summary Report on the Monitoring Project of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, ed. Elizabeth Ebbott and Jeannette Kahlenberg (St. Paul, October 1979).

⁹Names of the schools that were contacted about their intramural programs appear on page 53 of the report, in the section on "Work of the Committee."

¹⁰Statistics indicating participation in intramural programs at the University of Minnesota were supplied to the committee by the Recreation Sports Office at the University of Minnesota. Specific references include: "Intramurals-Extramurals, Annual Report, 1972-1973," University of Minnesota, Department of Leisure Education, and "Recreational Sports, Annual Report, 1978-1979," University of Minnesota, Recreation Sports Office.

¹¹This information was obtained by staff through telephone conversations with leaders of volunteer and park department sports programs.

¹²Rainer Martens, *Joy and Sadness of Children's Sports* (Champaign, Illinois: Human Kinetics Publishers, 1978), p. 189-191.

¹³G. Lawrence Rarick and Vern Seefeldt, "Characteristics of the **Young Athlete**," **Young Sports Guide for Coaches and Parents**, ed: Jerry Thomas (The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 1977), p. 29-30.

¹⁴Neil Amdur, "**Scholastic Study Disproves Age-Old Approach** for Gifted Athletes," *The New York Times*, June 24, 1979.

¹⁵"Early Sports Training: Is it Worth the Price?," *The Physician and Sports Medicine* (McGraw-Hill, Minneapolis, April 1977).

¹⁶Rarick and Seefeldt, p. 54.

¹⁷ "Joint Legislative Study on Youth Sports Programs" (Michigan, November 18, 1976), p. 15.

¹⁸Martens, p. 191.

¹⁹Gary Allan Fine and C. Steven West, "Do Little Leagues Work? Player Satisfaction with Organized Pre-adolescent Baseball Programs," *Minnesota Journal for Health, Physical Education and Recreation*, number 1, volume 7.

²⁰Lela Stoner, "Selecting Physical Activities for the Young Child, with an Understanding of Bone Growth and Development," *Review of Research for Practitioners and Parents*, Center for Early Education and Development, College of Education, University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, 1978).

²¹"Joint Legislative Study on Youth Sports Programs," p. 21.

²²Interview with Dr. Alan Ryan, Editor in Chief, *The Physician and Sportsmedicine* (July 11, 1979).

²³Martens, p. 220.

²⁴Ronald E. Smith and Frank Smoll, "Stress Management Training and Coach Effectiveness Training," University of Washington Medicine (Washington, Fall 1978) number 3, volume 5.

²⁵Interview with Terry Valeriotte, Director, National Coaching Certification Program, Coaches Association of Canada (Ottawa, Canada, July 1979).

²⁶Minnesota Statute 126.21, Minnesota Statute 363.03, "The Human Rights Act," Title IX, The Federal Higher Education Act.

APPENDIX 1
PARTICIPATION IN INTERSCHOLASTIC
ATHLETIC PROGRAMS - 1978-79

SPORT	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	
	BOYS	GIRLS
Baseball	13,252	--
Basketball	19,883	17,164
Cross Country	4,290	1,873
Football	32,572	--
Golf	5,204	2,073
Gymnastics	762	4,608
Hockey	5,051	--
Skiing	1,576	1,510
Soccer	3,204	--
Softball	--	6,779
Swimming	3,201	3,330
Tennis	3,788	3,856
Track & Field	16,465	15,467
Volleyball	--	16,656
Wrestling	12,290	--
TOTAL	121,538	73,316

SOURCE: Minnesota State High School League

APPENDIX 2
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN
INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC PROGRAMS
1979-80

SPORT	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	
	BOYS	GIRLS
Baseball	403	--
Basketball	510	505
Cross Country	257	231
Football	494	--
Golf	300	208
Gymnastics	34	178
Hockey	150	--
Skiing—Cross Country	35	67
—Slalom	65	48
Soccer	51	--
Softball	--	213
Swimming	126	125
Tennis	177	190
Track & Field	459	467
Volleyball	--	503
Wrestling	355	--
TOTAL	3,416	2,735

SOURCE: Minnesota State High School League

APPENDIX 3
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN METROPOLITAN AREA
THAT OFFER AT LEAST ONE INTERSCHOLASTIC
TEAM IN EACH SPORT LISTED

