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A Case Study of the Restoration of College Athletic
Programs and Academic Image

by

Edward P. Callinan

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree in the Graduate Division
of Rowan University
June 17, 1997

Approved by

Professor

Date Approved 6-17-97

ABSTRACT

Edward P. Callinan

A Case Study of the Restoration of College Athletic Programs and Academic Image

1997

Prof. Fulginiti

Public Relations

The study was designed to show that public relations is an integral part of a college's athletic program.

The researcher conducted questionnaires and solicited interviews of 15 individuals from three different institutions. The three chosen schools were Fordham University, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Those interviewed from each school included the coach of the selected team, the public relations director, an athlete of the selected team, student government president, and professor.

This study proved that public relations is necessary to restore a college athletic team's

image. It also found that division affiliation, the language the team uses to communicate, the geographic location of a school, and budget increases can also impact a college athletic team's image.

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Chapter One

Importance of the Problem

Public relations plays an important role in today's world thanks to technology. In fact, Robert Bronzan insists that "public relations in a modern, industrial society is a necessity."¹ Colleges and universities are no different. "A continuous public relations program is important to keep a cooperative education program running smoothly."² College public relations must be clearly defined. "A key issue for university administration is understanding just what public relations is since it plays a central role in strategic planning

¹ Robert T. Bronzan, Public Relations, Promoting, & Fund-Raising for Athletic and Physical Education Programs (San Jose: John Wiley & Sons, 1977), 6.

² Cynthia C. Ryans, Strategic Planning, Marketing & Public Relations, and Fund-Raising in Higher Education (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press, 1986), 166.

for the institution to identify a sense of purpose, articulate a sense of self.”³ If a college or university intends to identify an overall sense of purpose or articulate a sense of self, then every department within that school must identify its particular purpose. Thus, college athletic teams need a good public relations plan to succeed. This case study looks at three college athletic programs and how they used public relations to enhance their images and make their programs successful. “The intercollegiate athletic program, as it has been known, will either live or perish with the absence or presence of well-planned and well-conducted public relations, promotions, and fund-raising programs.”⁴

Barbara Bickford, Assistant Athletic Director of Brandeis University, cautions that “in order for a college athletic team to have a good public relations plan, it must be consistent with that of the university, because you can’t separate the athletic component from the mission of the institution.” To accomplish such a goal, Robert Bronzan says, “The director of athletics or chief administrative officer for the athletics program should have a complete understanding with the president or chief executive officer of the institution concerning the role and responsibility of the department.”⁵

Although the institution includes the athletic program as part of how

³ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁴ Bronzan, VI.

⁵ Bronzan, 74.

it identifies its purpose, the athletic program is usually left to finance itself. Bronzan notes that the intercollegiate athletics program is more self-dependent upon deriving its own funds than most other institution-sponsored activities. This practice is so prevalent, the Philosophy Statement for Division I athletic programs declares that every school within that division “strives to finance its athletics program insofar as possible from revenues generated by the program itself.”⁶

To fully define athletic public relations, the objectives of the athletic public relations program must be included. Robert Bronzan provides eight objectives.

- 1) Inform all relevant publics about the athletic program.
- 2) Develop confidence in the values of the program for the participants and others.
- 3) Create moral and material support for the athletic programs.
- 4) Stimulate an awareness of athletics as an expression and vital contribution to our way of life.
- 5) Contribute to psychological, social, and recreational needs of the masses.
- 6) Foster understanding of the operations of athletic programs to prevent misunderstandings.

⁶ Laurie Bollig, NCAA Manual (Overland Park, Ka: NCAA Legislative Services Staff, 1996), 421.

- 7) Encourage the conduct and content of athletics program to meet the interests and needs of the participant and relevant publics.
- 8) Develop a proper perspective of athletic competition by everyone participating in or associated with the athletic program.⁷

No school can deny the amount of income big-time collegiate athletic programs produce. For example, in 1970, Drake University founded the Bulldog Club. One form of membership in the club was called 'Honorary Coach.' "Honorary Coach memberships are \$1,000."⁸ East Carolina University has been home to the Pirate Club for many years. In a two-week pledge drive, "the sum of at least \$250,000 was committed by the Pirate Club for 1974."⁹ Further still, the exposure schools receive from their athletic teams' participation in sporting events is valuable. Barbara Bickford noted that "every single time the name of the university appears, the exposure is valuable. It is the goal of the university to make those associations appear in

⁷ Bronzan., p. 77.

⁸ Bronzan, 217.

⁹ Bronzan, 217.

a positive light. Even reading the school's name in the box scores generate a positive light."

Problem Statement

This case study asks the following question: How did three universities use public relations to save an athletic program? This question investigates how effective public relations is for collegiate athletic programs.

One program selected for this thesis was the men's basketball team at Fordham University. Fordham University is a Division I member of the NCAA. Fordham's basketball team was chosen as an example of a program that was struggling in both reputation and success, and was then successfully revitalized.

Reverend Joseph A. O'Hare, president of Fordham, said "The Patriot League never really caught on in capturing the interest and attention of students and alumni. We didn't get what we hoped for with football, and we suffered more than we thought we would in other programs, particularly basketball." ¹⁰

The blame for this period of struggle in Fordham's athletics was placed on the school's decision to leave the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference in 1990, to join a new Division I conference called the Patriot League. The Patriot League prohibits athletic scholarships, thus compelling Fordham to

¹⁰ Deborah E. Blum, "Fordham Returns to Grants," The Chronicle of Higher Education 5 May, 1995, p. 43

cease offering athletic scholarships and begin awarding financial aid based on need. Despite the men's basketball team having won the conference title in 1991 and 1992, average attendance at home games dropped to less than half the capacity of Fordham's 3,400-seat gymnasium. After five years with no athletic scholarships, Fordham left the Patriot League to join the Atlantic 10 conference.

The Atlantic 10 has held broadcast deals for years, and Fordham recognized the chance for its basketball team to play on national television. Fordham also realized that such national exposure would help its coverage by broadcasters and newspapers within New York City itself. Likewise, when the Atlantic 10 invited Fordham in as a member of the conference, it saw Fordham as an opportunity to tap into a larger media market. Linda Bruno, commissioner of the Atlantic 10 said "They bring us a market we are not in, and we bring them exposure."¹¹

Making the move to a conference which offered athletic scholarships did not hurt Fordham financially in subsequent years, because it spent the same amount of money in athletic scholarships as it did in need-based financial aid for athletes; \$2.5 million annually. Fordham athletic director, Francis X. McLaughlin, concluded the decision when he said: "We looked at ourselves and decided that we weren't meeting the objectives of our sports program - including rallying the interest of our alumni. Our teams were

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 44.

struggling.”¹²

This struggle for Fordham was over when the school joined the Atlantic 10. Commissioner Bruno asserted that “the Atlantic 10 continues to prosper through our member’s firm commitment to their student-athletes and to the future of the Conference.”¹³ Father O’Hare said that Fordham’s academic goals and reputation are not damaged by its sports affiliation. The president of the school explained that “it’s important for Fordham to build on past traditions, academically, religiously, and athletically.”¹⁴

The second of the three programs chosen for this thesis was the men’s ice-hockey team at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Like the first school mentioned, UMass is a Division I member of the NCAA. This team was chosen as an example of a program that was defunct and later reinstated. The 1993-94 season for the UMass ice-hockey team was its first in 15 years. The UMass hockey home page, located on the Internet, describes the reinstated team as “a program intent on building itself from nothing into a national power.”¹⁵

¹² *Ibid.*, 44.

