

Listener



1985 TELEVISION & RADIO

JUNE 15-21

75c

WOMEN'S SPORT

What does it take
to make them rate?

PAUL REEVES
"I gotta be me"
says our next
Governor General

EYEWITNESS
EVIDENCE
How reliable is it?

SEX EDUCATION
The case against
sex education in
the classroom

JUNE 15, 1985

EDITOR: DAVID BEATSON

FEATURES

- BAD TRACK RECORD** 14
TVNZ isn't playing fair with its news presentation of women's sport/Eileen O'Leary and Nigel S Roberts
- THE EYE DECEIVED** 16
Research on the reliability of eyewitness evidence/Graham Ford
- THE RISE AND RISE OF PAUL REEVES** 18
Next stop Government House/Tony Reid
- GROOVING TO THE BEAT** 20
C'mon — the latest in pops, dances, fashions and people/Frank Stark
- BOMBING IN AOTEAROA** 22
Art on the walls/Mark Scott and Gil Hanly
- TOUGH GUY** 24
James Cagney was tough in Hell's Kitchen and in Hollywood/Gordon Campbell
- SEX EDUCATION: ITS PLACE IS IN THE HOME** 26
A plea against moves towards increased sex education in schools/Martin Viney
- ART FOR WHOSE SAKE?** 28
Anne Kirker introduces a Concert Programme series on women and art
- CLIMATE OF DISASTER** 30
Climatic conditions in northern Africa continue to create drought and deserts/Christopher de Freitas
- RIGHT IN FASHION** 32
Paula Ryan's perfect appearance doesn't stop her doing a very full day's work/Louise Guerin
- GARY McCORMICK** 37
Introducing a new column
- CUT AND DRIED** 71
Cartoons by Larry of Punch
- LOOK** 85
The great bike-ride; Puzzles; What's on TV
- NEGATIVE EVIDENCE** 91
The Turin Shroud may not be what it seems to be/Denis Dutton

COLUMNS/DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|---|--|
| A K Grant.....35 | Korero/Ranginui Walker.....79 |
| Arts/Rebecca Simpson, Richard Dingwall.....45 | Letters to the editor.....10 |
| Arts diary/Alison Hill.....128 | Life in NZ.....5 |
| Books/Barbara Brookes, Gavin McLean, Rochford Hughes, Brian Turner.....58 | Local radio guide.....125 |
| Bookmarks/Michael Giftins.....64 | Look.....85 |
| Bradford's Hollywood/James Bradford.....134 | People/Frank Stark.....33 |
| Chess/Murray Chandler.....80 | Poem/Cilla McQueen.....12 |
| Children's books/Diane Hebley.....66 | Political diary/Denis Welch.....12 |
| Cinema/Helen Martin.....40 | Radio highlights.....100 |
| Classical/Arthur Everard.....51 | Radio review/Lora Mountjoy.....39 |
| Concert/Elizabeth Kerr.....51 | Rock/Chris Knox.....52 |
| Crossword/RWH.....73 | Sport/Terry McLean.....36 |
| Dick Sargeson/Graham Kirk.....90 | Teletext.....132 |
| Economy/Brian Easton.....82 | Television and radio programmes.....98 |
| Editorial/David Beatson.....10 | Television review/David Hill.....39 |
| Films on TV/Douglas Jenkin.....97 | TV quiz/Bruce Russell.....131 |
| Gary McCormick.....37 | What I'd watch/James Mack.....92 |
| | Word of mouth/Annabel Langbein.....74 |

THIS WEEK'S COVER: photograph by Jane Ussher.

14 COVER STORY BAD TRACK RECORD



18 THE RISE AND RISE OF PAUL REEVES



22 BOMBING IN AOTEAROA

NEXT WEEK
What do New Zealanders really think about the All Black tour to South Africa? The *Listener* finds out with a detailed survey, and talks to Ces Blazey and John Minto. On TV, an aerobatics team, an award-winning reporter and a trip to paradise that wasn't much fun.