SPORT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	
	GIRLS	BOYS
Basketball	74	74
Track	74	74
Volleyball	74	--
Baseball	--	74
Football	--	74
Hockey	--	71
Soccer	--	40
Wrestling	--	71
Cross Country Running	72	72
Golf	55	71
Gymnastics	68	22
Cross Country Skiing	42	44
Slalom Skiing	42	41
Softball	73	--
Swimming	63	62
Tennis	72	70

NOTE: a) Soccer, hockey, football and wrestling are considered unitary sports, (making girls eligible for competition) but boys teams are the only ones for which participation figures are available. The High School League estimates that there are 20 schools in the metro area with girls soccer teams. No estimates on the number of girls playing football, hockey, or wrestling are available.

b) Schools may offer sports besides those listed here.

c) Baseball has been considered a boys sport. Softball and volleyball have been considered girls sports.

d) Figures were not obtained for eight schools: Saint Paul Washington, Saint Paul Open School, Jordan, Belle Plaine, St. Francis, Minneapolis Southeast Free School, Norwood-Young America High, and Minneapolis Vocational High. There are 82 senior high schools in the metro area.

SOURCE: Prepared by Citizens League staff; based upon data supplied by Minnesota State High School League.

APPENDIX 4
INCREASE IN GIRLS' SPORTS PARTICIPATION BY ACTIVITY
Number of Interscholastic Teams

SPORT	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80
Basketball	84	127	218	407	* 489 **	493	504	500	505
Cross Country	4	1	4	29	* 123	158	179	217	231**
Golf	8	13	32	32	103	* 132	160	188**	208
Gymnastics	61	77	120	* 156	186	173	172	181**	178
Skiing	1	8	19	22	* 52	60	65	73	cc 67 sl 48
Softball	12	13	6	16	75	* 110	161	183**	213
Swimming	20	45	72	80	* 108	114	122	129	125
Tennis	8	42	84	* 134	168	179	188	187**	190
Track & Field	* 164	198	420	463	494**	494	474	469	467
Volleyball	62	111	220	* 250	460**	476	483	490	503
TOTAL	424	635	1,195	1,589	2,258	2,389	2,508	2,617	2,735

CODE: * Year in which State Tournament Series Initiated.

** Year in which State Tournament expanded to two classes, A-AA.

NOTE: League Members:

Class AA Schools - 128

Class A Schools - 389

TOTAL 517

SOURCE: Minnesota State High School League

APPENDIX 5
PARTICIPATION TRENDS IN CERTAIN SPORTS

COMMUNITY	Youth Athletic Program	Youth Athletic Participation	School Enrollment	%	High School Athletic Participation	1978-79 Senior High School Enrollment	%
Lakeville	Boys Baseball Grades 1-9	700	1109	63	35	398	9
Lakeville	Girls Softball Grades 1-9	200	1109	18	30	398	7
Lakeville	Co-Rec Soccer Grades 1-9	400	2218	18	59	398	7
Eden Prairie	Basketball Girls & Boys, Grades 4-8	160	1179	13	68	699	9
Eden Prairie	Boys Football Grades 4-8	245	589	41	54	348	15
Stillwater	Boys Baseball Grades 2-9	965	2960	32	40	1989	2
Edina	Boys Hockey Grades 1-9	875	2576	33	75 + 150 Midgets	1356	17
Edina	Boys Football Grades 5-8	700	3049	22	106	1356	7

NOTE: There is no summer baseball program for children in grades 10-12 in Lakeville. Edina provides a hockey program for children in grades 10-12, in addition to the school teams.

SOURCE: School Enrollment: Based upon data supplied by Minnesota Department of Education (Enrollment as of October 1, 1978).

High School Participation: Based upon data in *Study Report on the Cost Impact of Interscholastic Programs*, presented by the High School League on April 6, 1979. (In some cases this data was verified through phone conversations.) Includes all high school teams.

Youth Participation: As reported to Citizens League staff in phone conversations with officials of volunteer sports organizations.

