

5-9-2018

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Recommended Citation

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One Nation, One Team: A Historical Analysis of Inequalities between Men's and Women's Professional Soccer

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GSWS Capstone
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5/9/2017

Background:

The sport of soccer is one of the oldest and most popular organized athletic activities in the world. When comparing participation rates, revenue figures, and overall popularity, there is no doubt that soccer deserves the title of “the world’s sport.” It has been utilized to bring many nations together by rallying for a common cause, fostering incorporation and participation, and providing a source of entertainment to millions. According to the International Federation of Association Football, FIFA, around 265 million people currently play the game of soccer in an organized manner across the world (FIFA).¹ This does not include pick-up games amongst classmates or one-on-one style showdowns on the playground. And an even larger margin of the world’s population follows the sport as fans. From a global perspective, no other sport can even remotely compare to the magnitude of popularity that soccer has achieved over the past several centuries.

In America, the United States Soccer Federation (U.S.S.F.) governs the sport of soccer at the youth recreational, teen elite, and adult professional levels. The U.S.S.F. is one of the few organizations in the country that governs both the men’s and women’s sides of the respective sport. For example, in professional basketball, the WNBA governs the women’s professional league in the U.S. This is a separate entity from the NBA, which governs the men’s side of the game. The U.S.S.F. is devoted to developing soccer players from each gender within the United States, but throughout history, the organization has placed a greater emphasis on the development of men’s soccer. At the adult professional level of U.S. soccer, female players and coaches have experienced inequality at the hands of the U.S.S.F. in comparison to their male counterparts. Inequalities experienced by these individuals include wage discrimination of coaches and players, a lack of television broadcasting space, a sexualized portrayal in the public eye, a shortage of women in positions of power, and a lack of award recognition. The U.S. women’s national team has dominated the world stage since 1996, but they have been consistently marginalized by the United States Soccer Federation despite their success.

The game of soccer is said to have originated in China, Spain, Greece, and Brazil, but modernized in England. It was introduced in the United States in the late 1800s.² The new sport immediately grasped the attention of the general public of the United States. Demand began to grow for organized games and leagues, similar to the ones that existed in Europe at the time. In 1904, the worldwide organization governing the sport of soccer, FIFA, was created and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) voted to incorporate the sport of soccer in the world games.³ This generated an even greater level of interest by the American public. So in 1913, the United States Football Association was created.⁴ This first U.S. governing body of professional soccer almost immediately established a partnership with FIFA. The organization was in charge

¹ Kunz, Matthias. "Big Count." FIFA Magazine. July 2007. Accessed February 21, 2018. http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/fifafacts/bcoffsurv/emaga_9384_10704.pdf.

² Kitching, Gavin. "FEATURE: MODERN SPORT: SOCIETY AND COMPETITION The Origins of Football: History, Ideology and the Making of ‘The People’s Game’." *History Workshop Journal* 79, no. 1 (March 1, 2015): 127-53. Accessed February 11, 2018. doi:10.1093/hwj/dbu023.

³ "U.S. Soccer Timeline." U.S. Soccer. 2015. Accessed December 31, 2017. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/history/timeline>.

⁴ "History." U.S. Soccer. Accessed February 21, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/history>.

of monitoring all levels of men's football games, leagues, and player development within the United States. Another well-established athletic association, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), saw the newer association as a means to increase the popularity of the sport of soccer and decided to negotiate a partnership agreement with the United States Football Association shortly after its creation. In 1945, the United States Football Association underwent a name change and became the U.S. Soccer Football Association. None of the organization's governing responsibilities changed as a result of this.⁵ In 1959, the NCAA incorporated the first men's soccer championship season. This new elimination-style tournament added a new level of competitiveness to the game. Watching the successful reforms carried out in many different departments of the NCAA, the owners of the U.S. Soccer Football Association decided to restructure their organization. The U.S.S.F.A. restructuring involved a new development program for youth players and competitive youth teams that competed on the world stage.⁶ To top off the reform, the organization underwent another name change and became the United States Soccer Federation. The U.S.S.F. devoted the necessary resources to become one of most dominating soccer associations in the world, and shortly after, it began to see beneficial results.

Only a few years before the creation of the U.S. Soccer Federation, Congress passed a federal law that would change the culture of U.S. society in an extremely positive way. In June of 1972, Title IX of the Education Amendments was signed by President Richard Nixon. This law prohibits discrimination based on sex in any federally funded education program or activity.⁷ In the realm of organized sports, it has three stipulations: participation opportunities for women, the availability of athletic scholarships for women, and equal treatment of male and female athletes by their school.⁸ The law does not require exact parity, but it does require substantially equal opportunity. The same exact facilities, resources, and funding are not required, but they must not show great disparity. An organization or school is said to be in compliance with Title IX if men and women compete in organized athletics in numbers substantially proportionate to their enrollment. Also, an institution is in compliance with the law if the school has a continuing desire to expand based off of the interests, abilities, and desires of the underrepresented sex. Lastly, they are in compliance if the school's existing programs fully and efficiently accommodate the interests of the underrepresented sex.⁹ Title IX had an immediate effect on the growth and popularity of sports in the United States. In 1971, only 7.4% of students participating in interscholastic sports were female.¹⁰ In 1973, only one year after Title IX was introduced, that number had risen to 17.2%. By 1979, that number was up to 31.9%.¹¹ Statistics showed an

⁵ "U.S. Soccer Timeline." U.S. Soccer. 2015. Accessed December 31, 2017. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/history/timeline>.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ "Overview Of Title IX Of The Education Amendments Of 1972, 20 U.S.C. A§ 1681 Et. Seq." The United States Department of Justice. Accessed January 13, 2018. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/overview-title-ix-education-amendments-1972-20-usc-1681-et-seq>.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Buchanan, Maggie Jo Poertner. "Title IX Turns 40: A Brief History and Look Forward." *Texas Review of Entertainment and Sports Law* 14, no. 1 (2012): 91-93. Accessed February 12, 2018. <http://ezproxy.holycross.edu:2101/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=6&sid=dd6eee38-c31c-446f-9583-cc05d8797fe1@sessionmgr103>.

¹⁰ Hickok, Ralph. *The Encyclopedia of North American Sports History*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977.

¹¹ "Overview Of Title IX Of The Education Amendments Of 1972, 20 U.S.C. A§ 1681 Et. Seq." The United States Department of Justice. Accessed January 13, 2018. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/overview-title-ix-education-amendments-1972-20-usc-1681-et-seq>.

immediate jump in the popularity of soccer due to a peak in women's interest and involvement after 1972. This number would continue to grow steadily for the next three decades.

After the implementation of Title IX, it did not take long for pre-existing organizations to start creating women's teams and leagues. In 1982, the NCAA incorporated its first ever women's championship season to accompany the already existing men's championship.¹² Three years later, in 1985, the U.S. Soccer Federation created the first ever United States women's national soccer team. In their debut season, the team played four games and did not win a single match. In the next two years, the team posted winning records of 4-2 and 6-4, respectively.¹³ After two mediocre years in 1989 and 1990, the team began its dominant reign as one of the best women's national soccer teams in the world. From 1990 to 1995, the women's national team posted a 71-15-3 record.¹⁴ These impressive numbers did not include only friendly international matches, but also appearances on the world of soccer's highest stage. In 1991, the United States of America was crowned the Women's World Cup champions of the twelve team tournament. This came after a tough victory against Norway in the final match. Four years later, in 1995, the team came in third in the prestigious tournament.¹⁵ After two Women's World Cup appearances and an impressive record over the team's ten year existence, the U.S. women's national team had assumed a powerful position as one of the best female soccer teams in the world.

The twenty year span from 1996 to 2016 has been a fundamental span of time for the development of the U.S. women's national team. According to FIFA, the team has achieved the top-ranking in the world nine years out of the total twenty, and they have remained in the top two for the entire period of time.¹⁶ While the dominance of the U.S. women has remained consistent, their treatment on and off the pitch has not. The U.S. Soccer Federation is one of the only professional sports organization in the United States that governs both the men's and women's side of the game. Two separate organizations, like the NBA and WNBA, can each make separate decisions about facilities, pay, and treatment of the players. This makes it more difficult to prove direct and intentional discrimination based on gender. Meanwhile, the U.S. Soccer Federation governs both men's and women's professional soccer. Over the twenty year period, the inequalities between men's and women's soccer in the U.S. have encompassed wage discrimination, television broadcasting coverage discrepancies, differences in sponsorships and media portrayal of players, unequal playing and living conditions, disparate gender roles in positions of power, and a lack of award recognition. An overwhelming amount of evidence exists to support the claim that the U.S. women's national soccer team receives unequal treatment compared to the men's national team, even though the amount of time and energy they dedicate and the results they have produced mirrors or excels past that of the men.

¹² "DI Women's Soccer Championship History." NCAA.com. December 13, 2017. Accessed December 23, 2017. <https://www.ncaa.com/history/soccer-women/di>.

¹³ "WNT History." U.S. Soccer. Accessed December 15, 2017. <https://www.ussoccer.com/womens-national-team/records/wnt-history>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "U.S. Soccer Timeline." U.S. Soccer. 2015. Accessed December 31, 2017. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/history/timeline>.

¹⁶ "The FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking - Ranking Table." FIFA.com. Accessed February 12, 2018. <http://www.fifa.com/fifa-world-ranking/ranking-table/men/index.html>.

Pay and Wage Inequality:

The U.S. Soccer Federation is in charge of portraying the United States as a dominant force on the soccer field at the youth, teen, and adult professional levels, but the organization is also a business. The U.S.S.F. has to oversee the cost of renting practice facilities and reserving stadiums for games. It has to pay fees for player development, player travel, and team tournament entry. It has to manage assets and investments to maintain longevity. Lastly, the U.S.S.F. is responsible for paying the salaries of all the adult professional players who dedicate their time and effort to these teams. With an organization of this size and measure, it is easy for certain inequalities to arise and go relatively unnoticed. Within the U.S. Soccer Federation, one of the reoccurring inequalities has been the increasing wage gap between both players and coaches based on gender. This discrepancy has been disguised for many years because the men's team players have a different contract structure from the women's team players. The contracts of the men's team have always been negotiated as a pay for play approach in which the men would be paid for each individual appearance they make. Bonuses would follow depending on the team's success in the match and the skill level of the opponent. The women's contracts consisted of a monthly stipend or an annual base salary with bonuses being awarded for team success in major tournaments or games. This difference in the pay methods has allowed the federation to disguise the gender inequality. Since 1996, the U.S. Soccer Federation has been paying the men's national team coaches and players more, on average, than their female counterparts. The coaches on both sides of the organization receive contracts which include a set term as head coach with a guaranteed salary laid out in the document. This makes it easy to directly expose the wage discrimination experienced by the coaches on the women's side of the sport in comparison to the men's.

The Coaches:

Within the U.S. Soccer Federation, the women's players and coaches see discrepancies between the amount of revenue brought in by the organization and the amount of money the individuals receive via income. Coaching staff members have tried to uncover where all of the excess revenue is being allocated and have come up empty handed. In recent years, there has been a great deal of media coverage surrounding the comparisons of pay between coaching staff members on the men's and women's sides of the game. The lack of involvement of female coaches in professional sports, combined with the pre-existing issue of wage discrepancy based on gender in the American workplace, has created a movement that seeks to shed light on pay discrepancies in U.S. soccer.