37 GARY McCORMICK



VOLUME 110 **No 2365** **ISSN 0110-5788**
The *New Zealand Listener*, incorporating the *New Zealand Radio Record*, is registered for the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand as a newspaper and published by the BCNZ at Bowen State Building, Bowen St, Wellington.
Editorial and business offices: Head office, Bowen State Building, Bowen St, Wellington 1 (phone 721-777), Auckland branch office, Keans Building, 35 High St, Auckland 1 (phone 793-944; postal address PO Box 7, Auckland 1). Advertising enquiries to Auckland office.

Postal address: PO Box 3140, Wellington.
Subscription rates: 12 months, \$41.50; 6 months, \$20.80. Payable direct to the Subscription Dept, NZ Listener, PO Box 3140, Wellington. Overseas rates obtainable on request. Please allow four weeks for new subscriptions and changes of address to take effect.
Contributions: To the editor. The return of manuscripts cannot be promised unless a stamped, addressed envelope is included with the contribution.
Printed by Wilson and Horton Ltd, 46 Albert St, Auckland.

Bad track record

by Eileen O'Leary

Qualified teacher with an MA in recreation administration

and Nigel S Roberts

Director of Continuing Education at Victoria University

There are many women playing sport, but they're not turning up on our screens. A study of the 6.30pm news broadcasts shows that TVNZ isn't doing a proper job in its reporting of women's sport.



SPORT, a powerful means of education, teaches individuals self-expression and self-understanding and prepares them for recreational time in later life. "Through sport," writes Jay Coakley in her book *Sport in Society*, "people learn the general ways of thinking, feeling and acting that make them contributing members of society."

Sport is thus an important area in which women can strive for equality, status and achievement. But this is not made easy. "Sexist attitudes and practices," continues

Coakley, "have shaped the sports participation of women throughout the history of Western society."

The values inherent in sport are also the values traditionally associated with the male sex-role stereotype.

"Sport," says Jack Scott in *The Athletic Revolution*, "is our 'civilised' society's most prominent masculinity rite." The dilemma facing women in sport was recently epitomised by L Hunter, when he noted that "a guy who competed and won proved his masculinity, a woman who did the same thing had to prove her femininity".

The presentation of sport in the news media reflects this bias. Research in America and Britain led K F Dyer to conclude:

"Men's events are referred to as 'the major event', the 'big one' or, less emotionally but even more inaccurately, as 'the open championship' or 'the national

title', when women are not allowed to enter. Sports such as netball which are largely women's sports are hardly covered at all, despite the fact that their level of participation may be almost as great as that of the most popular men's sports."

Closer to home, an Australian study found that women received only five minutes' coverage out of a total television sports presentation time of 200 hours and 39 minutes. Less than two percent of the sports pages in newspapers were devoted to women's sports,

and less than 10 percent of sports photographs in newspapers were of women (and often those were of scantily clad cheerleaders or models).

A New Zealand study several years ago monitored Wellington's two newspapers, discovering a "severe inequality in the coverage of male and female interest sport" which left "the impression... that successful exciting athletes are virtually all male".

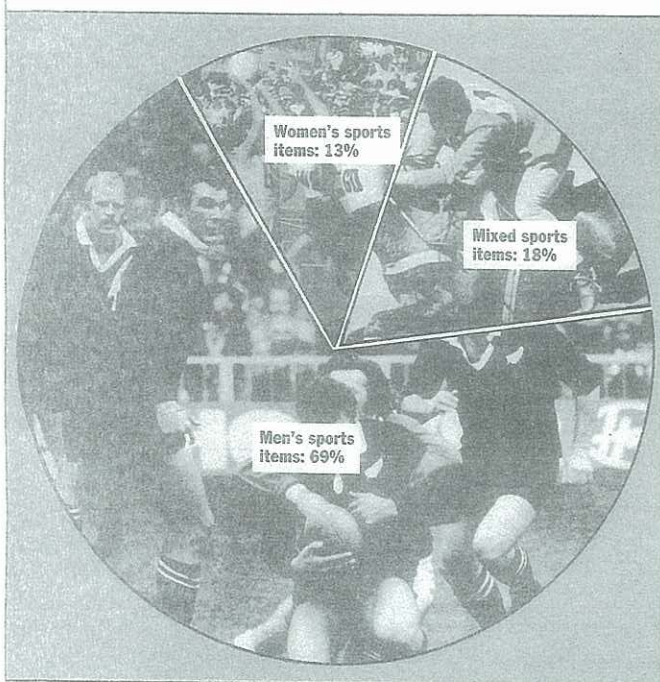
To find out if New Zealand television portrays the reality of sport in a balanced way, we studied the treatment of sport on TVNZ's 6.30pm news broadcasts. Television was chosen because it is the