**APPENDIX 6
POLICY ON CO-RECREATIONAL PARTICIPATION**

COMMUNITY OR ORGANIZATION	POLICY
BLOOMINGTON Bloomington Athletic Association	Boys and girls play on separate teams in all sports offered.
BROOKLYN CENTER Park Department	Operates co-recreational teams in basketball and soccer.
COTTAGE GROVE Cottage Grove Athletic Association Cottage Grove Soccer Association	Boys and girls play together in soccer from ages 5-9. After age nine they are separated. In other sports separate teams are formed.
EDINA Park and Recreation Department	Boys and girls below age 12 participate on separate teams whenever possible. They participate together when there are not enough children to form separate teams for each sex.
EDEN PRAIRIE Eden Prairie Athletic Association Eden Prairie Hockey Association	Boys and girls participate together in soccer. In other sports they participate on separate teams.
LAKEVILLE Lakeville Athletic Association	Boys and girls participate together in soccer in grades 1-9. In all other sports they participate on separate teams.
MINNEAPOLIS Minneapolis Park and Recreation Department Hospitality House	All park department teams are considered open to boys and girls. Teams for children below age 12 are designed by sex. Boys and girls in Hospitality House programs play on separate teams.
MOUNDSVIEW/SHOREVIEW Lake Region Hockey North Suburban Soccer Association Arden Hills Park Department	In the North Suburban Soccer Association boys and girls play together through age 8. Then they are separate. In other sports programs run by volunteers boys and girls play on separate teams. Arden Hills Park Department operates co-rec teams in some sports.
STILLWATER St. Croix Valley Hockey Association Valley Athletic Association	Boys and girls participate on separate teams.

APPENDIX 7
VARIOUS MEASURES FOR HIGH SCHOOL INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS PROGRAMS

Table 1 - Minneapolis South

Number of Sports for Girls - 9

Number of Sports for Boys - 11

	Basketball	Softball/Baseball	Cross Country-Running	Golf	Gymnastics	Swimming	Tennis	Track	Volleyball	Football	Hockey	Soccer	Wrestling	Badminton
Participants														
Girls	22	0	10	5	24	25	10	39	20	-	-	-	-	15
Boys	26	50	15	9	0	26	9	29	-	98	39	-	20	8
Participants as % of Enrollment	1.9	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.0	2.1	1.0	5.5	2.1	-	1.1	1.0
Number of Teams														
Girls	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2					
Boys	2	0	1	1	0	2	1	1	-	3	2	0	2	
Total Expense														
Girls	5507	0	1099	1126	3249	3161	1145	3049	2611	-	-	-	-	1409
Boys	4200	4341	1556	1190	-	2978	1320	2894	-	10980	6275	-	4511	1409
Gross Cost per Participant														
Girls	250	-	109	225	135	126	114	78	130	-	-	-	-	93
Boys	161	86	103	132	-	114	146	99	0	112	160	-	225	176
Average Coaching Salary														
Girls	1842	-	1085	1085	1420	1495	1085	1420	2115	-	-	-	-	1085
Boys	1842	1625	1085	1085	-	1420	1085	1420	-	1457	1842	-	1600	1085
Number of Coaches														
Girls	2	0	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	-	0	1
Boys	2	2	1	1	0	2	1	2	0	5	2	-	2	0

SOURCE: As reported for 1978-79 school year by individual schools to the Minnesota Department of Education, Office of Economic Opportunity.

* Number of Teams: Source: Minnesota State High School League.

* Total Expense: This includes: coaches salaries, facility rental expenses, equipment, transportation, supplies, insurance, custodians, utilities, referees, tournament entry fees, awards, uniforms, lodging. (Utilities are not included in Minneapolis school figures, due to payment of these expenses from a central office fund.)

* Coaches: Some sports have more than one coach.

* Net Cost per Participant: Some expenditures are financed by non-tax revenue sources. This income is not reported to the Department of Education. As a result, it is not possible to calculate a net cost per participant.

