

Women deserve the right to compete in sports

Wendy Fulks

I am a senior, and a female athlete. By virtue of these "distinctions," I feel somewhat qualified to address one of the issues this campus has faced, and must deal with in the near future, concerning athletics at Davidson. Many of us women who have participated in sports at Davidson have become frustrated with the situation here. Perhaps frustrated is not the right word. Some of us are mad; maybe even very mad. My two main points are these: By virtue of Davidson's size, we (men and women) do belong in Division I of the NCAA, and 2) although it seems that we are destined to remain in Division I, Davidson is not prepared to spend the money necessary to make competitive in this division.

Oh, but "The Basketball Team" went to the NCAA's year! Wow, "The glory days are back!" How wonderful! Surely that proves that Davidson belongs in Division I. First of all, let me ask all of you who refer to Davidson's basketball to qualify which team you mean. Time and time again I have seen references to "The Basketball Team," as if we had only one. This brings me to my next point, namely, that one NCAA bid for one team does not justify the fact that six women's teams must compete with Division I schools. We simply do not have the numbers of women, nor do we have the talent to be successful at this level. We must also realize that some men's teams simply suffer from our ambitious classification.

Is it fair to give scholarships (etc.) to male basketball players, but not to women, to baseball players, to wrestlers, etc.? You simply cannot convince me that Davidson is "in the right" about this one. Davidson's male basketball team is competitive because Davidson pumps big bucks into that one program, and lets the others fend for themselves. Oh, but they bring in a lot of revenue, don't they? Oh, and the alumni would abandon Davidson, if it weren't for "The" good basketball team we have. Well I, for one, think that, while it might not be easy, Davidson can live without Men's Basketball revenues. Furthermore, if "Big Basketball" is the primary concern of some alumni, I think that Davidson can do without their support. Davidson alumni need to understand that today's Davidson may be significantly different than the one they remember. Their primary concern should be that all Davidson students have the opportunity to supplement their education with appropriate activities, to include a wide base of competitive athletic teams.

Besides all of this, who says that Division III basketball won't be any fun? Personally, since being exposed to the injustices (I know that's a pretty strong word; I wanted one) of Davidson athletics, I have been unable to support Davidson Division I Men's Basketball with any degree of fervor. Wouldn't it be great if Davidson could have many, winning, competitive teams at the Division III level, as opposed to having an outstanding season in Division I Men's Basketball, once in a while?

Well, it seems that we're stuck in Division I. Perhaps we have the Trustees and/or Alumni to blame for this one:

I'm not sure. I don't blame the NCAA, that's for sure. They shouldn't allow Davidson to have Division I men's teams and Division III teams for women. I would call that discrimination. Sort of like giving scholarships to an elite group of athletes and excluding others, eh? As far as I can tell, things will go on at Davidson as they have before, with no great increase in the monetary support given to women's athletics. So, the women's basketball team must once again suffer losing seasons and campus ridicule, "The" tennis team (I mean the women, of course, the 1984 Division III champs) probably will no longer "enjoy success," now that they are playing Division I, and other teams, women's and men's, will keep their mediocre standings in a division which is out of our league.

Is the solution to sponsor different teams, those in which we can be more competitive? Probably not. Davidson will get what it pays for. Without money, and lots of it, for scholarships, more travel, better equipment, etc. women at Davidson will "enjoy" little success on any athletic fields and courts in the future. I don't know about you, but I happen to think that Davidson women deserve more. We deserve the opportunity to compete with "women our own size," so to speak, that is, in Division III. However, if we must remain in Division I we should receive the financial commitment to support women's teams and to attract more talented female athletes to be competitive in Division I.

Fulks is a senior from Leicester, NC.

Women's athletics needs recommitment

Women's Tennis Team

For several years Davidson has been in violation of a number of NCAA rules. Foremost is the NCAA rule that a school must have six Division I women's sports teams to compete in Division I. We have not prepared adequately to meet this requirement. Take a look at the women's sports teams that qualified for Division I:

- 1) Women's cross-country
- 2) Women's field hockey
- Women's basketball — did not qualify because of too few Division I games
- 3) Women's indoor track (did you know we had one?!) — barely qualified! five out of the 14 member team had to be recruited to meet qualifications
- 4) Women's outdoor track — barely qualified! five out of the 14 member team had to be recruited to meet qualifications

Women's tennis — has been Division III for four years. Davidson has been aware of the need to bring the women's program into compliance with the six-sport minimum since it was adopted by NCAA in 1981. What did it

do? In regards to effectiveness — nothing. Our sports administration has been getting around these violations for four years. Over five months ago, NCAA made it clear that Davidson must comply with the Division I sport sponsorship requirement this year or face becoming "unclassified" in both men's and women's sports next year. What did our administration do? Again, nothing that corrected Davidson's violation. With five weeks left in the year, we are now facing the penalties of their inaction. The school must immediately find two new women's sports somewhere. Last week Davidson literally threw together a golf team. With no clubs or preparation, five women traveled to Durham this past weekend and shot 18 holes against eight Division I schools. Their goal was to finish, never mind competing. But that's the fifth women's sport. Now, women's tennis is being forced up to Division I effective immediately. For the sake of creating this sixth team, Davidson is sacrificing the tennis team's last chance at a Division III National Championship.

We reiterate, Davidson's sports administration has been aware of the inability of the women's athletic program

at Davidson to comply with NCAA Division I regulations and has failed to prepare adequately for their enforcement. And now, to save Davidson's eligibility in Division I (as well as their pride), Davidson is willing to make a joke of women's sports. If we cannot field six Division I women's sport teams, Davidson will be considered "unclassified." This means that next year Davidson's sports teams would not be permitted to compete in post-season play, but then would resume status in an appropriate division. Not only does Davidson deserve this penalty for its negligence towards women's athletics, but the college needs this period to reassess its athletic direction, commitment to and expectations of their men's and women's athletic programs in the future. But rather than accept these consequences, the Athletic Department is opting to manipulate the women's sports program for the sake of a single year of Division I qualification. Please prevent the continued negligence of the real needs of Davidson's women's athletics — Become informed about what's going on — Express your concerns to faculty, staff, and administrators — Support us in our fight!! Thanks!!

GAY SUPPORT GROUP

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Concerned students and faculty are forming a support/social group to meet the needs of the Gay Community at Davidson College.

If interested in information on the first meeting, please write:

G.S.G., P.O. Box 3082
Davidson, NC 28036

Confidentiality is assured