

# REPORT ON THE PROGRAM OF ATHLETICS

## FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

1978

### Preface

This report is intended to provide a brief overview of the current conditions under which athletics proceed at the University, the history that led those activities to this point, the problems now encountered, and some recommendations relating to future development. The report was produced after substantial review of relevant documents and after interviewing those who participate as faculty, staff, students or athletes in these activities and other leaders of the University among the student body, the faculty, and the administration. The report was developed at the request of the President of the University.

### Definition and Goals

The report uses the term "athletics" to include all of the following: the instructional and research programs in health, physical education and recreation; the intramural, individual and team athletic contests; activity courses; club sports; special opportunities for physical workouts; the availability of athletic facilities for individual and group usage and organized intercollegiate competition.

The report assumes that the total University program of athletics seeks to carry out these objectives:

1. To offer instructional programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels in physical education and recreation and to promote and support research in these areas as a means to preparing professional personnel for the positions open in education and service which support and promote the physical well-being of our population.
2. To offer opportunity for members of the University community to participate in athletic and recreational activity.
3. To afford students with athletic interest and talent the opportunity to compete with individuals and teams from other collegiate institutions and the chance to develop that talent through special direction and assistance.
4. To enhance University esprit, pride, rapport and visibility from the success of its intercollegiate athletic teams and individuals.
5. To enhance positive relationships with the community at large.

### History

The original Master Plan of the University called for an extensive program in intercollegiate athletics to promote the institution. There was an expectation that

the University would join the National Collegiate Athletic Association in its Division I and compete with major teams across the country. Intercollegiate athletics was originally placed under the Dean of Student Services. Later, however, the program in intercollegiate athletics was moved to the School of Education. The plan that emerged provided that the regular academic program in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation would be combined with the intercollegiate athletic program. The regular academic faculty members would serve also as the coaches of the teams.

Early activity consisted of five sports, which were required for admission to NCAA. These were: baseball, soccer, wrestling, tennis and golf, all for men. (The program had not contemplated intercollegiate competition for women.) All five coaches were half-time teaching faculty members in the School of Education.

Implementation of the plan proved to be quite unsuccessful. After the first year, the University created an Athletic Council, in order to promote the progress of the program. At the end of the second year, it was determined that a full-time Director of Athletics was necessary and one was appointed. As a result, there was created a Department of Athletics divorced from and different from the Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation in the School of Education. The Director reported to the Vice President for Community Affairs. During the third year, however, the reporting was changed to the Vice President for Administrative Affairs. The Director of Athletics, who was brought in to generate a Department of Athletics and to supervise it, left before the end of that year. An Acting Director was appointed who subsequently became Director. Most recently University reorganization has resulted in the Director of Athletics reporting to the Vice President for Student Affairs, a return to the earliest model.

Meanwhile, some women's club sport teams were started in softball and volleyball. A faculty member from the Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation of the School of Education volunteered to coach them. She also promoted the development of varsity status for women's athletics and equality with the men's program. The University provided some support and these five women's sports achieved intercollegiate status: volleyball, basketball, softball, golf and tennis. They have been directed primarily by adjunct coaches.

The academic program in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, initiated originally with coach-faculty members, proceeded to develop slowly. Programs were offered at both the baccalaureate and the master's level in these areas: a program in Physical Education, a program in Health Education, and a program in Parks and Recreation. Enrollment has been small at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Review and reevaluation of the program has been in process.