Table 2 – Minnetonka

Number of Sports for Girls – 11

Number of Sports for Boys – 11

	Basketball	Softball/Baseball	Cross Country-Running	Golf	Gymnastics	Swimming	Tennis	Track	Volleyball	Football	Hockey	Soccer	Wrestling	Syn. Swimming	Cross Country-Skiing
Participants															
Girls	47	50	11	0	25	29	31	56	30	-	-	58	-	25	13
Boys	44	62	17	18	-	25	32	62	-	106	64	99	47	-	-
Participants as % of Enrollment	3.7	4.6	1.4		1.3	2.2	2.6	4.8	1.5	5.5	2.6	6.4	2.4	1.0	
Number of Teams															
Girls	3	3	2	-	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Boys	3	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	-	3	2	3	2	-	-
Total Expense															
Girls	10378	8116	1635	-	15846	8236	3490	8175	8654	-	-	8914	-	3913	3848
Boys	15954	11424	1635	3390	-	8236	3490	12121	-	26602	20487	8914	9356	3913	-
Gross Cost per Participant															
Girls	220	162	148	-	633	284	112	145	288	-	-	153	-	156	296
Boys	362	184	96	188	-	329	109	195	-	250	320	90	199	-	-
Average Coaching Salary															
Girls	1926	541	560	-	1734	1734	1270	1091	1541	-	-	1541	-	1344	1344
Boys	1822	1458	560	1120	-	1734	1270	1548	-	1632	1822	1541	1734	-	-
Number of Coaches															
Girls	2	2		0	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	2	0	1	1
Boys	3	3	1	1	0	2	1	3	0	6	3	2	2	0	0

Table 3 – Minneapolis Central

Number of Sports for Girls – 9

Number of Sports for Boys – 10

	Basketball	Softball/Baseball	Cross Country-Running	Golf	Gymnastics	Swimming	Tennis	Track	Volleyball	Football	Hockey	Soccer	Wrestling	Badminton
Participants														
Girls	20	0	10	5	37	28	31	58	40	-	-	-	-	32
Boys	33	37	20	12	0	15	24	35	-	101	20	-	28	-
Participants as % of Enrollment	4.2	2.4	2.4	1.3	2.4	3.4	4.4	7.5	3.2	8.1	1.6		2.2	2.5
Number of Teams														
Girls	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2					2
Boys	2	0	2	1	0	2	2	2	-	3	1	0	2	0
Total Expense														
Girls	4729	-	1085	1249	2864	3250	1240	3943	2459	-	-	-	-	1166
Boys	4212	3872	1175	1369	-	2983	1215	3939	-	10625	4258	-	3882	-
Gross Cost per Participant														
Girls	236	-	108	249	77	116	40	67	61	-	-	-	-	36
Boys	127	104	58	119	-	198	50	112	-	105	212	-	138	-
Number of Coaches														
Girls	2	0	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	-	0	1
Boys	2	2	1	1	0	2	1	2	0	5	2	-	2	0

Table 4 - Saint Paul Johnson

Number of Sports for Girls - 10

Number of Sports for Boys - 10

	Basketball	Softball/Baseball	Cross Country-Running	Golf	Gymnastics	Swimming	Tennis	Track	Volleyball	Football	Hockey	Soccer	Wrestling	Badminton
Participants														
Girls	32	26	9	7	14	19	19	27	32	-	-	-	-	22
Boys	22	42	5	8	-	19	17	37	-	110	47	-	47	-
Participants as % of Enrollment	3.3	3.7	1	1	1	2	2	3.9	1.9	5.9	2.5	2.8	2.8	1.1
Number of Teams														
Girls	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	co-	2					
Boys	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	ed	-	2	2	0	2	
Total Expense														
Girls	5633	3869			14417	3142	1635		4868	-	-	-	-	2054
Boys	6154	5457	2256	2766	-	2862	1474	7171	-	11740	12987	-	9793	-
Gross Cost per Participant														
Girls	176	148			1029	165	86		152	-	-	-	-	-
Boys	279	129	161	184	-	150	86	112	-	106	276	-	208	93
Average Coaching Salary														
Girls	1892	1534	803	803	1534	1910	904	2386	1406	1798	-	-	-	803
Boys	1892	1534	803	803	-	1910	904	2386	1406	1798	1892	-	1790	-
Number of Coaches														
Girls	2	2			2	1	1		2	0	0	-	0	2
Boys	2	2	1	2	-	1	1	3	0	4	2	-	2	0

Table 5
HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS IN THE SEVEN-COUNTY AREA
(Median Measures of Selected Factors)