Tony DiCicco was the head of the U.S. women's national soccer team from 1996 to 1999. During his reign, he won an Olympic gold medal and a Women's World Cup trophy. He is seen as one of the best coaches in the history of U.S. women's soccer. His successor, April Heinrichs, did not see an equivalent degree of success. She dealt with a team-wide boycott, multiple heartbreaking losses on the world stage, and a lack of respect from high profile players like Tiffany Milbrett. But both of these coaches led the U.S. women's national soccer team to a

FIFA ranking of, at the worst, number two in the world. For most of this ten-year span, the team remained in the top slot in the world. On the men's side, the national team was run by head coach Steve Sampson from 1995 to 1998. His squad finished dead last out of thirty-two teams in the 1998 World Cup. Bruce Arena took over after Sampson's subpar performance and headed the team all the way until 2006. During Sampson and Arena's ten year combined reign, the U.S. men's national team clawed its way to the number eight spot on FIFA's world rankings. That was the highest ranking they received, but they also dropped as low as 31 throughout the ten-year reign. Because of different privacy regulations, the United States Soccer Federation did not have to release any of the coaches' salaries, men's or women's, during this time period. Data and reports from the coaching staffs suggest that even though the U.S. women were dominant throughout the decade, their coaches received a salary significantly less than their male counterparts. Unfortunately, the general public had to wait until 2003 to see the first concrete proof that the U.S.S.F. was paying the head coaches on the men's side of the game higher salaries than the head coaches on the women's side.

It is often difficult to directly compare salaries and bonus opportunities of two coaches because the contracts are not normally being signed the same year, and the presence in major tournaments and general game appearances are usually different. These factors can all affect the income of individuals within a fiscal year. With U.S. Soccer, the contracts typically align in duration and minor stipulations negotiated, even though the contracts may not line up by the exact year they were signed. One excellent example of this involves the contracts of the men's and women's national teams' coaches beginning in 2003. In January of that year, Bruce Arena signed a new contract with the United States men's national team that extended until December 31, 2006. His base compensation for the months between January 2003 and December 2006 was \$41,667 per month.¹⁷ In total, he earned about \$500,000 per year and a little over 2 million dollars in base compensation during his second, four year residency as head coach. In reality, he earned more than 2 million because of different U.S. and major world tournament bonuses. Two years later, in April 2005, Greg Ryan signed a contract to become the new head coach of the U.S. women's national team. Unlike Arena, his contract was not an extension but a promotion because Ryan served as the assistant of the women's team for the previous two years. His contract began in April 2005 and would extend until December 31, 2007.¹⁸ His base compensation from April 2005 to December 2006 was \$15,000 per month. He earned about \$135,000 in base compensation for his first year. With bonuses from the U.S. Soccer Federation, he earned a total of \$152,864 in his first fiscal year. That rate held during his second year, where he earned around \$180,000 in base compensation.¹⁹ When including bonuses for his second year, Ryan received a total of \$202,430 from the U.S.S.F.²⁰ Beginning in January of 2007, Ryan's

¹⁷ The United States Soccer Federation. "Financial Statements Years Ended March 31, 2006 and 2005." News release. Financial Statements. Accessed February 31, 2018. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/2006 Audited Financials.pdf (1).pdf.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The United States Soccer Federation. "Financial Statements Years Ended March 31, 2006 and 2005." News release. Financial Statements. Accessed February 31, 2018. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/2006 Audited Financials.pdf (1).pdf.

²⁰ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2007. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/FY%2007%20990pdf%20(8).pdf

base compensation increased to \$15,800 per month. In his last year, he earned about \$189,600 in base salary.

The discrepancy between the pay of Bruce Arena and Greg Ryan is made evident via their publicly disclosed contract negotiations and their total yearly salary earned. To make a more direct comparison, in the fiscal year of 2005-2006, Bruce Arena made \$899,644 including bonuses. Meanwhile, Greg Ryan made \$152,864, including bonuses.²¹ These bonuses did not include outside sources, such as ones awarded by the World Cup committee or other major tournament committees. These figures only include U.S.S.F bonuses. The discrepancy between the U.S.S.F. salary of the two coaches for one year of pay was \$746,780. To make the discrimination even more clear, Glenn Myernick, the assistant coach of the men's national team at the time, made \$134,669--including bonuses--that same year. The assistant coach of the men's national team only made \$18,195 less than the head coach of the women's national team.²² These comparisons during one fiscal cycle are eye-opening for the general public, but one must keep in mind that this number is also contingent on the amount of opportunities presented to each coach to earn bonuses throughout the year. Money is rewarded via bonuses for appearances and success in major tournaments, increased revenue via ticket and jersey sales, and overall success of the team on a global scale. The men's team appeared in the World Cup during 2006, so it was expected that Arena would make more money in bonuses than Ryan during that fiscal cycle. The discriminatory aspect of the comparison lies in the differences in base compensation between the two coaches.

Bruce Arena's men's team had a subpar performance at the 2006 World Cup, and he was quickly replaced by Bob Bradley. Bradley signed a contract ranging from December 1, 2006 to December 31, 2010.²³ In the first fiscal year of Bradley's contract, which consisted of December 2006 to the end of March 2007, he made \$228,389. This number included bonuses, but only consisted of four months of pay. In that same fiscal cycle, Greg Ryan made \$202,430. Greg Ryan worked eight months longer than Bradley, but he still received \$25,959 less in total salary. It is impossible to note how much of the \$228,389 was base compensation and how much was bonus money because Bradley's contract was not released to the public that year. The comparison is still shocking, not only because Bradley worked eight months less than Ryan, but also because Bradley was just beginning his tenure while Ryan was nearing the end of his. Greg Ryan achieved great success as the head coach of the U.S. women's team, but ultimately, the organization relieved him of his duties as head coach at the end of the fiscal year.

In April of 2007, the U.S. Soccer Federation entered into a contract with one of the most desired female coaches in the world. Pia Sundhage's original contract was not publicly disclosed, but audit files produced by the federation allowed her salary to be seen by the public throughout each fiscal year. In the first five months of her contract, she made \$62,500 in base compensation

²¹ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2006. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/2006%20990pdf%20(3).pdf

²² Ibid.

²³ The United States Soccer Federation. "Financial Statements Years Ended March 31, 2007 and 2006." News release. Financial Statements. Accessed February 31, 2018. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/2007%20Audited%20Financials.pdf%20(3).pdf

according to federal audit reports.²⁴ During the 2007-2008 fiscal cycle, Bradley made \$399,996 in base compensation. He had the option to earn bonuses in the same manner as his predecessor and ended up bringing in \$452,500 from the federation in total.²⁵ Obviously, one cannot make an accurate comparison between these two figures because the timelines do not add up, but it is still interesting to note. In the 2008-2009 fiscal cycle, Sundhage received \$153,332 in base compensation and a total of \$257,000 when including U.S.S.F. bonuses. During that same fiscal year, Bob Bradley received \$412,497 in base compensation and a total of \$499,025 with U.S.S.F. bonuses.²⁶ He made \$242,025--nearly double what Sundhage made. Many observers considered this outrageous because she was a world-renowned coach and player with global coaching opportunities. Even the men's national team assistant coach, Piotr Nowak, made almost as much as Sundhage that year with a salary of \$230,025.²⁷ It was Sundhage's first full year at the helm, so many spectators expected her contract to include a decent pay increase in the following fiscal year.

In 2009-2010, Pia Sundhage made more in terms of base compensation but less in terms of total salary. This was due to a slight decrease in the amount of bonus money she earned. Sundhage brought in \$163,332 in base compensation and \$207,667 in total income for 2009-2010 year. Bob Bradley brought in \$625,833 in base compensation and \$794,025 in total.²⁸ This was a very big increase for Bradley from the previous year. The only significant explanation would be that the men's team competed in a large amount of qualification games as they attempted to earn a spot in the 2010 World Cup. But either way, it is interesting to note the jump in Bradley's total income while Sundhage's decreased, especially since neither team competed in a major tournament that year. In the 2010-2011 fiscal year, Sundhage earned \$173,336 in base compensation.²⁹ Her total salary was not even released by the organization during that year because only the top five salaries of non-executive members (i.e. coaches and players) must be included on the audit forms. Because the men competed in the World Cup and advanced to the round of sixteen, Bob Bradley and four of his players took up the top five highest paid positions. Bob Bradley, during the World Cup year, brought in \$500,004 in base compensation and a total income of \$915,647.³⁰ The other non-executive members of U.S. Soccer to make the list included four men's national team players-- Carlos Bocanegra, Michael Bradley, Landon Donovan, and Tim Howard. All of these male players made over \$339,000, which meant that

²⁴ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2007. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/FY%2007%20990pdf%20(3).pdf

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2009. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/FY%202009%20990pdf%20(3).pdf

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2010. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/FY%202010%20990%20(2).pdf

²⁹ The United States Soccer Federation. "Financial Statements Years Ended March 31, 2010 and 2011." News release. Financial Statements. Accessed February 31, 2018. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/USSF%20FY11%20Audited%20Financial%20Statements%20Final%20(5).pdf

³⁰ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2011. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/USSF%20Public%20Disclosure%202010%20990%20FYE%20033111%20(3).pdf

Sundhage's total salary for the year was less than that.³¹ That final year of Bob Bradley's contract should not be utilized to argue the point that Sundhage made a great deal less than Bradley and the men's national team players because it was a men's World Cup year in which the U.S. advanced to the round of sixteen. As previously mentioned, each side of the organization tends to receive a pay increase during the World Cup years. The women's team did not compete in a major tournament that year. They only competed in qualification matches for their world cup which was going to be played in the following year. It is important to note that Bob Bradley made significantly more than Pia Sundhage in his tenure as the men's national team coach, despite Sundhage's impressive resume and success.

In August 2011, U.S. Soccer relieved Bob Bradley of his duties as head coach and signed a world-renowned male coach to become the head of the men's national team. Jürgen Klinsmann signed a contract extending from August 2011 to the end of August 2014. The U.S.S.F. restructured the way in which they negotiated contracts with coaches beginning with Klinsmann. The organization no longer gave exact monthly stipend numbers in the negotiation. Instead they negotiated annual contracts. The organization also stopped releasing the precise base salary that each coach would be guaranteed during his or her tenure. In a release statement from the organization, Klinsmann would be making an estimated base compensation of 2.5 million dollars per year.³² The statement also said that Klinsmann could possibly earn bonuses ranging between \$500,000 and \$10.5 million dollars for success leading up to and during the 2014 World Cup.³³ Now, the U.S. Soccer Federation had two world-renowned coaches heading their men's and women's national teams. According to audit reports released by the organization, Jürgen Klinsmann earned \$1,041,667 in total salary from August 2011 to March 2012. Sundhage made \$183,332 in base compensation and netted a total income of \$286,808 for the entire twelve month cycle.³⁴ The \$754,859 difference is astounding, considering Klinsmann was paid for eight months of work. Sundhage had completed a twelve-month cycle and had led her team to a second place finish in the 2011 Women's World Cup. She had established herself as an extremely successful coach of the women's national team over several years, while Klinsmann was just beginning. In the following year, Pia Sundhage made \$309,526 in base compensation. This was the highest total salary income that Sundhage earned to date. This was because the U.S. women's national team competed in the 2012 Olympics and won the entire tournament. But upon seeing that Klinsmann made \$2,498,876 in the same year, she decided that it was time for her to move on from this coaching position.³⁵ Sundhage knew that she had other opportunities in

³¹ Ibid.