¹³ Bill Holtz, The 1996-97 Fordham Rams Basketball Media Guide (State College, Pa: Jostens Printing & Publishing, 1996), p. 3.

¹⁴ Blum,

¹⁵ McComiskey, Mike. Umass Ice Hockey Home Page (1996) Netscape. Internet. Available: [Http://www.umass.edu/athletics/hockey/index.html](http://www.umass.edu/athletics/hockey/index.html)

The 20 - 9 record compiled by the team in the first year of its return to competition, broke the school record of 19 wins set by the team during the 1971-72 season. With the return of the ice-hockey team came the construction of a multi-purpose facility designed for college hockey. The William D. Mullins Memorial Convocation Center was founded jointly by a state Capital Outlay and a Building Authority Bond issue, which cost \$51 million. The bond is being repaid through a student fee. The Mullins Center is "a big-time facility for what will be a big-time hockey program. It is one of only two facilities in the nation that can claim to have two olympic-sized rinks, so that hockey will take a back seat to no one." ¹⁶

In 1995, alumni and supporters of UMass across the country donated \$1,012,143 to UMass athletics through the UMAF. Such success is "directly related to the increased visibility and impact of the University's highly successful athletic program. As UMass teams gain national attention and media coverage, they boost pride among UMass employees, alums, and friends of the University." ¹⁷

Finally, the third program chosen was the women's field-hockey team at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Indiana University of Pennsylvania is a Division II member of the NCAA. This program was threatened with

¹⁶ McComiskey. Internet.

¹⁷ McComiskey. Internet.

extinction, and is the example this thesis uses to investigate collegiate athletic programs protected under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

In the spring of 1992, Indiana University of Pennsylvania dropped the women's field-hockey team, as well as the women's gymnastics team, because of budget cuts that were supposedly felt throughout the entire campus. In October of 1992, four female athletes sued Indiana University of Pennsylvania because they claimed the elimination of the field-hockey team, along with the women's gymnastics team "worsened the university's record of providing equitable opportunities for men and women to compete in sports."¹⁸

While women constituted 55.6% of the total population at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1992, the elimination of these teams decreased the number of slots on sports teams for women from 37.8% to 36.5%. On November 11, 1992, the women's field-hockey team at Indiana University of Pennsylvania became the first program protected under Title IX; a section of the Education Amendments of 1972 which bars sex discrimination by institutions which receive federal aid. A similar lawsuit concerning Brown University was pending in federal courts at the same time. And the University of Massachusetts at Amherst agreed to reinstate three women's teams after female athletes threatened to sue later that year.

The U.S. District Court, which ruled in favor of the four women, cited a three-part test of Title IX used by the U.S. Education Department's Office for

¹⁸ Deborah E. Blum, "Court Orders University to Reinstate Women's Teams" The Chronicle of Higher Education, 11 November, 1992, 37, no.39

Civil Rights. This three-part test allows for any school to be in compliance with Title IX, as long as it passes one part of the test. The author feels such a lenient adherence to Title IX weakens the impact and effectiveness of the amendment. In 1989, a full 17 years after Title IX was enacted, Ellen Vargyas wrote "To be sure, legal interpretations of Title IX are still at an early age and there is legitimate room for controversy regarding Title IX's precise meaning."¹⁹ The national Women's Sports Foundation is one of many groups which has recognized that problems with gender equality and Title IX still persist in women's athletics. "Enforcement efforts by the Office for Civil Rights have been questioned by the women's foundation, which asserts that 90 percent of schools are still not in compliance."²⁰

Delimitations

This thesis investigates certain aspects of image rehabilitation only in the cases of the women's field-hockey program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, the men's ice-hockey program at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and the men's basketball program at Fordham

¹⁹ Ellen Vargyas, "The NCAA Guide to Title IX & Intercollegiate Athletics: Some Misleading Information," The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance, 60, no. 6 (1989): 19

²⁰ Claire Smith, "Concerns are Voiced on Effects of Title IX," New York Times, 3 February, 1995, sec. B, p.19.

University. It did not look to answer the entire question of the need and use of collegiate athletic public relations.

Purpose

After a review of this thesis project and the information it contains, public relations practitioners, as well as college coaches and athletic administrators, will better understand the impact of public relations and collegiate athletics. They might gain insight into how to rejuvenate a college program through identity, image change, and the role of public relations in such situations.

To better understand the impact of public relations, this thesis is based on the assumption that, if used properly and effectively, public relations is helpful in creating successful collegiate athletic programs. This thesis must also recognize the fact that the athletic program or programs in question might have been revitalized merely by an improvement in the record of the team, and not the public relations methods used to promote it. An increase in the number of scholarships or money given by the school could be the most significant reason for the change in the chosen program.

Procedure

Research for this thesis question was collected through an Internet search, as well as a review of journals, books such as *Public Relations, Promoting, & Fund-Raising for Athletic and Physical Education Programs*, and manuals such as the *NCAA Manual*. These texts discuss public relations, collegiate athletics, or the combination of these two variables. An interview of the assistant athletic director of Brandeis University, located in Waltham, Massachusetts, was also conducted.

Terminology

NCAA - National Collegiate Athletic Association. As stated in the NCAA

Rules and Regulations Manual, "each active and provisional member institution and member conference is designated as a member of Division I, II, or III for certain legislative and competitive purposes."²¹

Division I - Division of the NCAA which is composed of colleges and universities which are allowed to grant full-tuition athletic scholarships to

²¹ Bollig, p. 413.

students based on athletic performance. As stated in bylaw 20.9.1.1 of the NCAA Rules and Regulations Manual, "A member of Division I shall not make an award of financial aid in excess of the number permitted by the provisions and laws governing Division I financial aid award limitations." ²²

Division II - A division of the NCAA which "believes in permitting athletically-related financial aid for its student athletes, but on a more modest basis than that permitted in Division I." ²³ A Division II school cannot "make an award of financial aid in excess of the number permitted by the bylaws governing Division II financial aid awards limitations." ²⁴

Title IX - Section of the Education Amendments of 1972, which bars sex discrimination by institutions which receive federal aid. The Office for Civil Rights within the United States Education Department uses a three-part test of Title IX to decide if such guaranteed rights have been violated.

²² Bollig, p. 421.

²³ Bollig, p. 430.

²⁴ Bollig, p. 431.

UMAF - Umass Athletic Fund. Established in 1992, the organization has over 2,700 members. This organization supports the total athletic program, emphasizing athletic scholarships and support service areas.

