



**LEAN IN
YOUNG WOMEN &
SPORT**

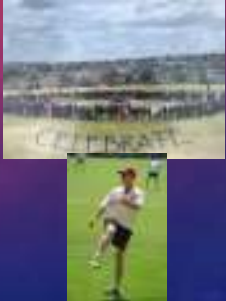
STUART WEST
HERSCHEL GIRLS SCHOOL

KEY LEARNINGS AS A COACH:



- People before strategy
- Don't take results and performances personally
- Do the hard work on the practice field > fitness, a new skill, game application, set pieces, feisty mini-game
- Value the learning from failure and defeats
- Local and overseas tours allow you time on the road to experiment, coach, (lose), and develop as a team
- Teens are incredible to coach! Pick the ambitious, coachable ones

KEY LEARNINGS IN CO-ED SCHOOL:



- Greatest attrition from Prep to Senior school is top sportsmen and women
- Passionate educational, invested coaches
- Difficult to consistently compete in main sports and against main single-sex schools
- Niche sports (swimming, athletics, biathle, golf)
- Girls soccer!
- Girls in particular, feel watched and evaluated in sport and PE > cover up, opt out of sport

MY JOURNEY

- **Bishops: 1998 – 2006**
- **Dainfern College: 2006 – 2012**
- **Herschel Girls: 2013 >**

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THE BENEFITS OF SPORT FOR GIRLS

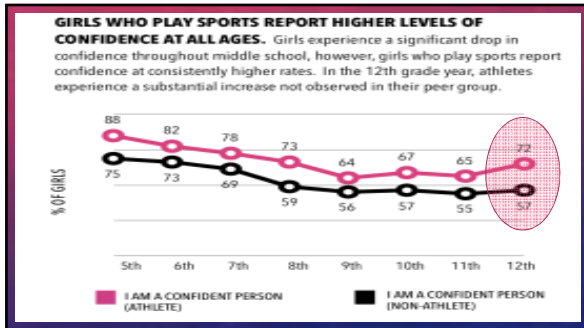
GIRLS, SPORT & CONFIDENCE

PLAYING SPORTS BUILDS SELF-CONFIDENCE

- Most teenage girls experience a self-esteem crisis. Girls involved in sport feel more self-confidence, both physically and socially. They don't need look to relationships with boys to build self-esteem
- Girls in sport constantly learn new skills and goals and how to apply them under pressure
- Team sports provide girls with a core of buddies and networks that are larger, less intimate and based on common achievement and goals, rather than the small, intense friendship groups based on popularity
- Team sports can help girls navigate the often complex social hierarchies of high school
- Girls who play organized sports are more likely to be involved in community activities as adults

HIGHER BODY ESTEEM

- Girls are especially pushed by mass media to develop unrealistic ideal body images, leading to unhealthy eating behaviours and personal dissatisfaction
- A Harvard Medical School survey: found nearly 6 out of 10 high school girls were dissatisfied with their bodies. The study found that female athletes obsess less about their looks, body esteem and attractiveness
- High school girls find participation in sports a way to break gender stereotypes



GIRLS WHO PLAY SPORTS → HAVE HIGHER OPINIONS OF THEIR ABILITIES & COMPETENCIES

Among girls who say they are:	NOT GOOD AT MATH & SCIENCE	NOT GOOD AT LOTS OF THINGS
% GIRLS WHO DO NOT PLAY SPORTS	64%	69%
% OF GIRLS WHO PLAY SPORTS	36%	31%
% difference	28%	38%

GIRLS WHO PARTICIPATE IN SPORT ARE:

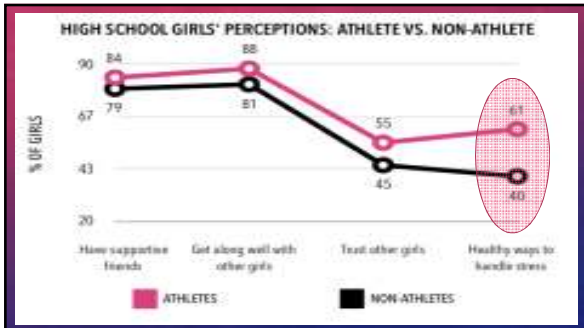
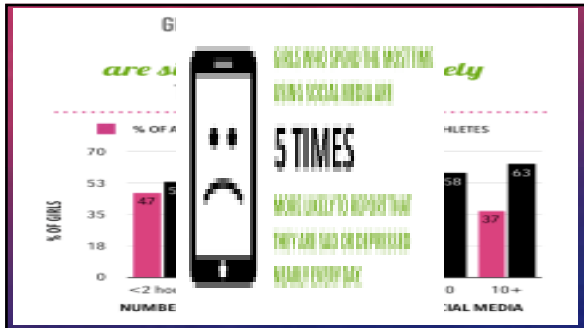
- 14% ↑ MORE LIKELY TO BELIEVE THEY ARE SMART ENOUGH FOR THEIR DREAM CAREER
- 11% ↑ MORE LIKELY TO SAY THAT THEY ARE HAPPY THE WAY THEY ARE
- 16% ↓ LESS LIKELY TO WANT TO CHANGE THEIR APPEARANCE