³² The United States Soccer Federation. "Financial Statements Years Ended March 31, 2013 and 2012." News release. Financial Statements. Accessed February 31, 2018.
file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%20%20%20FY13%20Final%20Audit%20Report%20(1).pdf

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2012.
file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/USSF%202011%20Form%20990%20Public%20Disclosure%20Copy%202011%2013%20(5).pdf

³⁵ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2013.
file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%2012%20Federal%20Form%20990%20Public%20Disclosure%2013014%20(2).pdf

clubs throughout the world, and as a result, she almost immediately received the head coaching job for the women's national team in Sweden.

When Pia Sundhage resigned in November of 2012, the U.S. Soccer Federation was tasked with the responsibility of signing a new coach to a contract with the women's national team. In January of 2013, Tom Sermanni signed on as the new head of the women's national team. His negotiated tenure would extend from November of 2012 until December of 2016. His base compensation was set between \$195,000 and \$210,000 per year for his time with the team.³⁶ He also had the opportunity to earn bonuses ranging from \$25,000 to \$80,000 if the U.S. women were to appear and achieve success in the 2015 World Cup.³⁷ The coaching contracts of Jürgen Klinsmann and Tom Sermanni are the easiest to compare to date because they were signed less than two years apart, they had the same length of duration, both contracts were annual salaries instead of monthly stipends, and both coaches would be competing in a major tournament in the latter half of the contract. For Klinsmann, he would have the chance to coach his team to a 2014 World Cup win and a 2016 Olympic victory. For Sermanni, he would have the opportunity to clinch a 2015 Women's World Cup victory and a 2016 Olympic gold medal. The only difference between these two men is the resume that they have. Klinsmann was an extremely qualified coach and was highly sought after on the world stage. Sermanni did not have the same flurry of opportunities. In the first full year of Sermanni's contract, he made \$204,035, including bonuses. During the same year, Klinsmann made \$2,498,815 including bonuses.³⁸ With the new contract negotiation stipulations within the U.S. Soccer Federation, it is impossible to determine how much each coach made in base compensation. Either way, Klinsmann made almost tenfold that of Sermanni in total salary for that year. That may have been due partially to the fact that it was Germany's first year as head coach or due to the fact that Klinsmann was a highly desired coach throughout the world. Many people believe that there were different contributing factors, but one evident was the gender of the team each man coached. Even the men's national team assistant coach, Andrea Herzog, was making more than Sermanni during that year. His total income for the was \$302,500.³⁹ But in 2014, after a subpar performance throughout his first year as head coach, Tom Sermanni was fired by the U.S. Soccer Federation. This would open the door to an extremely interesting comparison between coaching contracts, as another woman was about to assume the head coaching position of the U.S. women's national team.

In May 2014, Jill Ellis was named the new head coach of the U.S. Women's National Team. She signed a contract extending through July 2015 that consisted of a base compensation

³⁶ The United States Soccer Federation. "Financial Statements Years Ended March 31, 2014 and 2013." News release. Financial Statements. Accessed February 31, 2018.
file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%20FY2014%20Audited%20Financial%20Statements%20%20FINAL%20(3).pdf

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2014.
file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202013%20Public%20990%20(3).pdf

³⁹ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2013.
file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%202012%20Federal%20Form%20990%20Public%20Disclosure%2013014%20(2).pdf

of between \$185,000 and \$215,000.⁴⁰ This contract is relatively equal in nature to the one that Tom Sermanni signed about a year and a half earlier. She had the ability to earn bonuses through her first contract, if the team had success in the 2015 Women's World Cup. Sermanni's contract was supposed to be a three year contract that also had the potential to earn the 2015 World Cup bonus. In the first fiscal year of her contract, Ellis' total income was not released by the federation because the men's national team competed in the World Cup and took the five highest paid non-executive positions on the audit form. Klinsmann's salary of \$3,207,110 took the top position. Then, four men's team players all earned over \$395,000 in income from the U.S.S.F.⁴¹ Because Jill Ellis was not featured on the list, she earned less than \$395,000 in the first eleven months of her tenure. This is interesting because in that same year, U.S. Soccer negotiated a contract extension with Jürgen Klinsmann. The contract would have him making the same base rate of 2.5 million dollars from 2014 to July of 2018. It is difficult to make a stark comparison between Klinsmann's contract and Ellis' because the federation took into account the past success of Klinsmann as head of the men's national team, while they were still unsure of the success of Ellis. This is highlighted in the fact that Ellis' contract was short in duration, being only a little over one year long. It would be interesting to see if later success by Ellis would lead to a contract extension and a pay increase that would lessen than gap between her and Jürgen Klinsmann.

In 2015, the world watched as the U.S. women's national team dominated the biggest stage of soccer—the Women's World Cup. By bringing home the gold, the team provided U.S.S.F. the proof needed to extend Jill Ellis' contract through 2020. Despite the extension and supposed raise, the discrepancy between Jill Ellis' income and Jürgen Klinsmann's was still ridiculously large. In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, when the U.S. women won the World Cup, Jill Ellis made \$306,407 in total income from the U.S. Soccer Federation.⁴² Due to privacy stipulations placed a few years earlier by the U.S.S.F., Ellis' base compensation was not released to the public. During this same 2015-2016 cycle, Jürgen Klinsmann made \$2,500,000 in base compensation and \$3,050,813 in total income.⁴³ This cycle included a Women's World Cup victory by Ellis' squad, and no major tournament appearances by Klinsmann's. So even though Ellis may have received more in terms of bonuses, Klinsmann still earned \$2,744,406 more than her. In the next year, Klinsmann was fired by the federation for poor performances in the early 2018 World Cup qualifying matches. Bruce Arena was once again hired to lead the men's team in November of 2016. During the 2016-2017 fiscal cycle, Bruce arena made \$400,000 in total income in the first five months of his contract. During that same twelve month cycle, Jill Ellis made \$271,060 in

⁴⁰ Litman, Laken. "USWNT Coach Jill Ellis Gets Multi-year Contract Extension after World Cup Win." USA Today. August 05, 2015. Accessed April 06, 2018. <https://ftw.usatoday.com/2015/08/uswnt-coach-jill-ellis-gets-multi-year-contract-extension-after-world-cup-win>.

⁴¹ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. Form 990. 2014. [file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20\(9\).pdf](file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20(9).pdf)

⁴² United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. Form 990. 2016. [file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20\(5\).pdf](file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20(5).pdf)

⁴³ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. Form 990. 2016. [file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20\(5\).pdf](file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20(5).pdf)

total income.⁴⁴ Bruce Arena made \$128,940 more than Jill Ellis despite coaching his team for seven months less than his counterpart. He is a coach that is familiar to the organization but did not see great success in his first tenure. Meanwhile, Jill Ellis was just coming off of a World Cup victory. It is interesting that a coach who did not have success in a past reign as the U.S. men's national team head coach would still be given such a high salary compared to a coach who has demonstrated the highest level of success on the world stage.

The Players:

The year 1991 proved an important time for women's professional soccer because the national team won its first ever World Cup trophy. The twelve team tournament resulted in a 2-1 victory for the U.S. over Norway. After a few mediocre years from 1992 to 1995, the U.S. women began to assert their dominance. Players like Mia Hamm, Kristine Lilly, Tiffeny Milbrett, and Julie Foudy became consistent performers on the world stage and helped the team capture a gold medal at the 1996 Olympic games. This was followed by a World Cup victory in 1999. The men's team was going through a period of mediocre performance during this time, but it was overshadowed by the creation of the MLS. This new league provided male players the opportunity to play more and, as a result, make more money. This change increased both the popularity of men's soccer within the U.S. and the sponsorship opportunities for male players. In the late 1990s, male soccer players were receiving a steady increase in income, even though the female players were experiencing greater success on the field. It wasn't until 1999 that women's professional soccer received recognition for their dominant play.

After the 1999 World Cup victory, many of the female players celebrated their achievement with family and friends. The amazing feeling was quickly suppressed by the reality of an ongoing contract dispute between the players and the U.S. Soccer Federation. The 1999 season was played without a long-term contract supporting any players on the roster. That contract had each of the women earning different amounts that varied based on seniority. The veteran players were receiving about \$3,150 per month with a \$150 bonus for every game played.⁴⁵ Younger players and players with less longevity at that level were paid even less. These stipends were supplemented with differing amounts of bonuses that depended on major tournament appearances and game success. Winning the World Cup is often seen as the biggest accomplishment in the realm of soccer, and it is usually accompanied by one of the largest bonuses. After the 1999 victory, each of the women received \$12,500 from the U.S. Soccer Federation and \$37,500 from the World Cup organizing committee.⁴⁶ Even though these were seen as large bonuses, they were not easily attainable. The women's team would have to win the tournament every time they entered, which was only every four years. So even if the team was perfect, they would only earn the extra \$87,500 every four years. The Olympic bonus was similar

⁴⁴ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2017.

file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/20180220%20US%20Soccer%20033117%20Tax%20Filings%20Public%20Disclosure%20(5).pdf

⁴⁵ Longman, Jere. "SOCCER; Women's Team Ends Boycott, Agreeing to a Contract." *New York Times*, January 30, 2000. Accessed March 25, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/30/sports/soccer-women-s-team-ends-boycott-agreeing-to-a-contract.html>.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

in size, but that was also a reward that could only be earned every four years. The women were unhappy with their monthly pay because they believed that they were not receiving enough to support a family and sustain an average lifestyle. So in January 2000, the women unanimously decided to boycott their first overseas matches of the year at the Australia Cup. The federation was displeased with the team's decision to boycott and sent a younger development team in their place. The dispute lasted a little under a month as the federation agreed to settle on January 29, 2000. The women each signed five-year contracts with the federation that had them earning a minimum salary of \$5,000 per month. The women also had the ability to earn \$2,000 for every game they appeared in and an extra \$1,000 for beating a team that had already qualified for the Sydney Olympics. The contract also included a \$200,000 signing bonus to be split between all of the players that reported to Olympic training camp.⁴⁷ The average number of players brought into camp is usually around 25. If that was the case in that particular year, each player would have earned an extra \$8,000. On top of that, there was also a \$10,000 "roster bonus" for each of the eighteen players chosen to compete in the 2000 Olympic games.⁴⁸ These bonuses were in addition to the potential earnings from international organizations, like the Olympic committee. If the USWNT had won the tournament, each player would have received \$44,444 from the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The benefits of this new contract negotiation allowed the women to focus on enjoying the sport that they love, while also having a new sense of financial stability.