Chapter Two

The search for information relevant to this thesis was conducted at Rowan University and the Margaret E. Heggan Free Public Library. The author also searched the on-line databases for Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania. The search included findings in periodicals, books, newspapers, manuals, and the Internet. Keywords and phrases used in library, as well as Internet, searches included "college athletics," "athletic public relations," "college athletic public relations," and "image perception."

Implementing and practicing public relations for collegiate athletics is similar to its need in other entities which deal with public audiences. The importance of public relations in collegiate athletics cannot be underestimated. Edward Bernays, credited with having created and named the profession of public relations, insisted that "public relations is vital in all areas of life."²⁵ He explained how business is dependent upon many publics, as are universities. Bernays noted that:

A university has as its publics its professors and teachers, prospective teaching staff, present and prospective students, alumni, donors, the

²⁵ Edward Bernays, Your Future In a Public Relations Career (New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 1979),5

community in which it functions, and city, state and national government.²⁶

One element to maintaining good relations with its publics is for a university to achieve a positive image in all its facets. David Garvin, author of The Economics of University Behavior, has stated that “image and prestige are crucially important in today’s college market.”²⁷ Athletics certainly qualifies as one such facet. For a collegiate athletic team to establish and maintain good relations with the school’s publics, it must portray a good image. Oak Ridge Public Relations has identified that “public relations tends to be a tool for image shaping, for opinion and for influencing rather than a tool for direct response.”²⁸ In his book on establishing and operating a collegiate athletic program, Harold Vanderzwaag explains:

Part of the orientation process should be directed toward providing a perspective on the public relations stance in the sport program. What image does the program strive to project because staff members are constantly relating to a multiple public under diverse circumstances.²⁹

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Donald Chu, The Character of American Higher Education & Intercollegiate Sport (USA: SUNY Albany Press, 1989), 202

²⁸ Oak Ridge Public Relations web page. Internet.
[Http://www.oakridge.com/public_relations/WhatISPR.html](http://www.oakridge.com/public_relations/WhatISPR.html)

²⁹ Harold J. Vanderzwaag, Sports Management in Schools and Colleges (Canada: John Wiley & Sons, 1984), 123

Because this thesis deals specifically with image rehabilitation in college athletic programs, an understanding of what constitutes a good image for such a team must be found. On December 14, 1994, the morning on which Fordham University announced its switch from the Patriot League to the Atlantic 10 Conference, one anonymous source commented on the vitality of image in college athletics. Fordham's membership in the Patriot League was seen as an indication of its commitment to academics, but the anonymous source made the reason for Fordham's switch to the Atlantic 10 clear. He insisted that "the bottom line is winning. When you don't win, people distance themselves from you, no matter how well intentioned you are."³⁰

The notion of winning as a bottom line in college athletics raised the question of college athletic's exact role. Some people have suggested that college athletics act as a farm system for professional sports. Doug Bandow, a fellow at the Cato Institute, said:

Universities, like members of any cartel, have an incentive to cheat; they hope to attract top athletes and keep in school kids who have neither an aptitude nor an interest in higher education.³¹

However, college athletic teams have the power to change their image; and in effect change their public relations and perception entirely. This study

³⁰ Malcolm Moran, "Fordham to Make Switch to Atlantic 10 Conference" New York Times 14 Dec. 1994

³¹ Doug Bandow, "The Real NCAA Scandal." Wall Street Journal 21 June 1991

seeks to answer exactly how a collegiate athletic team completes this process. The findings of this study can serve as a guideline for collegiate athletic teams who desire, or need, to rehabilitate their image. John Gerdy has emphasized the importance of such actions, stating that "because college athletics is often the only window through which the public views higher education, a restoration of public faith in the integrity of our athletics programs is essential."³²

Fordham's unique situation not only introduced the idea that a college athletic team must win in order to maintain a good image, but also the importance of the team's affiliation/s. Two years before Fordham's departure from the Patriot League, the school won the conference championship in men's basketball. Thus, Fordham's switch to the Atlantic 10 suggested that it is not only winning that counts, but winning against the right competition. College athletic programs do not stay with one particular conference out of devotion. The need to be a member of the right conference for a program to portray the intended image to the school's publics is vital. When Fordham announced its move to the Atlantic 10, Malcolm Moran of the *New York Times* noted "This is the way of college athletics in the 90's, when one's loyalty to one conference is defined by the outcome of the most recent board

³² John Gerdy, "Restoring Trust in Higher Education: Athletic's Role" College Board Review 1994, pg. 24

of trustees meeting and the direction of the latest stiff breeze.”³³

Like any other entity, for a college athletic team to conduct image rehabilitation, it needs capital. An important element to a team’s image is how it sells itself to its publics. The collegiate athletic team is peculiar because the school boasts of its teams when they are successful, yet encourages its teams to find financial backing on their own. Bronzan explains that “the notion that intercollegiate athletics should be totally or substantially self-supporting has persisted from the earliest informal athletic contest.”³⁴

Because this is true, college athletic teams can easily lose their focus on academics and strictly concentrate on athletics. Gerdy notes: “Thus far, the high visibility of college athletics has been used primarily to promote college athletics rather than education in general.”³⁵ These circumstances drive collegiate athletics to behave like businesses. The Gerdy article cites a nationally televised interview of a famous college coach. The coach was asked about the firing of his colleague and the coach expressed dismay. When the interviewer remarked that college athletics was nothing more than a business, the coach did not respond. Gerdy said “his silence was damning.”³⁶

³³ Malcolm Moran, “Atlantic 10, Here Comes Fordham!” New York Times 15 Dec. 1994

³⁴ Robert T. Bronzan, Public Relations, Promoting & Fund-Raising for Athletic and Physical Education Programs (San Jose: John Wiley & Sons, 1997),6

³⁵ John Gerdy, “Trust in Higher Education: Athletic’s Role” College Board Review 1994 pg. 23

³⁶ Ibid.