GIRLS, SPORT & SOCIAL MEDIA

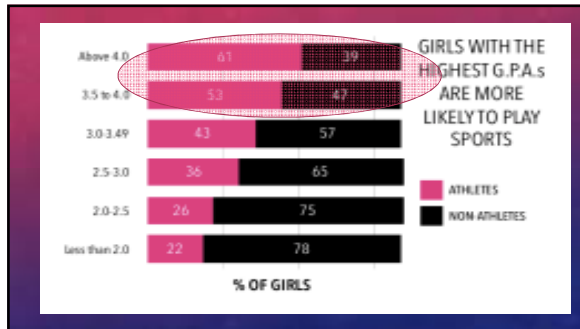
GIRLS, SPORT & FRIENDSHIPS

EXERCISE CAN CUT THE PRESSURE

- Pressure is a big part of life. Girls internalise pressure very personally. Playing sports helps you deal with it every performance
- Princeton Wellness Study: top 2 categories for success in pressurised courses - girl athletes and girls from all-girls' schools
- Exercise is a natural mood lifter and a great way to relieve stress and fight depression
- As part of a team, girls have teammates who support them both on and off the field



GIRLS, SPORTS & ACADEMICS



GIRLS WHO PLAY SPORTS LEARN TEAMWORK AND GOAL-SETTING SKILLS

- Working with coaches, trainers, and teammates to win games and meet goals is great practice for success later in life. Makes it easier to work with others and solve problems, whether on the field or in the workplace.
- When interviewed, 9/10 women executives said sports helped them be more disciplined; 7/10 said sports helped them to develop leadership skills that contributed to their professional success.
- Sport teaches girls resilience and grit. They learn to take healthy risks that often lead to new opportunities, that failure is a necessary part of life and that no-one can succeed without learning from and overcoming failure.
- Sport teaches the value of being on time and building an extended strong work ethic.
- Sport teaches a girl self-awareness and how to create working relationships with others.

GIRLS EXPERIENCE TREMENDOUS CHALLENGES WITH CONFIDENCE, RELATIONSHIPS AND ASPIRATIONS DURING THEIR ADOLESCENT YEARS.

GIRLS WHO PARTICIPATE ON A SPORTS TEAM ENJOY HIGHER LEVELS OF CONFIDENCE, MORE EFFECTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE FRIENDSHIPS WITH OTHER GIRLS AND INCREASED CAREER AND LEADERSHIP ASPIRATIONS.

GIRLS WHO PLAY SPORTS DO BETTER IN SCHOOL.

- Research shows that girls who play sports do better in school and are more likely to graduate.
- Exercise improves learning, memory, and concentration, which can give active girls an advantage when it comes to the classroom.
- Playing sports adds to - not detracts from - a girl's time, energy, and commitment to schoolwork and increases the desire to attend college.

SPORTS HAVE HEALTH BENEFITS

- Girls involved in sports have improved fitness and easier maintain a healthy weight.
- 80% percent of high school girls who played two or more sports had a healthy BMI (body mass index), compared to 60% of non-athletes.
- Three times as many female high school athletes labelled their health as excellent.
- Girls who play sports have stronger immune systems and run a reduced risk of chronic illnesses later in life.
- Two US studies found that female school athletes are significantly less likely to use cigarettes or illicit drugs or be involved in risky sexual activity.

GIRLS, SPORT & BARRIERS

ATTITUDES

- Girls drop out of sports at twice the rate of boys by age 14 and, by age 17, half of girls will have quit sports altogether.
- Girls perceive less sense of belonging in sport than boys.
- For girls, body image is a significant barrier to organised physical activity.
- 48% of girls feel that 'getting sweaty' is not feminine.
- Being 'sporty' still not seen as aspirational for many girls.
- Sport and physical activity not seen as important as academic work.

GIRLS, SPORT & BARRIERS

- **FAMILY & FRIENDS**
- 37% of girls say they are active because their mother-figure is active
- 40% of girls said that families are less supportive of girls' involvement in sport
- 57% of girls drop out of sport because their friends do so

GIRLS, SPORT & BARRIERS

- **SCHOOL**
- 76% of girls said that girls are self-conscious about their bodies when exercising
- 43% say that there are not clear sporting role models for girls
- Girls would like sport teachers to be more encouraging and not to focus only on the sporty girls
- Single sex schools have significantly increased participation and girls feel less on 'show'
- Schools are reducing traditional PE and sport offer due to academic pressures, staffing limitations and reduced demand and relevance



GIRLS, SPORT & BARRIERS

- **SCHOOL**
- 50% of high school girls are put off physical activity because of their experiences in school
- Active girls are positive about sport and PE; less active girls are very negative
- 46% don't like the PE activities and want a different set of choices
- 45% say sport is too competitive
- 30% of girls lack confidence in their sport skills and abilities