FACTORS	SPORTS									
	Baseball	Basketball	Football	Gymnastics	Hockey	Soccer	Swimming	Wrestling	Volleyball	Tennis
1. Total Number of Participants										
Boys	40	40	54	23	39.3	59.5	29.5	31.5	36.5	21.5
Girls		28		23			23.5			26.5
2. Total Activity Expense (dollars)										
Boys	4611	6913	8629	4973	7566	5767	4917	4334	4179	2033
Girls		6781		4566			3387			2530
3. Total Expense with Facility Rental (dollars)										
Boys	4906	7696	8909	4973	10,954	5767	4917	4334	4179	2180
Girls		7380		4566			3387			2530
4. Gross Activity Income (dollars)										
Boys		2043	2516	346	1600	483		6089	269	
Girls		400					268			
5. Gross Cost per Participant (dollars)										
Boys	106	146	114	142	210	81	158	145	111	79
Girls		219		189			142			98
6. Net Cost per participant (dollars)										
Boys	106	102	78	126	162	67	155	100	107	74
Girls		207		179			131			98
7. Percent of the Activity Expense to Total Interscholastic Budget										
Boys	5.5	7.0	21	2.6	14.5	4.2		6.9	2.8	.88
Girls		8.5		3.75			2.17			3.0
8. Percent of Activity Expense to Coaches Salaries										
Boys	63.0	56.2	46.5	63.0	43.5	53.5	67.5	63.3	56.5	52.5
Girls		60.3		59.5			65.5			64.5

SOURCE: *Study Report on the Cost-Impact of Interscholastic Programs* presented April 6, 1979, Minnesota State High School League.

FOOTNOTES:

* **Total Number of Participants:** The total number of students, including those who may have signed up late or dropped out of the activity before the official end of the season in the high school. This could include junior varsity and B Squad members, as well as members of the varsity team. This does not include junior high participants.

* **Total Activity Expense:** Those expenses which can be directly attributable to each specific activity. They include the following: Coaches salary, transportation, meals/lodging, equipment purchase and repair, scouting, awards, materials/supplies, towels/laundry, substitutes, MSHSL clinics, organizational meetings, and other clinics. (Coaching salaries account for the largest of these costs to any interscholastic activity.)

** In addition to these expenses, "indirect costs" are incurred which cannot be directly attributed to a specific activity. These costs include: energy, custodial service, upgrading of facility, and administrative costs.

* **Gross Cost per Participant:** This value constitutes the *average* cost per participant for each activity. This calculation cannot be made based upon total activity expenses, however, because the total activity expenses are *medians*.

* **Percent of this Activity Expense to Total Interscholastic Budget:** This calculation is based upon gross activity expenses, and does not include income raised through each activity. This data also does not include expenditures for athletic directors or expenditures for facility lease or rental.

* **Use of the Data:** The State High School League staff made no attempt to draw conclusions from the research data. Rather the information was meant to serve as a guide to member schools to help them understand how they compared with other schools of similar size in similar locations.

* Factors 1, 2, 3, and 6 are median scores. It is important to remember that the median is not an average. It is simply the point at which 50% of the respondents fall below and 50% of the respondents are above. The League staff used median measures in order to avoid extreme responses on either end of the spectrum.

**APPENDIX 8
HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FEES**

	HOPKINS	MINNETONKA Senior High/Junior High
Baseball	\$10.00	\$6.00
Basketball	15.00	9.00/5.00
Cross Country	10.00	13.00
Football	15.00	20.00/15.00
Golf	2.00	7.00
Gymnastics	8.00	8.00/5.00
Hockey	15.00	28.00
Skiing—Cross Country	3.00	6.00
—Slalom	2.00	--
Soccer	10.00	13.00
Softball	10.00	6.00
Swimming	6.50	4.00/0
Tennis	6.50	6.00
Track	7.50	11.00/7.00
Volleyball	10.00	8.00/5.00
Wrestling	15.00	12.00/5.00

NOTE: Minneapolis Public Schools do not charge fees for the use of equipment. Saint Paul schools charge an *equipment and materials* fee which amounts to \$10 for one sport and \$15 for two or more sports for senior high students. Junior high students pay \$5 per year, regardless of how many sports they play.

Bloomington schools have a uniform fee of \$10 per sport for all sports. A family fee of \$50 per year is available that would cover all children and all sports for the year.

WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The Youth Athletics Committee was formed by the Citizens League Board of Directors in early April 1979. The Committee was assigned the following charge:

Interest in youth athletics in the Twin Cities metropolitan area may be as high today as it ever has been. A broad range of opportunities is available throughout the area through community, park board, school athletic clubs and other organizations. Many issues have surfaced through this activity:

- Some of the issues concern the purposes and impact of youth athletics, such as competition versus exercise/physical fitness, or recreation for all participants versus special opportunities for those who excel. What are the sources which chiefly influence the purposes of youth athletics? Leaders of organized, competitive sports at the professional, collegiate and high school level? Parents? Community recreation directors? Youth themselves?