The overwhelming notion of collegiate athletics as strictly a business does not always prevail. Harold Vanderzwaag, author of Sports Management in Schools and Colleges, has reminded people that "sport has often been used as a principal means of gaining good public relations and financial support, which, in turn, have enabled the institution to upgrade the quality of its academic offerings." ³⁷

To study image rehabilitation in chosen college athletics teams implies that the team's image must first have a problem. What defines a "problem" for each school in this study varies. For the University of Massachusetts at Amherst men's ice-hockey team, the "problem" with their image was that they had no image. The team was defunct for fifteen years, so the rehabilitation actually resided in establishing an image. As for the Fordham men's basketball team, the program decided that it wanted to improve on a positive image it had previously held. The women's field-hockey team at Indiana University of Pennsylvania needed to rehabilitate not necessarily its own image, but that of the athletic department and the entire school. The case of Indiana University of Pennsylvania is different in that it deals with a problem which has many more negative connotations than the other two cases and stretches far beyond the simple boundaries of athletics. The women's field-hockey team at Indiana University of Pennsylvania was not so much a case of athletics as it was of gender politics and discrimination. Here,

³⁷ Harold J. Vanderzwaag, Sport Management in Schools and Colleges (Canada: John Wiley & Sons, 1984),32

sports can help create a positive image for the athletic department and school. The NCAA has expressed such a potential in athletics via women's sports. Representatives of the NCAA have stated that their "approach to gender equity will indicate to the public our commitment to provide equal educational opportunities for all." ³⁸

The decision of a U.S. District Court to reinstate the women's field-hockey, as well as the women's gymnastics teams at the University of Pennsylvania, prompted the school to seek image rehabilitation not only for its athletics, but the school as a whole. At the time of the court ruling, a spokesperson for the school, William Swauger, said "the cuts had been necessitated by financial problems."³⁹ Since sports teams for women were cut at Indiana University of Pennsylvania when women constituted more than half the student population, the problem was not financial as Swauger indicated. Bob Byers offered these thoughts concerning image portrayal in colleges and universities:

Whether a particular institution practices candor ultimately rests on the willingness of those who run it to tolerate dissent and to face problems squarely. As Robert M. Rosenzweig, president of the Association of American Universities, has observed, more than nine times out of ten, what

³⁸ Gerdy, pg. 32.

³⁹ Deborah E. Blum, "Court Orders University to Reinstate Women's Teams" The Chronicle for Higher Education Nov. 1992

administrators call an 'image problem' is, in fact, a genuine problem.⁴⁰

Thus, research indicates that the key to image rehabilitation in collegiate athletics resides in the knowledge that college athletics must serve two audiences: education and sports. To establish a good image and maintain good public relations in college athletics requires knowing that the goals and fate of one are inextricably linked with the other. This study helps prove that public relations can not only affect the creation of a team's image, but also can help rehabilitate a team's image as well. Vanderzwaag said:

It is no small wonder that many of those responsible for the management of school and college sport programs have decided to pursue the individual objective of pursuing excellence and the institutional objective of enhancing the image of the school or college.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Bob Byers, "Court Orders University to Reinstate Women's Teams" The Chronicle for Higher Education 1990 pg.

⁴¹ Harold J. Vanderzwaag. Pg. 32.

Chapter Three

Study Design

Data Needed - The data needed for this study are the attitudes and behavior of college personnel and students about the image of the university athletic team following an image rehabilitation and revitalization. The author conducted interviews with the coach of each team in the study, a student-athlete from each team, the public relations director of each school, as well as a professor and the student-government president of each school. These individuals provided insight into the collegiate team from both sides of the fence; from within the team itself and from the campus community. These interviews provided the basis for the entire study.

While these interviews provide insight into how each team was able to accomplish image rehabilitation, the author assumes possible bias in asking only people who are actually part of the team. The public relations director, whose sole purpose is to speak positively about every aspect of the school, may also exhibit bias. To counter such bias and guarantee objectivity, interviews were also conducted with a professor and the student-government president, who do not necessarily have a vested interest in protecting the image of the sports team. The student-government president is a representative for the entire student body, not just the athletes, and can

accurately convey the perceptions of the student population. These two interviews from each school comprised the control group of the study.

Data Sources- The author chose three categories in which teams could be defined as “struggling.” The first category is a team that was defunct and then brought back into operation. For this, the author chose the men’s ice-hockey team at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. This team went defunct after the 1978 - 1979 season because of its continual downward spiral in competitiveness thanks to the elimination of athletic scholarships by school administration, and because the team lacked its own ice-hockey facility. The men’s ice-hockey team did not return to competition until the 1993-1994 season.

The second category is a program that had lost not only the interest of communities surrounding the school, but also the interest of the people at the school itself. For this, the author chose the men’s basketball team at Fordham University. Despite the men’s basketball team winning its conference championships in 1991 and 1992, attendance at home games was less than half the capacity of the 3,400 seat gymnasium. Fordham’s switch from the Patriot League to the Atlantic 10 conference helped give the school an advantage in a highly competitive, media-driven area like New York City and brought fans back to the gymnasium.

The third team was threatened with extinction, but saved by Title IX of

the Education Amendments of 1972, which bars sex discrimination by institutions which receive federal aid. In October of 1992, four female athletes sued Indiana University of Pennsylvania and claimed the school's decision to eliminate the women's field-hockey team, as well as the women's gymnastics team, was a violation of Title IX. The four women won the case on November 11 of that same year, and the field-hockey team was re-instated.

Research Methodology - The author conducted phone interviews of people from each of the following schools; Fordham University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Interviews with various people within these three institutions provided the study with a variety of opinions, as well as prevented a skewing of the study by a single interview.

The author conducted interviews of the coach of each team, a student-athlete from each team, and the public relations director from each school.

To cover all aspects of image rehabilitation for college athletic teams, the author divided the interview questions into six categories; personnel, funding, media relations, sponsorships/affiliations, image perception, and school-selected questions. The last category consists of questions that only apply to a specific school within this study, and the questions are listed under the school to which they apply.

Analysis of Data - The author analyzed the interview answers and used cross tabulations to report the research analysis. The cross tabulations revealed similarities in the image rehabilitation process of each school. This analysis provided insight into whether there is a particular **method** that must be used in order to rehabilitate a team, or whether there needs to be an actual **physical change** to bring about an attitude change. Physical change can entail things such as a new team logo or a new sports facility.

Chapter Four

Personnel

1. *Did you ever feel personnel change was necessary for the image rehabilitation of your college athletic team?*

IUP

In rehabilitating the image of the women's field-hockey team following the decision of the Title IX suit filed against IUP, the school and the athletic department did not feel a new head coach was needed. As public relations director Bill Slager said of coach Culfie Montgomery:

She was an outstanding coach. It was not a matter of her not doing her job. The school simply felt the money could be better spent on something like a women's soccer team, which has like 40 participants rather than eight or nine players.

Team captain Sue Rote felt that new coaching should have been pursued. She cited the fact that the coach has been at IUP for over 20 years, and that her record has been dwindling every year. "I think we are just starting to recover now, but I wouldn't give credit to the coaching. I would give it to the athletes." Speaking of the years before the school hired an assistant coach, Rote questioned how one person could handle 34 people. Rote said:

She could never spend time with just one person or group, because she insisted on keeping enough people on the roster for two teams.

She is the only coach that teaches at our school full-time, so I think that limited her time."

Following the suit, however, the athletic department felt it was necessary to hire an assistant coach. Coach Montgomery recalls that **"between varsity and junior varsity, we had 30 students that year. I couldn't do it by myself."** In 1993, the women's field-hockey team also received two student trainers, and the athletic department hired three certified trainers, one specifically for women's sports.