It is not often that the public gets to see the base compensation of athletes from the U.S. Soccer Federation. The federation, which manages both the men's and women's sides of the game, only has to release the total salaries of the top five highest paid non-executive employees (i.e. coaches and players) within the organization. These salaries are released annually on federal audit forms, and the personnel change depending on the year. Head coaches from the men's and women's sides, youth coaches, and assistant coaches usually make up the rankings. In years where a team appeared in a major tournament, two to four players' salaries tend to be released. Since the men's and women's teams play in their respective World Cups one year apart, the audit forms present data on players from both genders. This makes it much easier to directly compare the wage discrimination of the players based on gender. In 2014, the U.S. men's national team competed in the World Cup. The team's journey consisted of a win, a loss, and a tie in the group stages. They advanced to the round of sixteen where they were eliminated by Belgium in a 2-1 loss. During the year of their World Cup run, five players made over \$395,000 in total income from the federation. Clint Dempsey made \$428,002, Geoffrey Cameron made \$405,209, Jozy Altidore made \$404,703, Tim Howard made \$398,495, and Jermaine Jones made \$395,920.⁴⁹ In the next year, the U.S. women's team competed in the Women's World Cup. They won two games and tied one in the group stage. They advanced all the way to the final where they defeated Japan 5-2. During that year, four players made a little over \$225,000. Lauren Holiday,

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2015. [file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20\(4\).pdf](file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20(4).pdf)

Meghan Klingenberg, Ali Krieger, and Tobin Heath all made \$225,450 in total income from the U.S.S.F.⁵⁰ The highest-paid women received \$202,552 less than the highest male player (Clint Dempsey), even though the women won the tournament and the men made their exit in the round of sixteen. It is also interesting to note that all of the women earned the same exact amount in total income, while the men's earnings spanned from \$395,920 to \$428,002. Some people believe that this is due to differences in contract structures between the men's and women's players. Others believe that it is due to the "glass ceiling" women constantly face in the working world. Unfortunately, the general public will never know the honest truth because the federation does not have to disclose that information to the public. The players themselves don't even seem to know the truth. This was made evident about one year later when the U.S. women's national team filed a federal complaint citing wage discrimination by the U.S. Soccer Federation.

On March 29, 2016, five women's national team players—Megan Rapinoe, Becky Sauerbrunn, Alex Morgan, Hope Solo, and Carli Lloyd—filed a federal complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) claiming that the U.S. Soccer Federation engaged in wage discrimination. In order to file a complaint of discrimination, one must provide evidence that the two comparative parties (in this case the men's and women's national teams) are in the same establishment, receive unequal pay, and perform equal work under similar working conditions.⁵¹ Both U.S. soccer teams are governed by the U.S.S.F., and the women provided ample evidence that they dedicate the same amount of time to training, traveling, meetings, and competition as the men. Therefore, the only thing they needed to provide substantial evidence for was the notion of unequal pay. The federation claimed that the men generate more revenue than the women on average. They also claimed that the difference in pay structure between the women and the men makes it appear as though the men make more. Lastly, they claim that the men's contracts were negotiated earlier, and therefore, a slight pay discrepancy would be fixed with the women's team's new contracts.⁵² The five women who took the initiative to file the complaint openly denounced the federation's claims and provided evidence for support.

The five women embarked on a press tour where they publicly claimed that the U.S. women's national team brings in more revenue, has a larger fan base, and has experienced more success than the men's national team, despite being paid significantly less. The women stated that they brought in almost 20 million dollars in revenue for the organization in 2015.⁵³ They also stated that they have held the record for the highest number of televised viewers of a U.S. soccer match since 1999, and they broke their own record in 2015. Furthermore, they have won three World Cup titles and four Olympic gold medals, while the closest the men have ever come

⁵⁰ United States of America. Department of the Treasury. Internal Revenue Service. *Form 990*. 2016. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/US%20Soccer%20Federation%202014%20Public%20990%20(5).pdf

⁵¹ Campbell, Honey. "Superior Play, Unequal Pay: U.S. Women's Soccer and the Pursuit for Pay Equity." *University of San Francisco Law Review* 51, no. 3 (2017): 545-70. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/HoneyCampbellSuperiorPlay.pdf.

⁵² Campbell, Honey. "Superior Play, Unequal Pay: U.S. Women's Soccer and the Pursuit for Pay Equity." *University of San Francisco Law Review* 51, no. 3 (2017): 545-70. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/HoneyCampbellSuperiorPlay.pdf.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

is a third place finish in the 1930 World Cup.⁵⁴ In terms of pay, the women stated that the U.S.S.F. pays the female players between 38% and 72% of what the men receive on a per-game basis. They broke down the discrepancies between the teams irrelevant of pay structure to prove this point. In the current agreements with the federation, the men's and women's teams must each compete in twenty friendly matches per year. The women receive \$72,000 in base salary, which comes out to \$3,600 per game. If they win the match, they receive a \$1,350 bonus. So if they lose every game, they make \$72,000 annually. But if they win every game, they make \$99,000 in that year.⁵⁵ For the men, they receive \$5,000 dollars for every game they appear in. They receive between \$6,250 and \$17,625 in bonuses, which vary depending on the world ranking of their opponent and the outcome of the game. So if they lose every game in a one year period, they each make \$100,000. Even though the pay structures are different, the inequality is still visible. If the men's team loses every single game while the women's team wins every single game in a year, the men would still each make \$1,000 more than the women. If both sides lose every match in a year, the men each make \$27,000 more than the women.⁵⁶ The women highlighted one specific player example involving the starting goalkeepers from the men's and women's teams. In 2014, Hope Solo made \$366,000 from the organization, including bonuses. The same year, Tim Howard made \$398,495, including bonuses. The discrepancy lies in the fact that Howard played in 8 games, while Solo played in 23.⁵⁷ Hope Solo argued that her male counterpart received more pay for less pay. The only issue with her argument lies in the fact that Howard played in World Cup matches that year, and Solo did not. Solo did make the point that this pay is only what is provided by the U.S.S.F. Yes, it includes bonuses from the Federation, but these numbers do not include bonuses from the World Cup committee. Therefore, Solo argues that the salaries should have been about equal for that year. This is because she played in more games, but Howard played in higher-profile games. But, the salaries were by no means equal in nature. Besides the discrepancy between base salaries of male and female players, there are other more subtle pay inequalities experienced by the women within the federation. The current bonus offered for making the World Cup roster is \$30,000 for the women, and \$68,750 for the men. A male player makes \$38,750 more than a female player just for earning a major tournament roster spot. In terms of venue bonuses, the men receive an extra \$62.50 for playing at a domestic venue and \$75 for playing at an international venue. The women receive \$50 for playing at a domestic venue and \$75 for playing internationally. So even though the women receive the same pay for playing at international venues, they receive \$12.50 less than the men within the United States.⁵⁸ The Federation also pays the men \$3,750 per sponsorship appearance, while the women receive only \$3,000. Lastly, the men receive an extra \$1.50 for every ticket

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ *The Match of Their Lives*. Performed by Hope Solo, Alex Morgan, Megan Rapinoe, Carli Lloyd, Becky Sauerbrunn. 60 Minutes. November 20, 2016. Accessed February 23, 2018. <https://www.cbsnews.com/video/the-match-of-their-lives/>.

⁵⁸ Campbell, Honey. "Superior Play, Unequal Pay: U.S. Women's Soccer and the Pursuit for Pay Equity." *University of San Francisco Law Review* 51, no. 3 (2017): 545-70. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/HoneyCampbellSuperiorPlay.pdf.

sold to one other their games, while the women receive \$1.20 per sale.⁵⁹ The evidence provided by the women was substantial, and it immediately grabbed the public's attention. The U.S. Soccer Federation experienced harsh backlash from the public and decided to offer a settlement to the team. They negotiated new contracts for each of the women, which would begin in 2016. The new contracts gave the women's national team players a 30% increase in base pay and better bonus initiatives within U.S. Soccer.⁶⁰ Even with these improvements in their wages, the women were not completely satisfied. They asserted that the organization continues to depreciate the efforts of its female athletes by quietly increasing wage gaps over time. The five women argued that equality has not yet been achieved, and that they would continue to use their voices to fight for equal pay for equal play within U.S. soccer.

Media Presence:

The U.S. women's national team began to dominate the world stage after a terrific 1996 season that concluded with an Olympic gold medal victory. From 1996 to 1999, the women were seen by television network executives as second-class athletes. Almost every men's sport was given precedence on national television over women's events. It wasn't until the 1999 Women's World Cup that the U.S. women's national team was given the opportunity to prove to network executives that they could draw at-home audiences. Mia Hamm, Briana Scully, and Brandi Chastain became well-known public figures after the penalty kick win against China in the final match was watched by millions of people in the U.S. This led to a flurry of sponsorship opportunities for female soccer players, but even more injustices accompanied this newfound fame. The media highlighted these female professional soccer players in a manner that was viewed by the public as overly sexualized. These athletes' abilities on the field were not being represented in the public eye in the same manner as their male counterparts. The U.S. women's national team has experienced great inequalities in the eyes of television network executives and sponsor companies over the past two decades.

Television Coverage:

In 1996, large corporations began utilizing television as a way to promote and market different aspects of sports. As more people readily gained access to television, fewer people purchased tickets and traveled to stadiums to attend games. Organizations saw that they were losing money in ticket sales and began to negotiate large-scale contracts with television networks as a way to increase popularity and revenue. In 1996, NBC purchased the rights to the Olympic games in Atlanta. Throughout the two-week span, the U.S. women's national team advanced out of the group stage and all the way to the championship. The final game, in which the U.S. women's national team claimed gold, was barely broadcast on American television. NBC only

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Springer, Shira. "Title IX Is 45 Years Old, but Now What?" The Boston Globe (Boston, MA), July 8, 2017. Accessed March 6, 2018. http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P4-1917016263.html?refid=easy_hf.

aired short highlight clips on their Olympics coverage broadcast.⁶¹ Even after winning the Olympic gold medal, women's soccer was still seen as inferior to any male athletic event in the eyes of media executives. They did not believe viewers would tune into the broadcasting of such events and feared that it would contribute to the corporations' losing money. But executives had no such reservations about the men's game; to the contrary, ABC Sports and ESPN signed a three-year contract with Major League Soccer in the same year.⁶² The eight-team men's professional soccer league was set to debut shortly after the conclusion of the 1996 Olympic games. MLS executives thought that the Olympics would help to generate interest in the league. But, the men's national team had a subpar Olympic performance, and they did not even advance out of the group stage. On the other side of the 1996 Olympics, the women's team won every single game that they played, except for one that they tied.⁶³ Despite the women's gold-medal dominance, television network executives did not believe that the women's national team would be able to generate the same level of interest as the men from a media perspective. Fans' purported lack of interest, however, seemed to be an excuse utilized by the network executives at the time. When a deal was signed with MLS, the league could not provide any proof of success because it was just being created. Not one of the team's had been announced, no coaches had been hired, and not one player had decided to join the league.⁶⁴ There was no evidence that this league would be successful in generating enough interest to make money on television. But, the network went forward in signing a multi-year contract with the league, through which they would televise ten games throughout the inaugural season on ESPN and ESPN2. They also planned to air the championship match on ABC. Meanwhile, the women's national team had drawn in 76,481 fans to the gold medal match of the 1996 Olympics, which broke the record for the largest crowd at a women's soccer match anywhere in the world.⁶⁵ The 1996 Olympics showed television network executives that the U.S. women's national team was a dominant force likely to win any match they competed in--and they even generated stadium interest with their extremely high attendance rates. Even with this astounding proof, executives did not decide to air a U.S. women's national team match on national television until two years later. The 1996 Olympic success displayed the clear discrimination being carried out by network executives when choosing to air MLS games over U.S. women's national team victory matches. It will never be uncovered exactly why large networks neglected U.S. women's soccer in 1996 and 1997, but these factors lend credence to observers' belief that gender played a role in the decision to prioritize males.