#### Present Conditions

Currently there are two separate University units offering the athletics program, the Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation in the School of Education and the Department of Athletics reporting through its Director to the Vice President for Student Affairs. The Division has a new chairman who brings substantial experience to it and who has been reiving and revising the program to make it more relevant to conditions in South Florida. The School of Education has no desire to return to the earlier status when it supervised the intercollegiate

athletic program through its physical education faculty. In the meantime, the new leadership assigned to direct the Department of Athletics has been reviewing its program and reassessing its objectives. In addition to administering five intercollegiate sports for men and five for women, the Department also conducts a small program in intramural athletics and some club sports. It proceeds with a budget, the major part of which is appropriated by the Student Government Association from regular student activities fees funds. The facilities for the program are extremely limited. They are also located away from the central academic campus and University House, and therefore, are unknown to the majority of university students. Planning is now underway for a teaching gymnasium. All but one of the men's intercollegiate sports have fulltime coaches. The women's intercollegiate sports proceed largely with adjunct coaches.

### Perceived Problems and Issues

These are the major problems and issues now facing the University program of athletics, as perceived generally within the University.

1. The University now participates in five organized intercollegiate sports for men and five for women. The problem arises from consideration of future development. Should the number be reduced? Should it be increased? If reduced, which sports? On what basis? If increased, which new sports? On what basis? Should the present number and configuration be retained? If so, should some sports be emphasized more than others? If so, which sports? On what basis?
2. There are now substantial differences in budget allocation for women's intercollegiate athletic program and for the men's intercollegiate athletic program. Are those differences justified? Should there be an effort to close the gap? Are resources available for that purpose? If new resources are not available is closing the gap important enough to reduce the program of both or either? Or, is the relationship in the budget at present a legitimate reflection of legitimate differences?
3. The University now has a second major campus at North Miami. The National Collegiate Athletic Association may require that separate campuses have separate teams in similar sports. How can the University respond to this apparent required doubling of effort? Moving that major issue aside, what development in athletics should North Miami experience? Should the academic program be duplicated there? What recreational and intramural opportunities should exist there? What kind of athletic facilities need to be developed there? What are the implications for organization? Should new athletic teams for intercollegiate competition be developed there? In additional sports?
4. A major deterrent in the development of the academic program, of intercollegiate competition, and of the recreational program including intramural competition,

has been substantial limitation of facilities. That condition obtains on both campuses. How shall this be redressed? What program of facilities development should be mapped out and on what basis?

5. The budget for the Department of Athletics and for the program of intercollegiate athletics is derived primarily from appropriations made by the Student Government Association from student activities fees. What are the prospects for continuing appropriations, especially in the face of requests for increasing appropriations? Should the program continue to depend almost exclusively on this one source: Should some effort be made to provide funds from the regular State-appropriated budget for operations? Should other sources be explored?
6. Most of the coaches for men's intercollegiate sports are full-time; most women's teams have adjunct coaches. Should this condition be changed? And how? Should the University support full-time coaches, or adjunct coaches, or both? Should the gap between men's coaches and women's coaches be closed with more full-time coaches assigned to women's sports?
7. Two different units in the University now conduct the total athletics program, the Division of Physical Education in the School of Education and the Department of Athletics. Earlier, there was but one unit. Is the present arrangement appropriate? Should the two be brought together again? Should there be more than two units?
8. Those who participate in the program of intercollegiate athletics, especially student athletes, have registered concern that so little of what they achieve is reported through the public press. Part of their reward is recognition. There is some interest in having a full-time Director of Sports Information appointed and, therefore, budgeted for the Department of Athletics. Can that be justified? Should it be pursued?
9. Early the University organized the Sunblazers Club. It is the booster organization for the University's intercollegiate sports program. It hasn't been given the kind of attention some would like from the Development Office and other University resources. Should a greater effort be made to integrate the activities of the Sunblazers Club and the fund-raising function of the Development Office?

#### Attitudes

Interviews with student leaders, faculty members, administrators, coaches, and student athletes reveal a consensus for moderate approaches to the program of intercollegiate athletics and its relationship with the Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation in the School of Education.