- Other issues involve barriers to participation. The girl-boy issue is perhaps the most visible here, but there are others, including (a) whether programs are available in some geographic locations because of population decline or other reasons, (b) whether participation fees are reasonable, (c) whether regulations of public agencies are fair, (d) whether physical facilities, such as ball fields, are available, and (e) sources of financing.

- A third category of issues involves the governance of the system, the variety of organizational structures and how they relate to each other. For example, some organizations are built around a given sport, such as a youth swimming club. Others are more general purpose in character, offering many sports, but concentrating on team sports rather than individual sports, such as a suburban athletic association. Other athletic programs are directly a part of the public school system. Others are designed to help the most talented youth to achieve excellence, such as the organizations which support "traveling" teams.

The committee will address these concerns by: *first*, taking an inventory of the athletic and physical fitness opportunities available to youth up to approximately the age of 18 in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Such an inventory is

not now available, which means that most conclusions about opportunities are based on suppositions rather than actual fact. *Second*, identifying the goals of the various organizations which now are making youth athletic opportunities available, public and private, commercial and non-commercial, *third*, understanding the various structures which are responsible for youth athletic opportunities.

Finally, the committee will make conclusions and recommendations concerning the purposes and impact, availability of opportunity, and organizational structures of youth athletics in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

A total of 14 members actively participated in the work of the committee.

Larry Loukin, Chairman
Jim Christianson
Robert J. Connor
Moria L. Cross
Mary Healy
Gary Jesslyn
Edson G. Kent

Bob Kajetan
Janis S. Mayerson
Mark McGree
Barbara Nelson
Curtis L. Sippel
William L. Sulzbach

The committee was assisted by Brad Richards, Citizens League research associate, and Paula Ballanger, committee secretary.

The committee held 37 meetings, from April 4, 1979 to March 12, 1980. The committee held an average of one meeting per week, except during the months of July and August, when it met once every other week.

During its first months, the committee devoted most of its meetings to orientation, learning about the several issues related to youth sports. The committee wishes to thank the following people for serving as resource guests during these orientation sessions:

Fritz Anderson, Director-Community School, Anoka-Hennepin School District 11
Emery Barrette, Member, Saint Paul Board of Education;
Member, State High School League Board of Directors
Lori Bocklund, High School Student-Athlete

Earl Bowman, Vice President, Metropolitan Community College, Former High School Coach and Athletic Director.

Kathy Braun, High School Student-Athlete

Art Bruning, Superintendent of Schools, Hopkins

Stav Canakas, Football Coach, Edina West High School

Tim Connelly, High School Student-Athlete

Lance Crowley, Director, Private Gymnastics Club

Chris Ekman, High School Student-Athlete

Dr. Gary Fine, Professor, Sociology, University of Minnesota

John Hanson, Superintendent of Schools, Fridley

Robert Hobert, Psychologist

Hap Holmgren, Superintendent of Municipal Athletics, St. Paul Park and Recreation Department

Willard Ikola, Hockey Coach, Edina East High School

Phyllis Kahn, Member, House of Representatives, Minnesota

Joe Kilpatrick, Registration Chairman, Minnesota Amateur Athletic Union

Julie Kocourek, Parent

Bob Kojetin, Director of Parks and Recreation, City of Edina

Dale Lyon, President, Apple Valley Athletic Association

Dr. Rainer Martens, Professor of Sport Psychology, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

Dr. Robert May, Coach, Girls Ice Hockey Team, Minnesota Checkers

Dennis McQuinn, Volunteer Coach, Minneapolis

Elaine Mitchell, Volunteer Youth Soccer Coach, Cottage Grove

John Moran, President, Bloomington Athletic Council

Art Nelson, Swimming Chairman, Minnesota AAU

Jody Nelson, High School Student-Athlete

Larry Nelson, Center Director, Folwell Park, Minneapolis

Robert O'Connor, Assistant Hockey Coach, Edina West High School

Harb Pfiffner, Director, Hospitality House

Eric Premack, High School Student-Athlete

John Rose, Member, House of Representatives, Minnesota; Chairman, Roseville Soccer Association