⁶¹ Vecsey, George. "Women's Soccer: 76,481 Fans, 1 U.S. Gold." *New York Times*, August 2, 1996. Accessed March 13, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/08/02/sports/women-s-soccer-76481-fans-1-us-gold.html>.

⁶² "Timeline: Two Decades of MLS." *Street & Smith's Sports Business Journal*, March 2, 2015. Accessed March 15, 2018. <https://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Journal/Issues/2015/03/02/In-Depth/Timeline.aspx>.

⁶³ "WNT History." U.S. Soccer. Accessed December 15, 2017. <https://www.ussoccer.com/womens-national-team/records/wnt-history>.

⁶⁴ "Timeline: Two Decades of MLS." *Street & Smith's Sports Business Journal*, March 2, 2015. Accessed March 15, 2018. <https://www.sportsbusinessdaily.com/Journal/Issues/2015/03/02/In-Depth/Timeline.aspx>.

⁶⁵ Vecsey, George. "Women's Soccer: 76,481 Fans, 1 U.S. Gold." *New York Times*, August 2, 1996. Accessed March 13, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/08/02/sports/women-s-soccer-76481-fans-1-us-gold.html>.

In 1998, it appeared as though women's soccer would once again be neglected by major television networks. The three-year contract between ABC/ESPN and MLS came to an end. The league signed a renewal with the network, but another contract was signed by ABC that year. The network announced that all 32 games of the 1999 Women's World Cup, hosted by the U.S., would be nationally broadcasted on either ABC, ESPN, or ESPN2.⁶⁶ At the time, ABC was recording the highest annual national network ratings compared to all other major television networks in the country. This was historic news for the U.S. women's national soccer team, as they were looking to come up victorious in the tournament. The tournament was an exciting journey for the players and the fans, who were now able to view every single match from home. The United States dominated group play with a 3-0 record. They cruised through the knockout stages to championship game against China. The event, which was hosted at the Rose Bowl Stadium in Pasadena, California, drew in a record crowd of 90,185 people. The fan attendance substantially outnumbered the 1996 Olympic crowd.⁶⁷ Fans in the stadium and at home watched anxiously as the U.S. battled China to a 0-0 tie after ninety minutes of regulation play. Throughout the broadcast, home viewership was being recorded via Nielson ratings. This rating consists of data collected by Nielson Media Research on the audience size and composition of television programs at any given date and time. A numerical scale is utilized to compare different televised events throughout their entire broadcast. At the start of the gold medal match, the rating recorded was a 7.6 on the Nielson scale. To compare it to other events, one year earlier, the gold medal match of the men's World Cup between Brazil and France recorded an overall average rating of 6.9.⁶⁸ The 1999 World Cup rating at the beginning of the broadcast was also less than the U.S. soccer match with the highest recorded viewership, which occurred in 1994. The U.S. men's national team match against Brazil recorded a 10.4 average rating. But as the 1999 final match continued, the rating skyrocketed up to an 18.8 rating and concluded with a 16.1 rating. Overall, the average rating of the match was 13.3.⁶⁹ And to compare it to other sporting events that occurred around the same in 1999, the NBA Finals game 7 between the San Antonio Spurs and the New York Knicks recorded an average rating of 11.3. The defining moment of the game, when Brandi Chastain scored the game winning penalty kick in the fifth round and ripped off her shirt, was watched by millions. This moment marked an inspirational breakthrough for U.S. women in sports. It marked the first occasion in which the entire nation could see the dominant success and unwavering passion of female soccer players. This game also became the most watched U.S. soccer match, men's or women's, in history. The data from the 1999 Women's World Cup helped the U.S. women's national team prove that women's soccer could draw in a large number of fans in order to be a profitable entity on national television.

⁶⁶ Wahl, Grant. "America's Host." *Sports Illustrated*, June 21, 1999.

⁶⁷ Longman, Jere. "Bigger Crowds Watching Better Play." *New York Times*, June 22, 1999. Accessed March 11, 2018.

⁶⁸ "WOMEN'S WORLD CUP; And Strong TV Ratings, Too." *New York Times*, July 12, 1999. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/07/12/sports/women-s-world-cup-and-strong-tv-ratings-too.html>.

⁶⁹ "WOMEN'S WORLD CUP; And Strong TV Ratings, Too." *New York Times*, July 12, 1999. Accessed February 12, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/07/12/sports/women-s-world-cup-and-strong-tv-ratings-too.html>.

The 1999 World Cup proved a pivotal moment for the popularity and future success of women's soccer in the United States. Newspaper headlines began to project that women's soccer would see an increase in television air time, the number of sponsorships its players received, and availability of top-tier training and playing facilities. When the 2000 Olympic games in Sydney approached, the nation looked again to the U.S. women's national team for a dominant performance. In 2000, NBC paid \$705 million for the rights to cover the entire Sydney Olympic games.⁷⁰ After only the first few days of competition, the network was calling this particular Olympic games a "flop." Some critics blamed the Olympic marketing committee; others blamed it on the fact that the games were being held in September as opposed to June or July. Early fall marked the time of year when the NFL dominated the television airwaves and overall viewing trends tended to decrease because children returned to school. Because of this lack of interest, the U.S. women's national team's second-place finish to Norway by one is often forgotten about. Even with this dip in interest one year after the 1999 breakthrough, hope was still alive due to the creation of a new women's professional soccer league in the U.S. The Women's United Soccer Association (WUSA) was announced right before the final match of the 2000 Olympic games. Set to begin in 2001, the league consisted of eight teams comprised of all twenty players from the 1999 World Cup team.⁷¹ The league signed a four-year contract with Turner Network Television (TNT) and CNN/Sports Illustrated to air 22 games per season, including the semi-final games and the championship match.⁷² But, the networks failed to mention that the games would be aired in undesirable time slots. These undesirable slots were either during the day when people were at work or school, or late at night when most people were asleep. These inopportune television times coupled with a lack of advertising and low attendance rates ultimately led to the league's demise in 2003. Coincidentally, the league folded just five days before the first match of the 2003 World Cup. Going into the tournament, the U.S. women were seen as a heavy favorite to bring home the victory. The world was shocked to see the women fall 3-0 to Germany in the semi-final match. This disappointment added with frustration of the WUSA collapse led to a difficult rebuilding period for women's soccer in the United States over the next few years.

After the collapse of the Women's United Soccer Association in 2003, major organizations and companies were hesitant to support the creation of another women's professional soccer league in the United States. Semi-professional teams existed up until 2009 when the Women's Professional Soccer (WPS) league was created. The seven team league had difficulty negotiating a contract with a major television network. In the inaugural season, not a single game was aired on a national television network. This included the championship match. This appeared to be a smart decision on the part of the network executives because the league

⁷⁰ Carter, Bill, and Richard Sandomir. "SYDNEY 2000: TELEVISION; NBC's Ratings For Olympics Are Worst Ever." *New York Times*, September 20, 2000. Accessed March 13, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/09/20/sports/sydney-2000-television-nbc-s-ratings-for-olympics-are-worst-ever.html>.

⁷¹ Miller, Gretchen, Jonathan Scheyer, and Emily Sherrand. "Women's United Soccer Association." Soccer Politics. July 07, 2011. Accessed April 07, 2018. <https://sites.duke.edu/wcwp/research-projects/womens-soccer-in-the-u-s/womens-soccer-after-1999/womens-united-soccer-association/>.

⁷² "Women's United Soccer Association Announces TNT and CNN/SI 22-Game Television Schedule." U.S. Soccer. February 20, 2001. Accessed April 07, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/stories/2014/03/17/12/29/womens-united-soccer-association-announces-tnt-and-cnn-si-22-game-television-schedule>.

struggled to generate interest and had very low attendance rates during the first year. WPS board members were frustrated to watch MLS experience continued success, while women's professional soccer seemed set up for failure once again. MLS had been in creation for over ten years at this point. In the four years prior to 2009, the league expanded to include five new teams. ABC and ESPN continued to negotiate contract extensions with MLS as well. The WPS looked forward to the 2011 World Cup as a way to help increase attendance and generate interest. This plan was successful due to the outstanding performance of the U.S. women in the tournament. The World Cup hype helped to double the attendance rates at WPS games during the following season. Even with this newly generated interest, it was not enough to keep the league running. The combination of scanty crowds, a legal dispute, and an unsteady source of revenue ultimately led to the cessation of the league in 2012.

In 2011, the U.S. women's national team was once again the heavy favorite to win the World Cup. This tournament was extremely important for the future of the sport because the women had not made an appearance in the final match of the World Cup since the 1999 victory. The U.S. women had secured the top rank in the world according to FIFA since 2008 but choked on the major stage in both 2003 and 2007.⁷³ In 2011, the team posted a 2-1 record in the group stage. They fought their way through the knockout stages to the final match against Japan. In the final game, the ninety minute battle ended in a tie. The world watched as the U.S. women lost in a heartbreaking penalty kick shootout. After the conclusion of the tournament, FIFA compiled data regarding in-home audience ratings from around the world. The total number of audience members, globally, who tuned in to the broadcasting for over three consecutive minutes was 407.8 million people. The total number of audience members tuning in for twenty plus consecutive minutes was 248.5 million people.⁷⁴ These numbers showed an exponential increase from the 2007 Women's World Cup four years earlier. The United States demonstrated the greatest increase in viewership from the previous tournament. The country had 24.5 million people watching over twenty minutes of game coverage throughout the entire tournament. This was a 200% increase from four years earlier. Within the country, an average audience of over 14 million people tuned in for the final match of the tournament between the U.S. and Japan. This ranked as the second highest audience for a women's football match in U.S. history and the sixth highest for any football match in the country.⁷⁵ To compare it to other sporting events of the time, the match recorded an average Nielson rating of 8.6. This topped the 8.4 average rating of the 2010 World Series between the San Francisco Giants and Texas Rangers.⁷⁶ ESPN was the major U.S. network covering the tournament. It aired fifty three of the games across the country, and forty-four of them were aired lived. The network dedicated one hundred and twenty-seven hours and thirty-five minutes of airtime to the tournament. ESPN averaged 1.6 million viewers

⁷³ "The FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking - Ranking Table." FIFA.com. Accessed February 12, 2018. <http://www.fifa.com/fifa-world-ranking/ranking-table/men/index.html>.

⁷⁴ "FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011 Television Audience Report." FIFA: 1-50. [https://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/tournament/competition/01/54/91/10/fwwcgermany2011televisionaudiencereport\(interactive\).pdf](https://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/tournament/competition/01/54/91/10/fwwcgermany2011televisionaudiencereport(interactive).pdf).

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Lefevre, Allie D., E. Frank Stephenson, and Sara M. Walcott. "Football Frenzy." *Journal of Sports Economics* 14, no. 4 (2013): 440-48. Accessed February 4, 2018. doi:10.1177/1527002513496012.

throughout the entire month long broadcast. During the final, ESPN reached 13.5 million of the total 14 million viewers, and another half a million viewers streamed the game on ESPN.com.⁷⁷ This significant increase in broadcast coverage and in-home audience viewership demonstrated an upward trend of U.S. women's soccer within the United States.