There seems to be relatively little support for expanding intercollegiate athletics into major sports or indeed to adding many, if any, sports to the present configuration

of five for men and five for women. At the same time, there is no substantial support for reducing the number of intercollegiate sports or for eliminating the program entirely. There is some interest in making more of the current program by emphasizing one, two, or three of the ten teams to generate additional visibility and University rallying. There is an interest in expanding the program of intramural athletics and recreation. There is an interest in the establishment of activities courses through the Division of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation so that many students may enroll in those courses for credit. There is an interest in providing credit for intramural competition. There is some interest in promoting international competition with teams coming from the Greater Caribbean to Miami and teams going from Miami to that area but, at the same time, there is concern and caution about the cost of such a program addition. There is a desire to see some involvement with alumni groups as part of the intramural program of competitive sports. Finally, there is a very strong desire on the part of student athletes for some measure of recognition for their industry and commitment, particularly in the public press but also in University publications.

#### A Note on Budget

Normally in the analysis of program with recommendations for program development, one attempts also to analyze budget configurations, resource needs and resource expectations. The latter is usually little more than an educated guess, in this instance two educated guesses: the resource which might be available to the University in the years ahead, and the resources which might be allocated to the program of athletics. Moreover, estimates of resource expectations are almost always in error on the high side in complex non-profit organizations supported by political entities partly because sudden shifts in conditions and attitudes occur often.

Resource needs, on the other hand, are often underestimated although based on expectations of unrealistically high program expansion. Therefore, an analysis of resource needs for athletics would not only elicit little consensus but it would ultimately have little, if any, use.

An analysis of present budget configurations will reveal very modest commitments of resources to the various program elements as they now exist.

Finally, we need to point out that the sources for support of the program of athletics are very few: the University's annual operating budget, the University's capital development budget, allocations from student activities fees, gifts to and other income of the Sunblazers, and gate receipts, if any, charged for admission to intercollegiate athletic contests. Needless to say, a good deal of effort needs to be committed to enhancing the flow of monies from all sources into the program.

The issue of the general financing of the program is addressed in #6 of the following section of this report.

## Some Recommendations

### 1. The Academic Program

The program in Health, Physical Education and Recreation is undergoing serious review and quality improvement. Essential will be the development of research by the faculty with some engagement by students in laboratory activities both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. In addition, the program will need to include physical activities courses for credit at least for majors. Both these needs suggest the importance of a carefully-designed physical education facility, the building that is being referred to as a "teaching gymnasium." Planning for this facility seems now to be happily under way.

The three major programs offered by the division of Health, Physical Education and Recreation in the School of Education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels need and are experiencing significant modifications.

The program in Health Education needs further development, probably in collaboration with the School of Health and Social Services. Given the very substantial interest by federal agencies in health and health education, it would be natural to look in this direction for support to promote research and appropriate special teaching activities.

The programs in Parks and Recreational Management at the undergraduate level and Parks and Recreational Administration at the graduate level can increase their viability by taking note of their setting in the midst of Vacationland. Cooperative activities with the School of Hotel Management would seem to be appropriate. Moreover, concern with the aged and with recreation for the aged, given the nature of this community, would seem to be an appropriate direction for further development. Federal agency interest in this area might also produce support for research studies in special instructional activities. Therapeutic recreation could be promoted, probably in collaboration with the program in Physical Therapy in the School of Health and Social Services.

The program in Physical Education can also benefit from further emphasis upon research and laboratory activities and can become more viable to students through the encouragement of a double major, for example Physical Education and History, or Physical Education combined with a program in coaching.

The University would profit from developing a program in dance, which might be housed in the Division or in Childhood Education or in the Fine and Performing Arts. Wherever it is housed, coordination with the other two areas would be desirable. Dance should provide physical outlet for students, an additional area for those interested in the performing arts, and an excellent way to improve relationships with the community-at-large, especially the Latin community.

The addition of a minor in coaching would seem to be an appropriate future development. With leisure time increasing in the society, the need for supervision and direction for sports is of increasing importance. For the years ahead more emphasis needs to be placed on preparing women for coaching.

Future faculty development should emphasize research interests and research capabilities.

