

## Title IX not entirely fair for males

Written by Mark Dukes

Sunday, 13 May 2012 19:28 - Last Updated Sunday, 13 May 2012 20:37

---



I've always struggled with Title IX and gender equality issues, especially since I've seen it unfold over the past 40 years. The pure thought that males and females ought to have the same athletic opportunities makes total sense, but it doesn't seem to have panned out that way.

I got to thinking about this issue when I read Amy Chu was back on the Iowa City West campus this weekend to participate in the dedication of the school's soccer complex. Chu is 44 years old now and has a flourishing consulting career on the East Coast, but in 1984 the teenager made local and national headlines.

West did not have a girls soccer program at the time. Chu's brother was on the boys team and she yearned to play. Then a junior, Chu joined the boys team at West after a series of legal wranglings. Chu entered a game against Cedar Rapids Jefferson and the J-Hawks promptly walked off the field in protest, per orders of the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

A year later, West and the Cedar Rapids schools introduced girls soccer and Chu played for the Women of Troy instead of the boys team. Chu was seen as a trailblazer at the time, and in many ways she was. She essentially forced school districts around here to offer girls soccer programs perhaps sooner than they would have otherwise, and many females since have enjoyed the opportunities of playing varsity sports.

But I never thought it was right for Chu to join the boys team, for the same reason it wouldn't have been right for a boy to join the girls volleyball team, just because the sport wasn't offered to boys. While Title IX has given many girls opportunities they didn't have decades ago, the vague and much-debated law also has affected boys programs.

Title IX, passed in 1972, essentially applies to equality in playing opportunities, financing and facilities for both genders. A series of challenges and legal maneuverings has developed in the years since its passage.

## **Title IX not entirely fair for males**

Written by Mark Dukes

Sunday, 13 May 2012 19:28 - Last Updated Sunday, 13 May 2012 20:37

---

Participation in high school sports has increased 22 straight years, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations. In the 2010-11 school year, nearly 4.5 million boys and about 3.2 million girls played a high school sport. Out of the boys number, there were 1.1 million football players. Participation among girls has skyrocketed in the last 40 years.

Title IX has served Iowa high schools and its athletes fairly well. Girls now have opportunities to play in almost every sport as boys do, and that's good. But for those who have the skills to compete for college scholarships, women often have more opportunity than men.

Football always has skewed the gender equality debate. Division I programs can tender 85 scholarships, and there is no like sport to football for females. Therefore, over time, females have been given more scholarships than men in almost every college sport.

For example, the NCAA Division I allowable scholarships are as follows:

- Basketball: 13 for men, 15 for women.
  
- Baseball 11.7, Softball 12.
  
- Cross Country/Track: 12.6 for men, 18 for women.
  
- Soccer: 9.9 for men, 14 for women.
  
- Swimming: 9.9 for men, 14 for women.
  
- Tennis: 4.5 for men, 8 for women.

## Title IX not entirely fair for males

Written by Mark Dukes

Sunday, 13 May 2012 19:28 - Last Updated Sunday, 13 May 2012 20:37

---

There also is not a similar female sport for wrestling, which has suffered the most since Title IX was introduced. More than 170 college wrestling programs have been eliminated in the past 30 years, many of them to make way for a women's program.

If you eliminate football's 85 scholarships from the equation, the argument can be made that women have more financial opportunities in Division I athletics than men. Critics of Title IX also point to the fact football is the main revenue source for college programs, which has helped fund women's programs at many universities.

When she was a young girl, Chu's bold move made history. But in the ensuing years, despite the fact females have enjoyed greater opportunities, there remains debate whether it has been totally fair to both genders.

*(Mark Dukes is former sports editor of the Cedar Rapid Gazette. He is co-host of The Gym Class radio show weekdays from 3-4 p.m. on KGYM-AM 1600 and FM-106.3.)*