In 2015, the Women's World Cup viewership continued to increase and draw the attention of in-home audiences. After the conclusion of the tournament, FIFA once again compiled data on global viewership statistics and U.S. viewership statistics. Globally, 7,781 hours of coverage was dedicated to the 2015 tournament. The total in-home audience for three or more consecutive minutes skyrocketed up to 555.6 million viewers. The total in-home audience for over twenty consecutive minutes reached 327.6 million viewers.⁷⁸ This data showed another significant increase from the previous World Cup contest in 2011. FOX negotiated the rights to air all fifty of the tournament's contests live from the six locations across Canada. The contest, which was held between June 6th and July 5th, aired on FOX, FOX Sports 1, and FOX Sports 2. Two out of the three U.S. group stage games was aired on FOX, and the third was aired on FOX Sports 1.⁷⁹ The network recorded over 200 hours of broadcasting time for the event and between six to seven hours daily. This helped increase the total number of viewers reached to about 61.4 million people, which was estimated to be about 20.5% of the U.S. population.⁸⁰ The semi-final match of the tournament between the U.S. and Germany recorded an average of 8.4 million viewers which was an increase of 45% from the U.S. semi-final match in 2011. The championship game, where the United States defeated Japan 5-2, averaged 25.4 million viewers on FOX alone. This was a 77% increase from the 2011 final match viewership.⁸¹ It also made the match the highest viewed football match in U.S. history, surpassing the record held by the 1999 Women's World Cup victory. The audience was estimated to be 18.2 million at the beginning of the game and grew to a peak of 30.9 million around 8:30-8:45 pm. To compare it to other sporting events, 18.2 million people tuned in to the U.S. vs. Portugal group stage match of the 2014 men's World Cup.⁸² Also, about 23 million people tuned in to watch the San Francisco Giants defeat the Kansas City Royal in game 7 of the 2014 World Series.⁸³ The statistics have shown that since 2007, the Women's World Cup has been growing exponentially in popularity within the United States. The interest level generated has far surpassed that of the men's national soccer team and major television networks have finally allocated the appropriate coverage to the

⁷⁷ "FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011 Television Audience Report." FIFA: 1-50.

[https://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/tournament/competition/01/54/91/10/fwwcgermany2011televisionaudiencereport\(interactive\).pdf](https://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/tournament/competition/01/54/91/10/fwwcgermany2011televisionaudiencereport(interactive).pdf).

⁷⁸ "FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015 Television Audience Report." FIFA: 1-55

http://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/tv/02/74/59/85/fwwccanada2015tvaudiencereport_neutral.pdf

⁷⁹ "Women's World Cup Final Is Most-Watched Soccer Match in U.S. History." U.S. Soccer. July 8, 2015. Accessed April 07, 2018.

<https://www.ussoccer.com/stories/2015/07/08/16/59/150708-wnt-victory-breaks-tv-records>.

⁸⁰ "FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015 Television Audience Report." FIFA: 1-55

http://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/tv/02/74/59/85/fwwccanada2015tvaudiencereport_neutral.pdf

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² "FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015 Television Audience Report." FIFA: 1-55

http://resources.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/tv/02/74/59/85/fwwccanada2015tvaudiencereport_neutral.pdf

⁸³ "Women's World Cup Final Is Most-Watched Soccer Match in U.S. History." U.S. Soccer. July 8, 2015. Accessed April 07, 2018.

<https://www.ussoccer.com/stories/2015/07/08/16/59/150708-wnt-victory-breaks-tv-records>.

sport. The only controversy lies in the continued subpar play from the men's team. Many people in the general public believe that if the men were achieving the same success as the women, their popularity would overshadow the women. The women's team would once again assume a subordinate role under the men's side of the organization. This angers many feminists in the U.S., but the U.S. men have not appeared in a World Cup finals since the 1930s. So, this controversy should not be feared until it becomes a reality.

Sponsorship and Public Portrayal:

1999 proved to be a pivotal year for the emergence of women's soccer into the spotlight of U.S. media. Millions watched as the Brandi Chastain slotted in the game winning penalty kick in the fifth round of the shootout. An epic picture of her ripping her shirt off and sliding on her knees in just a sports bra graced the cover of every major magazine and newspaper immediately after. The photo became a symbol of feminism and female empowerment in athletics. It also served as a Nike advertisement. As Chastain ripped off her shirt in front of thousands in the stands and millions at home, the Nike swoosh on the center of her chest was exposed for all to see. After this picture graced the cover of every major magazine and newspaper, including Sports Illustrated and People Magazine, Nike capitalized on the opportunity to sign multiple U.S. women's national team players to individual sponsorship deals. Mia Hamm, Brandi Chastain, and Julie Foudy were the first players to be contacted by dozens of major companies looking to sign sponsorship agreements. In the year following the World Cup victory, Mia Hamm made over one million dollars in endorsements from companies such as Nike, Gatorade, Fleet Bank, Earthgrains, Power bar and Dreyer's ice cream. At the time, the women were being paid so little by the U.S. Soccer Federation that they welcomed any opportunity to make extra money. With these new benefits came inequalities in the form an overly sexualized portrayal of the players to the public. After the 1996 Olympics, Mia Hamm's name was very well known in the sports world. She was the face of U.S. women's soccer and was often referred to as the "all American girl of soccer." Soon after her rise to fame, she was named one of People magazine's "50 most beautiful people." In an interview where she was asked comment on the honor, she gave an interesting response. She stated that she felt uncomfortable with this honor because she was being singled out as a superstar in an extremely low profile, low income sport.⁸⁴ She hinted at the notion that she believed she may have been receiving endorsement deals for more than just her athletic achievements. Her celebrity image made her a desirable client for sponsors. Mia Hamm was the first female soccer player to attract dozens of sponsors, but her "all-American girl" image made it easier for sponsors to portray her as more of a celebrity than a professional athlete.

There is this notion in female athletics that in order to attract male viewers, the athletes must portray themselves as attractive and beautiful. Many people would say that the 1999 women's team was a "sexy" group because of the Brandi Chastain image, the People magazine and Sports Illustrated covers, and all of the media attention they received after their World Cup

⁸⁴ Starr, Mark. "Keeping Her Own Score." Newsweek. March 14, 2010. Accessed April 15, 2018. <http://www.newsweek.com/keeping-her-own-score-167182>.

victory. The players were grateful for the attention, but they remained skeptical. They believed that sometimes it seemed as though their accomplishments were being overshadowed by the glamour aspect of media. The women made sure to emphasize in interviews that the World Cup victory did not come easily; it was a battle. Despite their efforts, the women continued to be overly sexualized by the media in their post-World Cup tour. This introduced the idea of female soccer players “pretending” to be heterosexual. Abby Wambach was the first member of the U.S. women’s national team to come out in public as homosexual. In the early 2000s, she expressed only to her teammates that she was gay. They all took the news exceptionally well, and she felt extremely comfortable talking to them about her personal life. But in the public eye, she remained very quiet about her sexuality.⁸⁵ The 99ers, as the 1999 women’s team came to be called, portrayed a feminine image to the public that was expected to be upheld by future members of the team. Along with this new public portrayal of the team, it was still very taboo to be a homosexual athlete at the time. Abby Wambach got nervous as her teammates began to retire, and she began to be surrounded by new faces and names that did not know her story. She began to disclose to the new players, as she became more comfortable with them.⁸⁶ She expressed over time that developing a relationship with a new teammate made it a lot easier to come out to them. As she rose to stardom, she became more confident as a person in the public eye and did not worry as much about her sexuality being known by the public.⁸⁷ She never officially released a statement saying that was homosexual, but in 2013, she married her longtime girlfriend Sarah Huffman. Megan Rapinoe was of the U.S. women’s national team players that Wambach developed a very close relationship with and could confide in. And, vice versa. In 2012, Rapinoe released a statement to the public saying that she was homosexual. She stated that she felt comfortable in her own skin, and it was an absolute farce that people believed the world could not enjoy women’s soccer if the players were not seen as “beautiful.”⁸⁸ In 2012, both Wambach and Rapinoe were viewed as two of the best players on the U.S. national team and in the world. This movement by the two players gave a voice to the LGBTQ community within professional athletics. Wambach was more of a private individual, but Rapinoe began to utilize her public platform to advocate for LGBTQ rights. She attended rallies for same-sex marriage and was a big supporter in the passing of the federal law. But both players have addressed the idea that they still receive scrutiny from the general public. Bitter individuals stated that Wambach was able to break all of Mia Hamm’s records because she was actually a man playing for a women’s team.⁸⁹ Wambach and Rapinoe have both been publicly criticized for wardrobe choices off of the pitch as well. The presence of Abby Wambach and Megan Rapinoe on the U.S. women’s national team has helped to create a new age for soccer in which LGBTQ

⁸⁵ Wambach, Abby. *Forward: A Memoir*. New York: Dey St., an Imprint of William Morrow Publishers, 2017.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Wambach, Abby. *Forward: A Memoir*. New York: Dey St., an Imprint of William Morrow Publishers, 2017.

⁸⁸ "Megan Rapinoe Comes Out: U.S. Olympic Soccer Player Says She's Gay And In A Relationship." *Huffington Post*, July 3, 2012. Accessed April 15, 2018. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/03/megan-rapinoe-comes-out-olympic-soccer-player-_n_1646700.html.

⁸⁹ Wambach, Abby. *Forward: A Memoir*. New York: Dey St., an Imprint of William Morrow Publishers, 2017.

athletes feel more comfortable in their skin; but, time has shown that our country is still not fully accepting of one another.

In an article published in 2012 titled, "Soccer star Alex Morgan leads a model life," the author highlights Alex Morgan's achievements on and off of the pitch within the previous year of her career. Kevin Baxter narrates all of the opportunities that have now been offered to Morgan, who has assumed the role as the new face of U.S. Soccer. Baxter utilizes three-fourths of the piece to talk about Morgan's caps, goals, and strengths as a player with the national team. The last fourth of the article is utilized to discuss that Morgan wears a full face of makeup during games. Other articles have also highlighted the headband Morgan chooses to wear during games. At first, commentators would talk about her beauty during a live game broadcast. Teammate and fellow soccer superstar, Abby Wambach, is not asked about her beauty routine or whether or not she enjoys wearing heels on a night out like her teammate. No member of the U.S. men's soccer team is interrogated by interviewers about their choice of clothing or accessories worn during games. A decade after the peak of Mia Hamm's career, Alex Morgan has assumed the title of the "all-American girl" or soccer. In 2014, Morgan was featured by Sports Illustrated in the swimsuit editions alongside professional models like Kate Upton and Chrissy Teigen.⁹⁰ These women's careers are modeling; Morgan's is soccer. Alex did agree to do the shoot, but it is unknown how much outside influence was involved in this decision. Two years prior, Morgan's teammate, Abby Wambach, was highlighted by Sports Illustrated as well. She did not appear in the swimsuit edition. Instead, Wambach was featured in the 2012 Body Issue alongside other athletes, like Rob Gronkowski and Ronda Rousey.⁹¹ These powerful athletes pose naked in an attempt to display their strong and dominant physique. It is interesting to note the decision by Sports Illustrated to incorporate these two very different members of the U.S. women's national team in two very different editions of the magazine. Both Alex and Abby were seen as equally important on the field, but different companies and media outlets saw Wambach as more masculine and Morgan as the "all-American girl" or soccer. Even though LGBTQ athletes are providing a positive presence in U.S. soccer, the business and media industries are not fully accepting of these women.