## 2. The Scope and Emphasis of Intercollegiate Athletics

The Department of Athletics now engages in ten intercollegiate sports, five for men and five for women. For the men there are teams in baseball, soccer, wrestling, tennis and golf. For the women there are teams in volleyball, basketball, softball, golf and tennis. For the short-range future, given attitudes and given limited resources, there should be no expansion either into additional so-called minor sports or into major sports. The latter carries very little support and obvious large costs. The two possibilities sometimes mentioned are football and men's basketball. Football is quickly dismissed in view of the presence of the Miami Dolphins and the University of Miami football teams. Basketball is given some consideration but only if a coliseum planned by private parties to be built on the campus with the approval of the University does indeed materialize. As of this writing, that possibility seems quite limited. Therefore, football and men's basketball would seem to be inappropriate for short-range consideration.

Should other so-called minor sports be considered? This report is recommending no significant expansion into additional sports without elimination of a current sport. One exception may be on the horizon. If a swimming pool were to be built on either the North Miami Campus or the Tamiami Campus, consideration might be given to developing a swimming team. Beyond that possible exception, expansion of the intercollegiate athletic program is not recommended for the short term.

The matter of emphasis may be another consideration. If we agree that among the purposes of a program of intercollegiate athletics is the promotion of esprit and attractive public visibility, we shall have to admit that those objectives can be achieved only with a highly-successful record of a sport. That means winning a good many games, especially in contests with teams of some distinction. That means also that effort and resources will have to be concentrated into an area smaller than ten teams. The conclusion we are led to is that one or two or at most three teams from among the ten now supported ought to be selected for some special infusion of resources and energy so that they might achieve for the University a modicum of that esprit and public visibility from which the institution might benefit.

A difficulty presents itself when one proceeds to make choices among the ten sports. But there are criteria. The following are suggested.

- a. The availability of student talent.
- b. The availability of schedule
- c. The availability of facilities
- d. The availability of special conditions to promote public visibility and esprit.

The latter is worth exploring a bit. There may be, and probably are, certain times of the year when prestigious teams from the northern part of the country would welcome a chance to come to Florida to play. In addition, there may be periods of the year here in South Florida when there is relatively little sports news of wide interest. This condition provides an opportunity for public visibility for a particular sport from Florida International University. Baseball, for example, would seem to satisfy this emphasis. There is the possibility that certain minor teams from prestigious universities, academically or athletically, might be induced to play here; whenever FIU can defeat them, much is gained. Planning and development along these lines is especially to be encouraged.

### 3. Sports Information

The major refrain one hears from student athletes is the disappointment of non-recognition, particularly given their commitment of time and extraordinary effort, and especially when their teams score victories. Moreover, the institution itself loses by its inability to generate some attractive university visibility. For these reasons we are inclined to recommend that a sports information specialist, with whatever title, be appointed on a full-time basis to carry this important mission. While this specialist needs to coordinate activities with University information services, he/she should report to the Director of Athletics, and be supported in the budget of the Department of Athletics.

### 4. Organization

Current organization has evolved out of experience. That organization has consisted of two independent units directing different aspects of the program. As has been pointed out, the Division of Health, Physical Education and Recreation in the School of Education, with its Director reporting to the Dean of the School of Education, has overseen the development and operation of the academic program. The Department of Athletics, whose Director of Athletics reports to the Vice President for Student Affairs, has been overseeing the program in intercollegiate athletics, intramural competition, club sports, and recreation. While there are other viable forms of organization available (for example, a School of Health, Physical Education and



Recreation combining all elements in one unit), such organization should be reserved for consideration in the future after further University development. For the present, the organizational arrangement that has evolved with the most recent change provides the best opportunity for continuing development of both sides of the total program, with the academic aspect of the activity reporting to an academic dean and the athletic and the competitive and recreational aspect of the activity reporting to the Division of Student Activities.