Susan Schmain, Health and Physical Education Director, Minneapolis YWCA

Paul Schmitt, Public Relations Officer, Saint Paul YWCA

Dr. Vern Seefeldt, Director, Youth Sports Institute, Michigan State University

Cal Stoll, former Football Coach, University of Minnesota

Dr. Lela Stoner, Professor, Physical Education, Director of Biomechanics Laboratory, University of Minnesota

Dan Stoneking, Sports Writer, Minneapolis Star

Eleanor Weber, School Board Member, Saint Paul Board of Education

The following people who assisted in the research through private contact with staff:

Orv Dies, Staff, Minnesota State High School League

Murrae Freng, Staff, Minnesota State High School League

Jack Gauze, Chairman, Minnesota AAU Wrestling

George Hanson, Minnesota Department of Education

Pat Mueller, Director, Recreation Sports Program, University of Minnesota

Dr. George Nagabods, University of Minnesota

Robert Nilson, Volunteer Coach, White Bear Lake Youth Basketball

Gene Olive, Director of Personnel and Finance, Richfield Public Schools

Dr. Priest, Institute for Athletic Medicine, Fairview Hospital

Dr. Alan Ryan, Publisher, Physician and Sports Medicine

Otis Smith, Youth Activities Coordinator, City of Minneapolis

Bruce Tetzman, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Dan Ventrees, President, Minnesota AAU

Robert Wordan, Chairman, Burnsville Athletic Council

Detailed minutes were prepared at each meeting, with copies being made available to members who were not present, and to a number of other persons outside the committee who were interested in its work. A limited number of copies of minutes are on file at the Citizens League office. A series of Background articles were also made available to the committee for review. These are also available at the Citizens League office.

Following the completion of the orientation portion of the committee work, the committee spent the remainder of its meetings coming to conclusions and recommendations about youth sports. This was a particularly frustrating time for many committee members. Many expressed dismay at the general lack of factual information about many of the issues related to youth sports. Many of the issues seem to be settled in the community today on the basis of opinions and values held by individuals. This made it difficult for the committee to reach agreement about what needs to be done about each problem area.

As the charge of the committee indicates, part of the committee's job was to "take an inventory of the athletic and physical fitness opportunities available to youth up to approximately the age of 18 in the Twin Cities metropolitan area."

The assumption was made that the goals of the inventory were to understand the kinds of opportunities which are

generally available, and to identify any outstanding shortages of opportunities, be they in particular sports, in certain age groups, in certain geographic areas, or for boys or girls.

The committee did not attempt to design a survey instrument that would produce a statistically valid roster of all youth sports opportunities in every community in the region. It did not try to produce a booklet listing all youth sports organizations either, although such a guide might be a helpful document.

The committee tried to satisfy the goals of the inventory by visiting with appropriate resource people and gathering additional data as needed. As the report indicates, the committee found that youth sports opportunities are provided primarily through high schools and through volunteer, non-school groups.

The state Department of Education and the Minnesota State High School League were the primary sources of information about participation and programs in high schools.

Also, twenty schools were contacted individually to inquire about their intramural programs. These included:

Minneapolis Central	South Washington County
Minneapolis Edison	Richfield
Minneapolis Marshall-University	Saint Paul Central
White Bear Lake	Robbinsdale
Saint Paul Kellogg	Park Center, Saint Paul
Hopkins Eisenhower	Moundsview
Saint Paul Highland Park	Roosevelt
Saint Paul Humboldt	Saint Paul Johnson
White Bear Mariner	Eden Prairie
Saint Paul Tartan High	Bloomington Kennedy

Staff attempted to gather the facts about the opportunities available outside the high schools (beyond information obtained at resource sessions) by making a telephone survey of the park departments, school districts, and volunteer youth sports groups in several communities in the region. The communities and organizations contacted included:

Cottage Grove:

Cottage Grove Athletic Association
Cottage Grove Soccer Association
School District 833

Edina:

Edina Park and Recreation Department

Eden Prairie:

Eden Prairie Athletic Association
Eden Prairie Gymnastics Club
Eden Prairie Hockey Association
Eden Prairie Park and Recreation Department

Stillwater:

St. Croix Valley Hockey Association
Valley Athletic Association
School District 834

Lakeville:

Lakeville Athletic Association

Moundsview:

Arden Hills Park Department
Little Lake Little League
Nike Soccer Group
North Suburban Soccer Association
Moundsview Jr. Football Association

Brooklyn Center:

Brooklyn Center Park Department

Bloomington:

Bloomington Athletic Association

Burnsville:

Burnsville Athletic Council

Minneapolis:

Park and Recreation Department

Local park and recreation officials were the primary source of information about the adult volunteer leaders in the community. After these leaders were identified, some in each community were contacted and asked the following questions:

What sports are offered through your organization?