Recognition:

Women's professional soccer has existed in the United States since 1985. Throughout this three-decade span, the U.S. women's national team has achieved great feats. They have won Olympic gold medals and World Cup trophies. The individual players have captured national and international records. Coaches have received awards for their superb ability to lead these players to victory on the highest stage. But within the United States, there is a lack of recognition for female soccer players' and coaches' dominating performances. The U.S. Soccer National Hall of Fame displays this inequality. This may be due to the structure of the governing body responsible

⁹⁰ "Sports Illustrated Swimsuit 2014 Vault." SI.com. Accessed April 15, 2018. <https://www.si.com/swimsuit/archive/2014>.

⁹¹ "The Bodies We Want." ESPN. Accessed April 07, 2018. http://www.espn.com/espn/photos/gallery/_/id/8136693/2012-body-issue-bodies-want-espn-magazine.

for the creation of the Hall of Fame— the U.S. Soccer Federation. The federation has been structured with a male dominating executive force. The association has more men in positions of power than women. This includes coaching positions, refereeing positions, and executive board member positions. This discrepancy has led to many different forms of inequality within U.S. Soccer.

Women in Positions of Power:

The U.S. Soccer Federation is one of the oldest and largest national soccer organizations in the world. The federation has been working for over one hundred years to improve the sport of soccer within the United States and around the globe. There is one example of inequality that has eluded the federation executives for many years because it directly involves the people in charge of the organization. One extremely prevalent issue within the U.S.S.F. is the complete dominance of men in board, trustee, and coaching positions. The United States has always prided itself in being on the forefront of women's equality, compared to other countries throughout the world. Therefore, shedding light on the current inequalities facing U.S. soccer, in regards to women in positions of power, may allow the organization to dissipate this inequality.

In 2014, FIFA distributed a survey asking about different aspects of women's involvement in soccer throughout the world. FIFA received responses from employees in a variety of departments within 177 member organizations.⁹² The data collected covered topics such as the number of staff members allocated solely to women's football, women on executive committees, female coaches hired, etc. Many of the results from the survey were shocking on the global level, but it was interesting to see how much gender discrimination occurs within U.S. soccer. One statistic covered how many staff members are dedicated solely to the ventures associated with women's soccer in the organization. The highest percentage of staff members dedicated to women's soccer in the world occurred in the U.S. and Canada (which were grouped together for organizational purposes). That number was only 20%, as of 2014. Luckily, 95% of those staff members in the U.S. and Canada are employed in full time positions.⁹³ But in the global picture, only 52% of staff members are dedicated to women's soccer in a full-time position within their respective organization.⁹⁴ These statistics are informative because the U.S. has created the best women's soccer team in the world over the past two decades, so this may be a reflection of the resources allocated to the women's side of the sport. If the organization works to increase the number of staff members from the 20% in 2014, the U.S. women may receive more resources to help them maintain the number one position in the FIFA world rankings. Also, by encouraging other FIFA member associations to dedicate further resources to the development of women's soccer, it will allow the United States to face tougher competition. This will hopefully lead to an increase in interest level from the public and an increase in the level of play of the U.S. female players. Throughout the world, women's soccer would benefit from

⁹² "Women's Football Survey." FIFA. Accessed March 21, 2018.

http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/footballdevelopment/women/02/52/26/49/womensfootballsurvey2014_e_english.pdf.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

having more staff members dedicated solely to women's soccer ventures within the respective organizations.

Every national soccer team in the global pool is run by either a government-funded or non-profit organization that manages every detail of the team's existence. Each of these organizations consists of a complex executive committee that governs the teams' contracts, expenses, revenues, schedules, etc. In the 2014 survey administered by FIFA, there was a section dedicated to presence of women on executive committees. The results showed that there are 188 women on executive committees throughout the globe. This may seem like a high number of female representatives, but the 188 women only made up 8% of the total number of people on the respective executive committees. The United States and Canada do boast the highest percentages of female representation with 19% of the executive committee being comprised of women.⁹⁵ Still, the extremely low female representation on executive boards within the United States had led to the creation of inequalities in other departments within the federation. One of the other departments within the U.S.S.F. that deals with a lack of female representation is coaching. A follow up section of the survey discussed the number of female coaches working throughout the 177 FIFA-associated organizations in 2014. The survey reported that there were 83,262 female coaches total within the 177 FIFA member associations in 2014. This seems like a relatively large number, but it only accounted for 7% of the total coaches within the all of the organizations.⁹⁶ The survey did not specify whether this figure accounted for female coaches in charge of female teams or if it was regarding female coaches in charge of any team. The suspected answer is the latter. The United States and Canada, once again, recorded the greatest number of female coaches with 29,423. This meant that the United States and Canada accounted for 35% of the total number of female coaches in the world. It is not surprising that globally and within the United States, female soccer players are unhappy with their pay and treatment. They are not being advocated for by coaches or executive committee members because there is a lack of female representation in those positions. In order to lessen the burden of inequality between men's and women's soccer, there needs to be greater female representation in executive and coaching positions within the U.S. Soccer Federation.

Awards:

Since the creation of professional sports, the clear goal has been to give recognition to a winner and a loser of each contest. Every match may not end with a trophy or medal, but most end with a clear winner and loser. Many team sports include individual accolades to be earned by players as a way to give recognition to their success and to incentivize them to continue to better their game. Since 1991, FIFA has given out multiple awards to coaches, players, and administrators for many different achievements. Currently, the association hands out an award for the best male and female player in the world, the best male and female coach in the world,

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ "Women's Football Survey." FIFA. Accessed March 21, 2018.

http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/footballdevelopment/women/02/52/26/49/womensfootballsurvey2014_e_english.pdf.

and the club with the best fan support in the world every year.⁹⁷ Two U.S. women have won what was known as the fair play award— Julie Foudy (1997) and Michelle Akers (1998). This award is given to a team or individual that displays exemplary behavior while demonstrating an unwavering passion for the sport. From a team perspective, the U.S. men's team has won the award once in 1998, while the women's team has won it in 1996 and 2016.⁹⁸ Since 1991, FIFA has been awarding a male player of the year award on an annual bases. Ten years later, in 2001, the association decided to crown a female player of the year. Mia Hamm won the inaugural title.⁹⁹ This was controversial because many experts believed Hamm was the best player, male or female, in 2001. It is believed that FIFA did not feel comfortable handing out a male-dominated award to a female recipient. Therefore, the association created a separate category in order to award Hamm. Hamm won the title again in 2002. Abby Wambach received the award in 2012. And, Carli Lloyd received the honor twice in 2015 and 2016.¹⁰⁰ It is interesting to note that not a single male player from the United States has ever won the award or even been in the top three finalists for the honor. From a coaching perspective, two female U.S. coaches have won the coach of the year title. Pia Sundhage and Jill Ellis both earned the honor, while no male coach has been awarded. On the world stage, the U.S. Soccer Federation received greater recognition for their female players and coaches as opposed to the males. Six female players and two female coaches have racked up individual accolades, while not a single male individual has. Yet, the national recognition for female players and coaches is basically non-existent.

The U.S. Soccer Federation followed FIFA's lead by creating a National Soccer Hall of Fame in 2010. This was utilized as a way to honor two to four members of the organization on a yearly basis. The inductions include players, coaches, and administrators from both sides of the women's and men's game in the United States. In the inaugural induction, in 2010, one coach and three players from the men's side of the game received the honor.¹⁰¹ The next year, four players from the men's side were inducted.¹⁰² It wasn't until 2012 that a coach from the women's side received the honor. Interestingly enough, it was a man. Tony Diccico, who was the U.S. women's national team coach from 1994 to 1999 was inducted for his extremely successful career that included an Olympic gold medal in 1996 and a World Cup victory in 1999.¹⁰³ The public has to wait until 2014 to see a woman get inducted into the Hall of Fame. Kristine Lilly

⁹⁷ "The Best FIFA Football Awards™ - History." FIFA.com. Accessed March 09, 2018. <http://www.fifa.com/the-best-fifa-football-awards/history/index.html>.

⁹⁸ "History." Awards - U.S. Soccer. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/history/awards>.

⁹⁹ "The Best FIFA Football Awards™ - History." FIFA.com. Accessed March 09, 2018. <http://www.fifa.com/the-best-fifa-football-awards/history/index.html>.

¹⁰⁰ "The Best FIFA Football Awards™ - History." FIFA.com. Accessed March 09, 2018. <http://www.fifa.com/the-best-fifa-football-awards/history/index.html>.

¹⁰¹ "Class of 2010." National Soccer Hall of Fame. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/national-soccer-hall-of-fame/class-of-2010>.

¹⁰² "Class of 2011." National Soccer Hall of Fame. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/national-soccer-hall-of-fame/class-of-2011>

¹⁰³ "Class of 2012." National Soccer Hall of Fame. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/national-soccer-hall-of-fame/class-of-2012>

was inducted that year, along with two men.¹⁰⁴ Only three other women have been inducted since Kristine. In 2016, Brandi Chastain and Shannon Macmillan, two amazing players from the late 1990s and early 2000s, were received the honor.¹⁰⁵ In the following year, Briana Scurry joined them by being inducted.¹⁰⁶ It is very interesting to note that twenty-five people have been inducted into the U.S. National Soccer Hall of Fame since its creation in 2010. Only four of those people have been women. Female players and coaches have displayed success and dominance on the world stage, yet they continue to be marginalized within their own country.

Where Do We Go From Here/Conclusion:

It is easy to point fingers at the U.S. Soccer Federation and blame them for all of the inequalities that female national soccer players have experienced over the past twenty years. Some of the points that have been highlighted can be directly tied to the federation. One of these examples is the contract discrepancies experienced by individual coaches and players. But some are results of social constructs within the United States. This creates a complex web of inequalities that women in professional soccer must overcome. So looking into the future, where do U.S. women's national soccer players and supporters of the movement go from here in terms of the fight for equality? First, the general public must realize the importance of developing the next generation of female youth players. Funding and resources need to be allotted to girls just starting out in the game of soccer. This will provide young girls with a positive first exposure to the sport and hopefully inspire them to continue playing the game. Second, the women's national team players must continue to stand up for their rights and utilize resources to ensure that they receive everything they have already earned, on and off of the field. This means continuing to file lawsuits for pay discrimination by the U.S. Soccer Federation, continuing to bring awareness to subpar training and playing facilities, and continuing to compare sponsorship opportunities and media contracts with the male U.S. players. Lastly, the women's national team players must continue to inspire and grasp the attention of fans of all ages. Americans love sports because there is a winner and a loser in every contest. If one looks at any professional sports franchise with a history of losing, he/she will see that they generate significantly less revenue compared to a highly successful team. The U.S. women's national team needs to continue winning and maintaining their status as the best women's team in the world in order to continue drawing in a larger fan base. These three initiatives are not easy to carry out, but there is a deep rooted belief that women's soccer can propel to the next level if these goals are met.