Fordham

The question of the need for personnel change to effectively execute image rehabilitation invoked responses for both sides. The fact that faculty of the school and students of the school gave both answers is even more compelling. Connie Mack, a fifth-year senior during the Ram's 1996-1997 campaign, did not feel that personnel change was necessary concerning the coaching staff. As for players on the team, Mack noted that **"it's the names of the players that make a difference. People want to see high performance and talent on the court."** However, Coach Macarchuck noted that some of the players on Fordham's present team were at Fordham when the school was still a member of the Patriot League. Both Coach Macarchuck and public relations director Joe DeBarry felt the existing coaching staff was not a hinderance to the image rehabilitation.

Since Fordham has moved to a much more competitive conference,

especially in basketball, some people have questioned whether or not a switch in the coaching staff is necessary. The student government president of Fordham, James Richichi, said “people say he’s (Nick Macarchuck) a great coach. But, god forbid a coach doesn’t go at least 50/50 nowadays. I look at other schools and wonder.” Objectively, Richichi noted that the coaches need a few years to ‘build up a base’ of new players. Similarly, Robert George, a professor of finance at Fordham, said “the coaches haven’t gotten the tools they need. You have to give them an opportunity.” George recanted, however, saying “they are in charge of recruiting, so if they can’t get it done, well then find someone who can.”

UMass

As for coaching, everyone agreed that a change was not necessary. Public relations director Mike McComiskey felt “the school made a good choice in Joe Mallen.” Professor Bob Daughtry agreed. He said

I know they recently signed coach Mallen to a four-year extension on his contract. The athletic director and the powers that be would not have done this if they weren’t satisfied with the performance of the personnel.

Because of the long layoff, the entire coaching staff was new. However, the trainer is the same one the men’s ice-hockey team had in the 1970s. The team was reinstated in April of 1993, so “most good recruits had already signed

with other schools. The players recruited weren't necessarily Division I caliber." (Mike McComiskey)

Sponsorships/Affiliations

1. During the time of your image rehabilitation, did you pursue sponsorships, corporate or otherwise?

IUP

Neither the team nor the athletic department pursued any type of sponsorship to help rehabilitate the team's image.

Fordham

Being in a high-profile conference like the Atlantic 10, Fordham pursued sponsorship, as well as the conference. The primary sponsor of the Atlantic 10 is US Air. Fordham has several sponsors that are retailers in the Bronx. When the Atlantic 10 finds sponsor, the schools within the conference give the sponsors ad space in their game programs. Joe DeBarry summarized the difference in sponsorship due to the change in conference. He said "being in a high-profile conference like the Atlantic 10 gave us the incentive to pursue more sponsorships than we had previously."

UMass

Sponsorship was pursued as part of the image rehabilitation. The athletic department has a person in charge of marketing and promotions. At the beginning of the team's revitalization, corporate sponsorship was pursued in the form of advertisement space on the ice-hockey rink's dasher boards and signs. The boards are now filled with sponsors; most notably Nynex and Nestle. The team has also had individual games sponsored. There have been five games sponsored since the team returned to play in 1993. Mike McComiskey explained that "Deciding what game to sponsor for the company, depends on how big of an audience is anticipated."

2. During the time of your image rehabilitation, did you consult your athletic conference for advice/help?

IUP

The team nor the athletic department consulted their conference following the court decision and the inception of the image rehabilitation. Bill Slager said the reason why the athletic department did not consult the conference was because "there was no animosity." However, coach Montgomery, who has been involved with Title IX since its inception, consulted a fellow coach.

Fordham

Consulting the conference for help/advice concerning Fordham's move was left mainly up to Joe DeBarry. He said it was important to seek advice because "each conference is different, and has different characteristics and criteria. Thus, it was very important to 'get in line' with the other schools of the conference."

UMass

The men's ice-hockey team did not seek the advice of the conference because coach Mallen had already been a coach in the conference for many years.

3. Did you seek the advice of other college athletic teams that had been through image rehabilitation?

IUP

The women's field-hockey team did not consult other teams that had been through a Title IX lawsuit for a simple reason - this case was the first of its kind.

Fordham

Mr. DeBarry emphasized the fact that the people at Fordham knew

what they were doing when they decided to switch conferences because they had made such a move before (moving from the MAAC - Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference - to the Patriot League). However, Coach Macarchuck said they sought the advice of most other schools in the conference, including St. Joseph's, Temple, LaSalle, and St. Bonaventure.

UMass

Seeking advice from teams that had been through the same form of image rehabilitation was next to impossible. The last collegiate ice-hockey team to jump straight into Division I was St. Louis in the 1970s, and that program was dropped after seven years. Presently, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Niagara University are trying to mimic the pioneering effort of UMass. Coach Mallen said "the schools have been in contact with me all the time, and every guy that has gone for a coaching interview has sought my advice."

Media Relations

1. Outside of the school, what media did you use to convey the message of the team's image rehabilitation?

IUP

Because of the magnitude of this ground-breaking Title IX lawsuit, the message of the team's reinstatement did not have to be conveyed by the school. Bill Slager explained that "because of the ruling, the media came to

us.” The decision was covered by both local and national media, including *Sports Illustrated* and *USA Today*. Radio and television stations also contacted the school. Coach Montgomery said

The media came to us because the situation took on a life of its own.

It was simply the nature of the beast. People would call me up all the time and ask for interviews.

Fordham

Conveying the message outside of Fordham was easier than it might be at other schools. There are four daily newspapers in New York City (*Daily News*, *Post*, *Newsday*, *Gannett*), and North Jersey papers cover Fordham athletics as well. Local television and radio stations also covered the announcement. Joe DeBarry recalled that “many people already knew we were going to switch conferences, so our press conference was well attended.”

UMass

Externally, the men’s ice-hockey team conveyed the message of its image rehabilitation through newspapers like the *Springfield Union* and the *New Hampshire Gazette*. Local radio and television also played a part. Mike McComiskey noted, “the involvement of radio station WHMT has increased. They only broadcast home games at first. Now, they cover every single game!” Coach Mallen recalled that “at the beginning, we also had

skating sessions where the general public could skate with the players and coaching staff.”

2. *Within the school, what media did you use to convey the message of the team's image rehabilitation?*

FUP

Student newspaper and school radio station. Also, the local town newspaper and radio station because students live off campus in the surrounding area.

Fordham

Within the school, getting the word out was done by mostly conventional methods - school newspaper and radio station. But the announcement was also posted on a electronic bulletin board outside of the athletic center.

UMass

The greatest method of conveying the message of the team's image rehabilitation around campus was the student newspaper called *The Collegian*. The student radio station also played a part, but as WHMT increased its coverage of the team, the school radio station decreased its coverage in favor of women's basketball. Also, student workers for the

athletic department pass out promotional flyers for games and have a table with a video tape and schedules in the student center.

Funding

1. Where did the funding for the team's image rehabilitation come from?

IUP

No funding for the image rehabilitation of the team came from outside the school. At state colleges, such as IUP, entities such as athletics are funded by student co-op associations. It was interesting to note, however, that the allotted 2 percent increase for the team's budget became much greater after the court decision. The team also began to offer scholarships thanks to fundraising conducted by the athletic department.