GIRLS, SPORT & SCHOOLS - IN SUMMARY

- Generally, school girls are less positive about sport and physical activity than boys and many see aspects of being sporty as unfeminine
- Girls are more likely to be motivated by social and health benefits of taking part whereas boys are motivated by being part of a team
- For girls, outside school activities like dancing, gymnastics, equestrian, gym classes or yoga are viable alternative choices
- Girls are more concerned about having choice, fun, being with friends and enjoying sport rather than competition and representing the school

PASSIONATE ALL-ROUND GIRLS' EDUCATION

- **ACADEMIC**
- **CULTURAL**
- **SPORT**
- **SERVICE**
- **ADVENTURE**
- **LEADERSHIP**
- **SPIRITUALITY**

Girls get to be part,
excel, lead and
belong in every
area



STRONG & SUCCESSFUL IN TRADITIONAL GIRLS' SPORTS

- **Outdoor Hockey** - Ranked 3rd in SA 2018. 5 SA u18, 3 Junior Olympians, u14 + u16 + 1st team won CT leagues 2018, 1st team won league 6 years in a row
- **Indoor Hockey** – won CT league for 5 years in a row
- **Netball** – won u16 CT girls tournament 2018
- **Basketball** – u16 won American International School Tournament 2018
- **Water Polo** – Ranked 11th in SA, top 4 at St Peter's Tournament, 2 SA u16, 3 SA u17, 1 SA u18



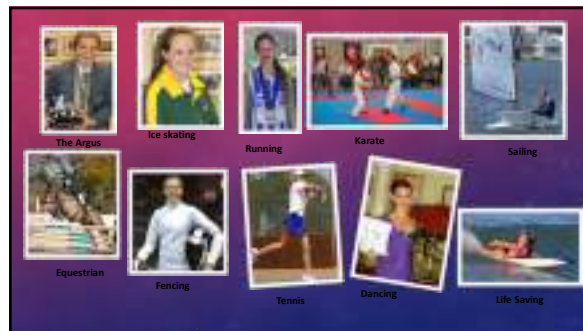

RESOURCING SPORT

- Passionate, old-school Head of Sport
- Reputation for competitive edge
- Facilities – indoor centre, pool, astro, courts
- Strong coaching structures in key sports
- Added fixtures (Boland schools)
- Onsite clinics – hockey, water polo
- Tours, tournaments, festivals
- Educational approach




STRONG & SUCCESSFUL IN TRADITIONAL GIRLS' SPORTS

- **Swimming** – won A League and Girls' Schools gala 2017, 5 girls in Junior and Senior nationals
- **Tennis** – won Independent Schools tennis 2018, won CT tournament 2018
- **Squash** – won CT league for last 5 years, 1 SA junior player
- **Cross Country Running** – won CT girls' league 17/18 years, 1 SA u18

CHALLENGES

- Fee barrier – few scholarships
- Perception of elitism / buying players
- Growing parental criticism, abuse and interference - selection and positional queries
- Parents drive for winning
- Demands on players > school, provincial, club, national





CHALLENGES

- Recognition of 'first team' achievements v celebration of all teams / players
- Squad systems:
 - Ensuring game time to all players in the team
 - Winning culture v player opportunities
- Reliance on outside coaches:
 - Upholding school values, managing teens well, and knowing the educational side of sport
 - Familiarity with girls / WhatsApp groups!
 - Retention and continuity








PHYSICAL LITERACY - FAILING

*The core responsibility of schools – and the priority for parents and students – is **health**, and the most important legacy of schools should be that that **every girl** leaves school having had a **positive experience of being active, found activities she would carry on in adult life, and where appropriate, achieve her full potential.***


Sue Tibballs – CEO Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation

CHALLENGES

- Academic pressure and extra lessons
- Extended and busy all-round school programme
- Few staff involved in coaching and sport
- Sporty girls thrive, non-sporty girls opt out
- PE lessons often outdated, irrelevant and threatening
- New LO syllabus dumbs down PE syllabus and requires marks

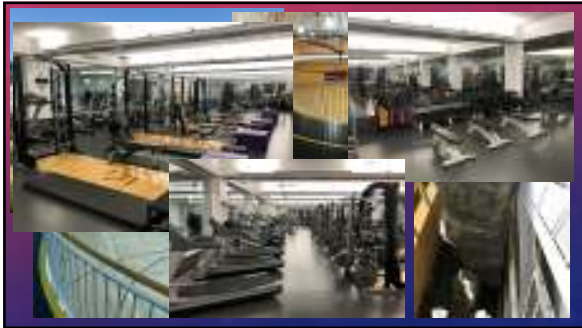




PHYSICAL LITERACY - FAILING & THE DREAM





NATIONAL CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
ATHLETICS CENTRE - THE DREAM?



THE DREAM - A LEGACY OF EVERY GIRL AT HERSCHEL
VALUING A PHYSICALLY ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

A collage of six images showing girls participating in various physical activities like dance, aerobics, and group exercises. A small circular logo is in the top right corner.

THANK YOU