## 5. Staffing

While the organizational separation has been inevitable, given historical development, and can be justified as viable, staffing separation is hard to justify. Both activities, the academic program and the athletic and recreational program, can benefit from a staff whose members can participate in both activities. The academic program profits from those engaged in activities while the activities program can enjoy the support and cooperation of the academic staff. Ideally, most staff members should have joint appointments and should be qualified for both kinds of program. Recent developments have not quite tended in that direction. We recommend therefore, that as position openings become available, serious consideration be given to attracting staff members who have both the qualifications for academic and research contributions and the skills to coach or direct activities. It is only reasonable to assume that for both programs on occasion there will emerge an especially attractive candidate whose contributions can be made in only one area, and of course such exceptional candidates should be appointed to promote each program. At the same time the emphasis for future staffing should be on joint appointments. Such a direction will lead to more cooperative functional relationships and will generate economies through personnel flexibility. These economies should permit adjustments in the budget to bring close to equality allocations for men's and women's intercollegiate sports, an important and necessary objective. There is limited justification for full-time coaching positions in either men's or women's sports.

## 6. Financial Support

The academic program generates its own support through the regular budget for instruction in the University.

The Department of Athletics and Recreation has been funded for its annual operations through student fees. There are, as indicated earlier, only five possible sources for funding this aspect of the program:

- a. Gate receipts for athletic contests
- b. The University's regular state-funded operational resources
- c. The University's regular state-funded capital outlay resources
- d. Gifts, donations, and special profitable activities
- e. Student fees

Gate receipts would seem to be an unlikely prospect for the short term. Not until a good deal of enthusiasm has been generated for a winning sport is there likely to be any significant opportunity for realizing enough gate receipts to justify the expense of collecting them. The use of State-provided University operational funds cannot be committed in very substantial quantities to the support of the Department of Athletics, given the variety of constraints, including substantial competing demands for those resources. But to the extent possible, some effort should be made in this direction to ease the pressure of very great dependence upon student fees resources. Likewise, State capital outlay resources can and should be acquired to create facilities for credit producing physical education activities.

It is wise to recognize that for the near future the program of intercollegiate athletics and intramurals and recreation will have to draw a large part of its resources from student activities fees monies. One recommendation here might prove helpful. Each year the Student Government Association, through its committees and its Senate, reviews needs and makes allocations for a variety of purposes from its resources. In view of continuing need in a number of major areas which Student Government supports and in view of annual difficulty in contending with the problem of allocation, it might be well to make a commitment, always reviewable, to allocate some percentage of each student's fee or some percentage of each dollar to a variety of significant activities including those of the Department of Athletics and Recreation. Such an action would relieve the decision-making system from having to deal constantly with those major items and would free that activity to deal with other, lesser, more temporary needs from among remaining resources. At the same time, it would provide more confidence in the continuity of the program and its support. As indicated, such a decision is always reviewable at a later date.

Gifts and donations and income from special activities have generally come through the boosters organization the University established some years ago, The Sunblazers Club. While this organization has produced some handsome gifts and has provided help for the program, its potential has not been nearly fully realized. In the past there has been relatively little coordination between the activities of the Sunblazers Club, the Development Office of the University and the activities of the Florida International University Foundation. More concentrated effort on the potential of the Sunblazers Club, through more coordination with the Foundation and support and direction from the Development Office of the University, should generate increasing quantities of resources. Fortunately, under its new leadership the Development Office has begun to take action in this direction.

As indicated many times in this report, a need has been felt for improved and expanded facilities. This kind of capital development is supported by the special funds generated by the State for facilities construction and also by bonding opportunities available to student leadership with the pledge of some quantity of future student fees receipts. In the former case, facilities are developed to support credit-producing activities. In the latter, special programs of benefit to students that do not produce credit can be supported without tax revenues. Since a commitment has

now been made and planning is going forward on the creation of a teaching gymnasium to support credit courses, it would be wise to review once again the desirability of floating bonds for an addition to that facility which would be supportive of those activities which do not produce academic credit and, therefore, which cannot be supported by regular capital outlay funding means. The melding of these two sources of income with cooperative planning by both academic interests and athletic and recreational interests would seem to produce the most useful kind of facility with maximum flexibility for a variety of activities. Such melding of funds and such cooperative planning is recommended here.