Fordham

Most importantly, moving to the Atlantic 10 meant Fordham had to offer scholarships again, which had to come from the school's own funding. With the switch, the men's basketball team received more money from the school annually for travel, referees, and recruiting. These monies came mostly from the school's booster club.

UMass

With the reinstatement of the men's ice-hockey team, the budget of the athletic department was expanded, because UMass is a state school. Alumni who played in the 1970s also contributed money to the team.

2. How did you use the funding for your image rehabilitation?

IUP

During the 1995 season, new astro-turf was installed in the stadium. Lights were installed and a visible scoreboard was erected. The women's field-hockey team was also moved from playing their games outside the stadium to inside the stadium proper. According to Culfie Montgomery, the location move for games made a significant difference. "The situation before hand was awful. The field we would have our competitions on before was called the 'practice field,' which in itself is already knocking us down a peg." Speaking of the changes made after the court decision and the location move of games specifically, Montgomery said, "we started to attract bigger crowds, and thanks to the scoreboard, students who lived in nearby dorms became curious."

New Coaching Staff? - 1 new assistant, 2 new student trainers

New Logo? - "No. But since the suit, the school has changed the logo from lowercase to capital letters. Now it is simply IUP."

New Team Colors? - No. But again, the university changed from maroon and slate to crimson and grey.

New Uniforms? - No.

"Originally, the school teams were called the Indians and Lady Indians. This did not provide equal opportunity for our sports because they did not have equitable 'images.' 'Lady' is seen as a put-down. 'Lady Indians' was first to go. Then, the school dropped the name altogether because you can't use a term or name that offends an entire group. The school simply switched to IUP."

(Culfie Montgomery)

Fordham

The move to the Atlantic 10 did not prompt the school to build a new athletic facility. In fact, **"Fordham's athletic facility is the oldest Division I gym still used in the country,"** remarked Joe DeBarry. While Fordham's metropolitan locale was an added bonus in terms of media coverage, here that fact hindered the school. DeBarry explained **"there is no room for expansion. And to be honest, I don't see any change coming for another five to ten years."**

Despite making a change in conference affiliation, the athletic department did not change the athletic logo. However, they did 'update' (Joe DeBarry) the ram to look meaner.

The colors of the school were also not changed, but the basketball team opted to make their uniforms 'more modern.' (Nick Macarchuck)

UMass

New Facility? Yes. The Mullins Multipurpose Center was financed by a bond 'outlay' program through the state. Students are repaying the bond through student fees. Because UMass is a state school, the state contributed some money to the center which did not have to be repaid.

New Coaching Staff? Yes.

New Logo? Yes. Coach Mallen explained that while the team did not abandon the 'minuteman,' he also wanted to use "an inverted triangle as a background for the design. CCM (Canadian Custom Made) said they couldn't do it, and that no one else had that design. But when the Anaheim Mighty Ducks entered the NHL and had the same design, my proposal went through without a hitch."

New Team Colors? No.

New Uniforms? Yes. Until 1973, the uniforms were modeled after the Chicago Blackhawks, because the school nickname was the Redmen. When the nickname was changed to the Minutemen, the team had a plain uniform which just said 'Massachusetts' across the jersey. When the team was reinstated in 1993, the uniforms were changed to have a more European look. Mike McComiskey used the uniform of Finland's national team as an

example. Coach Mallen pointed out that now “every piece of the uniform has solid colors.”

Image Perception

1.

A sports team should be willing to win at any cost?

	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
U.P.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Fordham	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
UMass	Disagree	Did Not Partici- pate	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree

The potency of responses varied. However, all respondents from every school felt that a college sports team should not be willing to win at any cost. All respondents from UMass simply “agree(d).”

A sports team should more concerned with fairness in a competition than with who wins the event?

	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
I.U.P.	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree
Fordham	No Opinion	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree
UMass	Strongly Agree	Did Not Participate	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

All public relations directors "agree" that a college sports team should be more concerned with fairness than with who wins the event.

A sports team should always be fair in competition?

	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
I.U.P.	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
Fordham	Strongly Agree	No Opinion	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
UMass	Strongly Agree	Did Not Participate	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion

Except for the professor of UMass, all other employees of each school

“strongly agree” that a college sports team should always be fair in competition.

2.

The college sports team should be well-known in its _____.

I.U.P.	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
1	Conference	Conference	National	National	Conference
2	State	State	Tri-State	Conference	Tri-State
3	National	Tri-State	State	State	State
4	Tri-State	National	Conference	Tri-State	National

The control group (SGA president and professor) for IUP thought that “state” should be ranked third.

Fordham	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
1	National	Conference	National	National	Conference
2	State	National	Tri-State	Tri-State	Tri-State
3	Tri-State	Tri-State	Conference	State	National
4	Conference	State	State	Conference	State

All employees of Fordham thought being known nationally was the most important category.

UMass	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
1	Conference	Did Not Participate	Conference	State	State
2	State	Did Not Participate	State	National	Tri-State
3	Tri-State	Did Not Participate	Tri-State	Conference	Conference
4	National	Did Not Participate	National	Tri-State	National

The control group (SGA president and professor) for UMass thought that the most important category for the college sports team to be known in is the school's state.

All students of IUP and Fordham thought “national” was the most important.

The SGA president of all three schools thought “tri-state” should be ranked second.

Coaches from all three schools thought that “state” should be ranked second.

3.

A college sports team should be most proud of which accomplishments? ____.

I.U.P.	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
1	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics
	Academics	Academics	Academics	Academics	Athletics
3	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Academics

Fordham	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
1	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics
2	Academics	Academics	Academics	Academics	Athletics
3	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Athletics	Academics

UMass	COACH	ATHLETE	P.R. Director	PROFESSOR	SGA President
1	Athletics/ Academics	Did Not Participate	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics	Athletics/ Academics
2	Academics	Did Not Participate	Athletics	Athletics	Academics
3	Athletics	Did Not Participate	Academics	Academics	Athletics

All interviewed placed the combination "athletics/academics" as their number one choice.

All coaches placed "academics" second and "athletics" third.

4. *Has the image rehabilitation merely restored your sports team to its original status or helped to surpass it?*

IUP

Responses can be directly divided between the selected athlete, and the staff of the school. Sue Rote, captain of the women's field-hockey team,

stands alone in her belief that the suit simply **restored** the old image of the team previous to the loss of funding from the school.

I don't think the school, as a whole, has a very good image. Overall, **our record** was worse after the suit than it was before the suit. The **athletes** don't want to come to a school that has had **trouble**. We had **athletes** leave during the suit to go play at other schools.

All interviewed, save Sue Rote and Dr. Christine Black, felt the new image of the team clearly surpassed the one it had previous to the landmark Title IX decision. Coach Montgomery summarized this sentiment, saying **"we're getting more press now - especially all the women's sports. Now students are recognized as athletes. Title IX has certainly made a difference."**

Fordham

The majority of those interviewed at Fordham felt the image rehabilitation of the men's basketball team has simply **restored** the image the team had when it belonged to the MAAC Conference. Most people interviewed felt that **"the jury is still out on the difference the conference has made."** (Robert George) People also feel the team needs a few more years to surpass the old image. It has only been two years since Fordham returned to scholarship athletes, and the basketball team must compete with national powers in basketball, such as UMass and Temple. Connie Mack noted that Fordham now has **"guys being first-round draft picks. Not only that, but the**

school has maintained its good academic standards - which was the reason for the move to the Patriot League in the first place."