Men's soccer is often seen as the most popular sport in the world. Many fans say that the men's game is faster, more physical, and includes more skill than the women's game. Other fans believe that the women's game is equally as exciting. It has been proven with statistics that the men's side of the game has consistently higher viewership ratings than the women's side. In

¹⁰⁴ "Class of 2014." National Soccer Hall of Fame. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/national-soccer-hall-of-fame/class-of-2014>

¹⁰⁵ "Class of 2016." National Soccer Hall of Fame. Accessed March 09, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/about/national-soccer-hall-of-fame/class-of-2016>

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

2014, FIFA distributed a survey to all of its member associations regarding women's involvement in soccer. The data showed a clear need for reform, and in 2015, the association created the FIFA Female Leadership Development Program. The group met and developed ten key principles to carry out. They were allotted one million dollars annually to pursue these endeavors. These principles included making the game more accessible to all women, creating a sustainable professional women's soccer industry, emphasizing female involvement in coaching and refereeing, etc.¹⁰⁷ The 2014 survey displayed that women around the world currently saw the game of soccer as a way to institute change. 35% of respondents stated that they see women's soccer as a great platform for international participation. 32% of respondents stated that it is a vehicle for social development. 30% see it as a sport allowed for women who are culturally challenged. Lastly, 29% of women did believe that soccer is a sport only to be played by men.¹⁰⁸ The FIFA development team utilized the data from the survey to begin developing and implementing their program within different organizations. Plans were drawn up, a strong marketing and promotional initiative was put in place, and implementation began through mentoring, workshops, and other activities. Even though this program is still in its infantile years of existence, it has received a positive reception. It has been introduced in the U.S. and has served as a foundation for what the U.S. women's national team aspires to achieve in terms of women's involvement and interest in the sport.

In the United States, women have the right under law to compete in athletics from the youth level all the way up to the professional leagues and everywhere in between. The U.S. has always been seen as at the forefront of accelerating women's involvement in athletics, but that does not mean that women are treated equally to men within the U.S.S.F. Grassroots programs are an intricate part of the development of the game of soccer for both genders within the United States. Grassroots programs involve different seminars and training modules mandatory for coaches and administrators to help ensure children receive a positive first exposure to the game. Many of these programs occur within youth club organizations or town/recreational organizations. U.S. Soccer has provided grants to individual organizations throughout the country in an attempt to stimulate youth involvement in that area. By recruiting more children and having proper coaching technique at a younger age, the skill level at that age will increase. This allows the elite clubs at the teenage and young adult levels to push players even farther because the players have a stronger foundation. Also, exposing children to the game in an informational and positive manner makes the children more likely enjoy the experience and want to continue playing. This increases overall participation rates and income for the federation. The U.S. Soccer Federation has implemented these programs through the digital coaching center. At the beginner level, coaches log in to the portal and are guided through a twenty minute training

¹⁰⁷ FIFA. Female Leadership Development Programme. "Women's Football - 10 Key Development Principles." News release. FIFA.com. Accessed March 12, 2018. http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/affederation/bodies/02/36/77/51/10_keys_en_neutral.pdf

¹⁰⁸ "Women's Football Survey." FIFA. Accessed March 21, 2018. http://www.fifa.com/mm/document/footballdevelopment/women/02/52/26/49/womensfootballsurvey2014_e_english.pdf.

module that allows them to earn the lowest level coaching license.¹⁰⁹ As a coach attempts to gain a higher license, the training modules are more in depth and are proctored at in-person conferences. The initiative has been in place for a number of years now, but it is constantly being altered and updated to improve efficiency. Grassroots programs are extremely important for young girls in soccer because they foster positive experiences in hopes of increasing participation rates to help dissolve the stigma associated with girls in sports.

The social stigma surrounding female involvement in sports makes it extremely important for successful female athletes to present themselves as positive role models to young girls. Recently, the brand Always has embarked on a campaign titled "Like A Girl." In this campaign, the company has utilized a sociologically-based study to address different perceptions young girls hold true about themselves. Many of the girls who were interviewed reported feeling inferior to boys in speed, strength, and overall athletic ability. The campaign highlighted the trivial use of the phrases "You hit like a girl," and "You run like a girl" to show the negative effects that a seemingly harmless phrase can have on a young, impressionable girl's confidence.¹¹⁰ These stereotypes and stigmas have discouraged girls over the years from participating in sports, including soccer. Girls have been encouraged to stick to feminine sports like cheerleading and dance. Or they have been encouraged to pursue other hobbies like baking and painting. Over the past twenty years, the U.S. women's national team has made it their mission to become inspiring role models for young girls. Throughout her amazing career, Mia Hamm was debatably the most well-known female athlete of the time. She has emphasized that her brother was the one to encourage her to try playing soccer. He praised her raw talent and gave her a sense of confidence. Hamm attributes that support to her success at such a young age. At fifteen years old, she became the youngest player to make her debut for the U.S. women's national team.¹¹¹ Abby Wambach was another player who pays tribute to her family for their encouragement. She was one of seven children and always enjoyed competing in athletic contests with her brothers. Her family encouraged her to play sports in high school where she honed in on her basketball and soccer talents.¹¹² She went on to play for the national team for over ten years, and she became the leading scorer of all time. Lastly, Megan Rapinoe is a player who has always emphasized the support and creative freedom that she has received from her family. As a child, she was allowed to roam the rural land by her home and get into trouble with her twin sister. She said that her experience as a child has helped her to develop creativity and confidence as a player. She also uses her voice to advocate for the LGBTQ community and other human rights issues.¹¹³ She says that her loving support from her family and her freedom as a child has helped her to develop her passionate and outspoken demeanor. All three of these

¹⁰⁹ "Five Things to Know About the Grassroots Pathway Coaching Initiative." U.S. Soccer. January 17, 2018. Accessed March 11, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/stories/2018/01/17/19/28/20180117-news-coach-education-five-things-to-know-grassroots-pathway-coaching-initiative>.

¹¹⁰ "Our Epic Battle #LikeAGirl." ALWAYS. Accessed February 11, 2018. <https://always.com/en-us/about-us/our-epic-battle-like-a-girl>.

¹¹¹ Starr, Mark. "Keeping Her Own Score." Newsweek. March 14, 2010. Accessed April 15, 2018. <http://www.newsweek.com/keeping-her-own-score-167182>.

¹¹² "Abby Wambach - USWNT." USWNT - U.S. Soccer. Accessed April 2, 2018. <https://www.ussoccer.com/players/w/abby-wambach#tab-1>.

¹¹³ "Megan Rapinoe." Team USA. Accessed April 2, 2018. <https://www.teamusa.org/us-soccer/athletes/Megan-Rapinoe>.

players have emphasized that their success has come through hard work, familial support, self-confidence, and capitalizing on opportunities. These women understand that the next generation of U.S. soccer is watching them on television and looking to them as role models. They have highlighted the positive support that they received growing up and want to now use their public platform to inspire the next generation to dig deeper, push the boundaries farther, and be greater than anyone has ever imagined. By being positive role models, the U.S. women's national team will be able to inspire the next generation of national team players to become the most skilled female athletes the country has seen.

The U.S. women's players past and present have expressed their concern regarding the constant battle they have endured for equal rights. In 2000, players like Carla Overbeck, Mia Hamm, and Brandi Chastain voiced their frustrations to the public after arguing with the U.S. Soccer Federation over a new contract negotiation. These players had just won the highest prize in world soccer—the Women's World Cup. Afterward, the federation was refusing to increase their monthly stipend from around \$3,000 to \$5,000.¹¹⁴ These women emphasized that they have put their bodies on the line day in and day out for this organization, and they were not going to settle for less than they deserved. And, they didn't. After boycotting a friendly tournament in Australia, they were given a new contract. A few years later, it was released to the public that the U.S. men's national team traveled first class on their flights across the country and internationally. The women's team was appalled because they had always been traveling in the coach or economy section. After talking with members of the men's side to discover if the federation paid for the upgrade or they individually chose to fly first class, the women uncovered that the U.S. Soccer Federation was funding the first class flights. Conveniently, this created a large issue in the public eye. Eventually, the U.S.S.F. decided to pay for both teams to travel in first class. In 2015, the fight for inequality came to the surface once again. Women's national team members—Carli Lloyd, Megan Rapinoe, and Alex Morgan—reprimanded FIFA for the unfit playing conditions that the women were expected to compete on during the World Cup. Soccer is a game predominantly played on grass, but the entire Women's World Cup was set to be played on artificial turf. Playing on this surface leads to an increased risk of injury, likelihood of developing heat exhaustion, and risk of turf burns when sliding or falling. The men's World Cup, the UEFA tournament, the CONCACAF Gold Cup, and every other major men's tournament have all been played on well-maintained grass fields. But, the female players were not going to boycott the biggest tournament in the world. They agreed to overlook this detail but did make sure to express their discontent to the media. After the U.S. women won the tournament, the U.S.S.F. decided that the team's victory tour would also be played on artificial turf. The players were appalled by this decision because these upcoming games meant nothing. They were only played as a way to say thank you to the fans that supported their journey. The players competed in the victory tour for the fans, but filed formal complaints with the federation, citing "turf discrimination." One year later, the U.S. women were once again dominating newspaper

¹¹⁴ Longman, Jere. "SOCCER; Women's Team Ends Boycott, Agreeing to a Contract." *New York Times*, January 30, 2000. Accessed March 25, 2018. <https://www.nytimes.com/2000/01/30/sports/soccer-women-s-team-ends-boycott-agreeing-to-a-contract.html>.

headlines due to a battle with the U.S. Soccer Federation over contract negotiations. Five players—Megan Rapinoe, Alex Morgan, Hope Solo, Becky Sauerbrunn, and Carli Lloyd—filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Soccer Federation and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regarding “equal pay for equal play.”¹¹⁵ They presented their own evidence that individual players and coaches from the men’s side of the game were receiving more pay, even though the women’s national team’s success has greatly surpassed that of men’s team. The women said that they generally sell more tickets and bring in more revenue than the men, but the federation denied that claim. After finally settling with the federation, the women continued to speak to the media about how they would continue to fight for equal rights and bring awareness to this issue. When asked about why since they had received the contract that they wanted, the women said that this issue is about a greater injustice. The U.S. national team players have a public platform that allows them to constitute social change. They believe that they must use their voices to rid sports culture of these inequalities. Over fifteen years before the 2016 pay debate, Julie Foudy was quoted as saying, “Whenever you meet female athletes there’s a bond you share. A lot of them are pioneers, like the women on this team. They understand where we’ve come from and where we need to go.” She was discussing the boycott that occurred as a result of the 2000 pay negotiations with the U.S. Soccer Federation. In 2016, Foudy’s point was still relevant. The fight for equality in women’s sports has been and continues to be an uphill battle. In order to denounce this oppression permanently, female athletes must continue to speak up and demand better conditions. This way, hopefully, the next generation of female athletes will not have to experience the same level of inequality. Carli Lloyd, in a 2016 interview with 60 Minutes, expressed the idea that this battle is about something bigger. She stated, “This isn’t about me, though. It’s about a group of women who fought hard and gave every morsel of energy and skill they had to offer. It’s about sacrifice and belief and never giving in, never giving up. It’s about character.” Inequalities, like the ones experienced within U.S. soccer, don’t only prejudice individuals based off of gender, but they also degrade the character of every member of the marginalized group.

¹¹⁵ Campbell, Honey. "Superior Play, Unequal Pay: U.S. Women’s Soccer and the Pursuit for Pay Equity." *University of San Francisco Law Review* 51, no. 3 (2017): 545-70. file:///Users/abraciska/Downloads/HoneyCampbellSuperiorPlay.pdf.



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