### 7. Intramural Competition

In order for intramural activities to enjoy a higher degree of success on the campus, it is necessary to give that activity much more visibility. More vigorous announcements of intramural programs need to be made. Activities in progress need to be publicized particularly through the student newspaper. Such activities will not only make participation more rewarding but they will also generate a higher degree of consciousness of the program and encourage more participation. In addition, there seems to be a good deal of interest in the awarding of academic credit at some reasonable level for engaging in intramural competition. Certainly a commitment to such a program of physical activity would seem to be deserving of academic credit and would generate a level of discipline for consistency of attendance and participation. Credit would also make the activity more rewarding for the instructor and would provide justification to use a teaching gymnasium.

It would hardly be necessary to emphasize the importance of facilities to support a program of intramural competition. Fortunately, such planning is now under way. Hopefully, the facility will be funded by the State at an early date.

That the University offers only two years of upper-level undergraduate study would seem to be a disadvantage in any effort to promote more participation in intramural competition. For that reason, it would seem wise to generate a sense of continuity beyond the two years into alumni status. Since some eighty per cent of our graduates remain in the metropolitan Miami area, conditions exist to promote continuing intramural participation after students have graduated from the institution. It seems possible to develop teams from among young alumni relating to their own special interests. For example, an organization with the title of "The Young Accountants" or "The Young Attorneys" might establish teams and compete with student teams. This development will not only serve to promote the well-being of the program of intramural competition but should also generate new linkages between the University and the community at large.

### 8. Recreation

A program of recreation requires fundamentally the availability of facilities and equipment and some minimal commitment of staff to supervise the use of those

facilities and equipment. This activity, like intramural competition, needs heavy promotion to persuade a university community that the opportunity does indeed exist. The only other supervisory need would be related to the scheduling of facilities when heavy use begins to be felt.

#### North Miami Campus

The development of some recreational opportunities, such as tennis and handball, should be promoted as quickly as possible at the North Miami Campus, and indeed such plans are already in progress. It is clear that aquatic activities ought eventually to be placed at North Miami if they cannot be supported at both campuses. Again, plans are under way to generate facilities for aquatics.

As facilities become available, more recreational opportunity and some intramural activity with emphasis on aquatics ought to be scheduled. There might even develop an opportunity for intramural competition between the two campuses.

In the pursuit of its intercollegiate athletics program, the university faces a problem as it develops the North Miami Campus. The National Collegiate Athletic Association, in which the University holds membership, may require that each campus have its own independent teams. If so, that would appear to pose an extraordinarily expensive effort at expansion. We recommend, however, that the problem be explored further and that representation be made to the Athletic Association on the very special conditions of our two-campus University. In most instances, the second campus and indeed other campuses of a University are a hundred miles or more from each other. Normally, students do not commute between those two campuses, but reside in the area near one campus and undertake all of their study on that campus. In our instance, we have two campuses that are not quite thirty miles apart. Moreover, a substantial number of students take courses on both campuses. We would, as a matter of fact, have difficulty in assigning athletes to one of two teams. We would, moreover, need to transfer athletes from one team to the other as the student's program required attendance at one or another campus in various quarters. For these reasons, it would appear that, should it be necessary, a case can be made to justify one all-university team in each sport for men and each sport for women at Florida International University.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is much to be said in support of a modest program in athletics in a University, including all its aspects as defined earlier. The importance of sound, regular physical activity for personal well-being should not be underestimated. As a group activity, sports competition, both within and without the University, offers not only personal and community benefits, but also some very special benefits to the institution itself. The University would do well to give reasonable attention to the realization of all these benefits.

Milton Byrd  
December, 1977