All those interviewed felt Fordham's rigid academic standards make it harder for the teams to keep up athletically. Unfortunately, the overall image of a basketball team (even a collegiate basketball team), is not based on the player's academic performances. Joe DeBarry elicited such sentiment:

I think the problem is we're not winning. And when you're not winning, you're in trouble. But I think it's getting better, and in the future - like three to five years - we'll surpass it."

UMass

All interviewed agreed that the image rehabilitation of the men's ice-hockey team has been through has helped the team to surpass its old image. Mike McComiskey attributed this to the switch in NCAA division affiliation. "Before, the team was in Division II and was moderately successful. But Division II is just not the same as Division I." Coach Mallen expressed similar thoughts, noting that "every time we beat a different Division I team, it has never been done before by us. It is just completely different." Bob Daughtry said "the team is viewed in a positive light, and people see it is only going to get better."

5. Was there a target audience for the image rehabilitation? If so, what was it?

IUP

The target audience for the image rehabilitation was the recruits of the team, because people interviewed feel they are the key to the future of the team.

Fordham

There was not a target audience for the image rehabilitation. However, Joe DeBarry felt there was a message being relayed to the alumni that said "We're willing to invest now. We're willing to take athletics seriously again."

UMass

Both coach Mallen and Mike McComiskey felt the target audience was more the people of Pioneer Valley (area surrounding UMass) than the students of the school. Coach Mallen said "the growth of families brings more people into the building. The students are in and out, depending on how the wind blows." Mike McComiskey agreed and noted that students receive free tickets as part of their fees. He explained that "the residents of Pioneer Valley are where you make your money."

6. Is there any one change you feel has made the most impact in rehabilitating the team's image?

IUP

In rehabilitating the image of the women's field-hockey team, different opinions were expressed as to what one action has made the most impact. Both the public relations director for the school and the coach feel the court decision was the center. However, Culfie Montgomery feels that the subsequent scholarships and the team's move inside the stadium were the most important results. Whereas, Bill Slager feels the media exposure athletes received at IUP because of the trial was the most important result.

Fordham

In rehabilitating the image of the basketball team, "our switch of conference has made the difference." (Nick Macarchuck) Everyone else seems to agree. Joe DeBarry explained that "playing in the Patriot League against teams like Bucknell - not to take anything away from them or the conference - is not same as playing UMass. The competition is better and the facilities are better."

UMass

The change that has made the most difference for the image rehabilitation of the team is their involvement in youth hockey. Youth

hockey teams are given use of the Mullins Center, and special discounts on tickets for games. Mike McComiskey explained that “the team doesn’t make much money that way, but it helps build a following.”

8. In your opinion, which audience should be reached first to most influence the image rehabilitation process?

Culfie Montgomery felt the students are the most important audience to reach first because “if you don’t have the students, you don’t have anything.” Meanwhile, Bill Slager said he felt members of the team and their parents are the people that need to be reached first in order to most influence the rehabilitation process.

Fordham

When rehabilitating a team’s image, all interviewed felt the student body was the audience that needs to be reached first to have the most effective influence.

UMass

There was a difference of opinions as to what audience needs to be reached first for image rehabilitation. Some thought it was clearly the students and their families. Yet, as a public relations director, Mike McComiskey said the local media should be notified first, because “people tend to believe what they read. The message then gets hammered into their heads.”

Selected School Questions

UMass

2. Everyone agreed that construction of the Mullins Center was **necessary** for image rehabilitation because if it weren't built, the team was not going to be reinstated. Coach Mallen explained the importance of the Mullins Center:

The Mullins Center seats 7,400 people, which is the same as Wisconsin. In Hockey East (the highest ranked hockey conference in the country), we already have the fourth largest average attendance behind Maine, Boston University, and the University of New Hampshire."

Selected School Questions

Fordham

3. Coach Macarchuck felt that switching to a new conference was **necessary** for image rehabilitation. He said "the media exposure afforded by a conference can help a team's image." Joe DeBarry also noted the impact of media exposure on a team's image. Coach Macarchuck pointed out that the Patriot League's ranking among Division I conferences (rankings are determined by the wins/losses of the team within that conference, and the strength of

schedule for the teams within that conference i.e. who those teams play and the national rankings of their competition) is 31 out of 33.

5. Interviewees were split in their opinions when the following question was asked: "Was it necessary to move to the Atlantic 10 specifically, or did the program just need to leave the Patriot League?" Joe DeBarry felt any other Division I conference among the top ten would have sufficed for their image rehabilitation. "But the Atlantic 10 sets up some good rivalries for us. Plus, the Atlantic 10 has a lot of Catholic schools, like the Big East, which is a plus." Coach Macarchuck recalled: "There was an opening in the conference, and we seized the opportunity."

Chapter Five

The search for the answer or answers as to how the three chosen schools were able to rehabilitate their image is very difficult. Perhaps there is no one answer. When looking at any of the three schools, or when looking at them holistically, it must be remembered that each school has its own distinct characteristics, as well as characteristics any of the two might share. Like any pro-active or reactive steps the teams might have taken to bring about a change in their image, the characteristics of each school might also have been a factor.

The most important factor to remember when considering a collegiate sports team and how it is perceived by the athletic department or school as a whole is division affiliation. This study was comprised of two Division I teams (Umass and Fordham), and one Division II team (IUP). Many Division I collegiate sports generate a great deal of revenue, and many consider Division I sports simply a lower tier of professional sports. Thus, a great deal of emphasis is placed on such teams that is normally placed on professional teams. Attempting to summarize the problems that still linger for Fordham's men's basketball team and its image, Joe DeBarry said it could be attributed to the fact that the team does not have a winning record. Such a statement suggests that Division I sports have a bottom line - winning.

The other Division I school for this study has evidenced proof that division affiliation affects a team's image and how it approaches its sport. Mike McComiskey, public relations director for UMass, voiced a surprising difference of opinion when he said the residents of Pioneer Valley, and not the students of UMass, were the target audience for the image rehabilitation. The study revealed that IUP was the only school not to pursue any type of sponsorship during the image rehabilitation. That means both Division I schools pursued the financial aspect of image, while the Division II school did not. Thus, Division I college sports would seem to have a double-bottom line - winning and capital. During this study, those interviewed from IUP did not express any bottom line in its goals and objectives. Ergo, division affiliation plays a factor in image rehabilitation.