For each sport:

- For what ages or grades are opportunities provided?
- What is the total number of participants, male and female, in each sport?
- Are there separate teams for girls and boys?
- Are there co-recreational teams?
- Are there traveling teams? for boys? for girls?
- Are there in-house teams? for boys? for girls?

Total participation in non-school youth sports was estimated in the following manner. The participation level reported in each community for the sports surveyed was calculated as a percent of total school enrollment in the community. This percentage was applied to other communities which were not surveyed, but which have similar K-12 enrollments. To this number 4,400 swimmers and 4,000 wrestlers were added. These were the participation levels reported by the AAU chairman of these sports.

Adult participation was estimated on the assumption that soccer, baseball, and softball average about 17 children and, 1½ coaches per team, and that the parents of one-half the children playing on any team came to watch each game or practice.

There are undoubtedly inaccuracies in the inventory of opportunities available outside the high schools. First, staff did not survey the YMCA and YWCA agencies in all the communities contacted. Nor did staff contact the commercial recreation organizations. The survey involved primarily volunteer, school, and municipal park department programs, and some of these may have been overlooked in some communities.

One question that kept coming to mind during this inventory was: "What constitutes an opportunity to experience the benefits of sports?" How many teams does a child need to be on? Must a child play more than one sport, or can a child play just one and still benefit? Concern about the accuracy of the inventory rests largely on some judgement about these questions.

A Word About Minneapolis:

A list was compiled of opportunities available through the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. It is highly possible, however, that some of the opportunities listed are not available in some neighborhoods in the city.

Committee testimony suggested, if a shortage of opportunities exists anywhere in the city, it might be on the near north side of the city. Historically, this community has been characterized by high family mobility and low income. Two resource guests were asked to testify before the committee about programs in this community. They were

Larry Nelson, an employee of the Park Board at Folwell Park in North Minneapolis, and Herb Pfiffner, director of Hospitality House, a community service agency on the near north side of the city.

In addition phone contact was made with representatives of the following organizations:

The Way
Farview Park
North Commons Park
Weber Park
Creek View Park
Harrison Park
Jerry Gambles Boys Club
Phyllis Wheatley Community Center
YMCA, North Broadway Branch
Upper Midwest American Indian Center
YWCA Ruth Hawkins Center

Finally, staff mailed a youth sports questionnaire to 49 people in different parts of the metropolitan area. The questionnaire was drafted by stating, in the form of questions, 10 issues the committee had identified during its deliberations. The purpose of the questionnaire was two-fold: 1) To supplement the testimony received at committee meetings, and 2) to aid in the implementation of the committee report.

The mailing included 15 directors of municipal park and recreation departments, 2 members of the staff at the Minnesota State High School League, 1 state legislator, 3 people employed by either the YMCA or YWCA, 2 people who operate private gymnastics organizations, and 26 people who serve as volunteers with volunteer athletic associations.

While it was not assumed that the mailing list was representative of people involved in youth sports in the region, an effort was made to contact at least someone connected with each sport and each type of organization or provider of youth sports opportunities. An effort was also made to receive opinions from different parts of the metropolitan area.

Sixteen of the surveys were returned. A summary of the responses was distributed to the committee.

WHAT THE CITIZENS LEAGUE IS

Formed in 1952, the Citizens League is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational corporation dedicated to understanding and helping to solve complex public problems of our metropolitan area.

Volunteer research committees of the Citizens League develop recommendations for solutions after months of intensive work.

Over the years, the League's research reports have been among the most helpful and reliable sources of information for governmental and civic leaders, and others concerned with the problems of our area.

The League is supported by membership dues of individual members and membership contributions from businesses, foundations and other organizations throughout the metropolitan area.

You are invited to join the League, or, if already a member, invite a friend to join. An application blank is provided for your convenience on the reverse side.

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