How a team portrays its image is not simply how it approaches its sport. There are many components. How a team communicates its image and the language members of the team use is important as well. For example, when the UMass ice-hockey team was revitalized, a web site was created for the team, and the team quickly used the language they desired to create an instant image. The web site said that the clear objective for the team was to become a 'national powerhouse.' This is a lofty goal for a team that was just revitalized after two decades of inactivity. People interviewed from spoke of how impressive their multi-million dollar athletic center is. They always referred to the Mullins Center as a 'facility,' whereas when Joe DeBarry spoke

of the 71 year-old athletic center at Fordham, he described it as the oldest Division I 'gym' in the country. Culfie Montgomery recalled that during the time the Title IX suit was in court, she had "30 students that year." Not only does her decision to give the academic 'label' signify how important language is in communicating image, but it also reaffirms the idea that division affiliation is a component to a college team's overall image. Language and communication play a factor in image rehabilitation.

Perhaps the most unique method of conveying the message of image rehabilitation was displayed by the ice-hockey team at UMass. Coach Mallen spoke of their open skating sessions in which members of the team and the coaching staff would skate with people from the surrounding area. This method was very effective because UMass is located in a enclosed mountain valley away from any large city. If Fordham had used such a method, the impact would have been very minimal because the school is located in a large city like New York. UMass ice-hockey games are not covered by the school radio station. They are covered by the local commercial radio station WHMT. Surely, large commercial radio stations in New York City would not sacrifice valuable air time for Fordham men's basketball games. By the same token, Fordham's move to the Atlantic 10 received wide coverage because they are located in a large metropolis. Therefore, the location of a college or university can have an impact on how its sports teams construct/rehabilitate their image.

During the image rehabilitation process, the women's field-hockey team at IUP and the men's basketball team at Fordham were given increases in their budgets. The budget change for each team was funded for different reasons. The women's field-hockey team was given an increase because they are a state school. Fordham men's basketball team was given an increase because of the new conference. It does not matter how a change in funding is brought about, but it seems that to rehabilitate a team's image, the change must be an increase compared to the team's previous budget.

When James Richichi, the student government president of Fordham, was interviewed, he felt the basketball team needs "a few years to build up a base." Professor of finance Robert George resounded such thoughts. He said "The coaches haven't gotten the tools they need. You have to give them an opportunity." When Mike McComiskey talked about how the men's ice-hockey team at UMass helps out youth hockey and gives young players discounts on ticket prices, he explained that while such a method does not increase revenue, it does increase fan support. These comments make it clear that a sports team cannot change or rehabilitate their image overnight. Image rehabilitation is a process, and takes a significant amount of time.

The women's field-hockey team at Indiana University of Pennsylvania offered a unique situation to the study. This because a Title IX suit is really about gender equity, not sports. Thus, the entire school was affected, not just the women's field-hockey team. It was discovered during the study that the

school made immense changes. The athletic department hired a trainer exclusively for women's sports. The school changed its logo and school colors. Most importantly, Culfie Montgomery explained how the school changed the team names from 'Indians' and 'Lady Indians' to 'TUP.' When a college sports team faces a Title IX suit, the ramifications can be great, and rehabilitating the team's image requires change across the board, not just with the team in question.

All those interviewed at each school said that a college sports team should strive to have a good balance of academics and athletics. When senior Connie Mack was interviewed about the men's basketball team at Fordham and their switch in conference affiliation, he felt it was important that the team, and ultimately the school has maintained its good academic standards. When people were asked to rank a team strictly on the importance of academics or strictly on the importance of athletics, many said that in a perfect world, academics should take precedence - but that college athletics is not a perfect world. Academics is the main distinction between college teams, and professional and semi-professional teams. Not only do academics play a factor in college sports by deciding who is eligible to compete, but they also affect how the players of a team and the team as a whole is perceived.

It is not possible to produce figures as to how important each factor is in rehabilitating a team's image. The author could not produce percentages as to how each factor figures into the overall scheme of a team's image. This is

because there really is no way to find percentages. This was a qualitative study as opposed to a quantitative study, and is only able to discover which factors exist in image rehabilitation - not the importance or insignificance of each one. Image is an over-arching term with many components. However, that fact cannot be misconstrued to mean that image is not important. This study provides merely the basics for the image rehabilitation process in regards to college athletic teams.

Thesis Instrument

Personnel

1. Did you ever feel personnel change was necessary for the image rehabilitation of your college athletic team?

Sponsorships/Affiliations

1. During the time of your image rehabilitation, did you pursue sponsorships, corporate or otherwise?
2. During the time of your image rehabilitation, did you consult your athletic conference for advice/help?
3. Did you seek the advice of other college athletic teams that had been through image rehabilitation?

Media Relations

1. Outside of the school, what media did you use to convey the message of the team's rehabilitation? (radio, t.v., newspaper, media guide)
2. Within the school, what media did you use to convey the message of the team's image rehabilitation? (radio, t.v., newspaper, flyers on campus)

Funding

1. Where did the funding for the team's image rehabilitation come from?

Outside the University?

Inside the University?

Combination of both?

2. How did you use the funding for your image rehabilitation?

New facility?

New coaching staff?

New logo?

New team colors/uniforms?

Other?

Image Perception

1. I'm going to read to you three statements. After each statement, tell me which word most accurately expresses how you feel about the statement.

A sports team should be willing to win at any cost.

Agree (Strongly Agree Agree)

Disagree (Strongly Disagree Disagree)

No Opinion (Why?)

A sports team should be more concerned with fairness in a competition than with who wins the event.

Agree (Strongly Agree Agree)

Disagree (Strongly Disagree Disagree)

No Opinion (Why?)

A sports team should always be fair in competition.

Agree (Strongly Agree Agree)

Disagree (Strongly Disagree Disagree)

No Opinion (Why?)

2. Now, I am going to read a statement with four answers. After I read all four answers, I will go back and repeat them. When I do, please rank each one 1 - 4.

The sports team should be well known in its athletic conference ____
in its state ____
in its tri-state area ____
nationally ____

3. I am going to read you three statements that deal with a team and its accomplishments. After I read all three answers, I'll go back and repeat them. When I do, please rank each one 1 - 3.

A team should be most proud of its athletic accomplishments ____
its academic accomplishments ____
both good academics and good athletics ____

4. Has the image rehabilitation merely restored your sports team to its original status or helped to surpass it?

5. Was there a target audience for the image rehabilitation? If so, what was it?

6. Is there any one change you feel has made the most impact in rehabilitating the team's image?

7. In your opinion, which audience should be reached first to most influence the image rehabilitation process?

8. What channels did you use to communicate the new image to the target audiences?

Selected School Questions

University of Massachusetts at Amherst

1. Was the construction of the Mullins Center necessary for the rehabilitation of the ice-hockey team's image or was it just an incentive?

2. If the Mullins Center was not necessary, how important was its impact?

Fordham University

3. Was Fordham's switch to a new conference necessary for the image rehabilitation of the men's basketball team?

4. If Fordham's move to the Atlantic 10 was not necessary, how important was its impact?

5. Was it necessary to move to the Atlantic 10 specifically, or did the program just need to leave the Patriot League?

			X				X								X	
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