DURING THE survey period, news items relating to 41 different sports were broadcast. Twenty-five were men's sports, 10 women's sports, and six mixed. (Items about the administration and organisation of the Commonwealth, Paralympic, and Olympic Games, and all horse and greyhound racing, were recorded as mixed sports because they involved members of both sexes.)

A total of 294 items were recorded; 69 percent men's sport, 13 percent women's sport, and 18 percent mixed sport. This dramatic imbalance is illustrated in Figure 1.

Many sports are played on Saturdays,

Figure 1: Sports news items on ONE's 6.30pm news



paramount mass medium. The prime-time evening news bulletin was chosen because of its reputation as an important, authoritative summary of the news of the day and associated sports events. BCNZ figures consistently show that the peak audience time for television viewing in New Zealand is from 6.30pm to 7.30pm, when about 1.5 million people watch TV. Audience research shows that a large proportion of these viewers tune in to the news on ONE.

A six-week period of news broadcasts, randomly drawn from a three-month period last year, was taped and extensively analysed. Overseas studies contend that random samples of 12 days' newspapers or 14 days' television news bulletins are sufficiently representative of a year's output. Our sample covered 15 days in May, 13 days in June and 14 days in July; a time when winter sports are being played nationally, and immediately prior to the Los Angeles Olympics. The data, selected by scientific random sampling techniques for this study, undoubtedly constitute an accurate picture of sport as depicted on ONE's main news broadcasts.

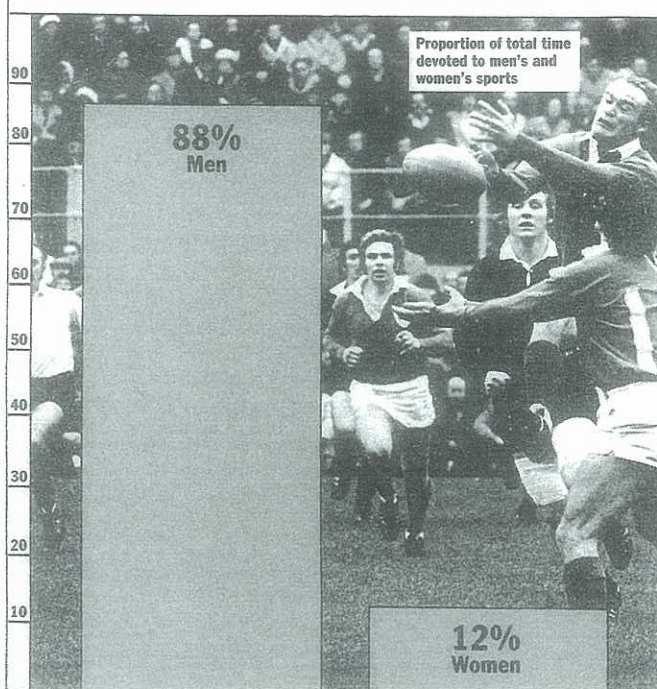
and the 6.30pm news programmes feature a large number of sports items.

Results of important matches and events are reported using a "scoreboard" or "sports headlines" type of presentation. This means there are a lot of short sports items on Saturday's news. It could therefore have been expected that important women's sports' scores would be reported. However, on the six Saturdays in the study's sample, only five news items featured women's sport, while men's sport accounted for 37 items. (Mixed sports were featured eight times on these days.)

The duration of each item of sports news in our sample was also measured and examined. In total, men's sports were given 3 hours, 24 minutes and 25 seconds of ONE's news time, while women's sports were allotted only 26 minutes and 37 seconds coverage (Figure 2).

Sports items were divided into four groups: 15 seconds or less in length; 16 to 51 seconds; 52 to 97 seconds; greater than 97 seconds (Figure 3). The proportion of items on women's sport declines, without exception, as the length of sports

Figure 2: Length of sports news broadcasts for men's and women's sports

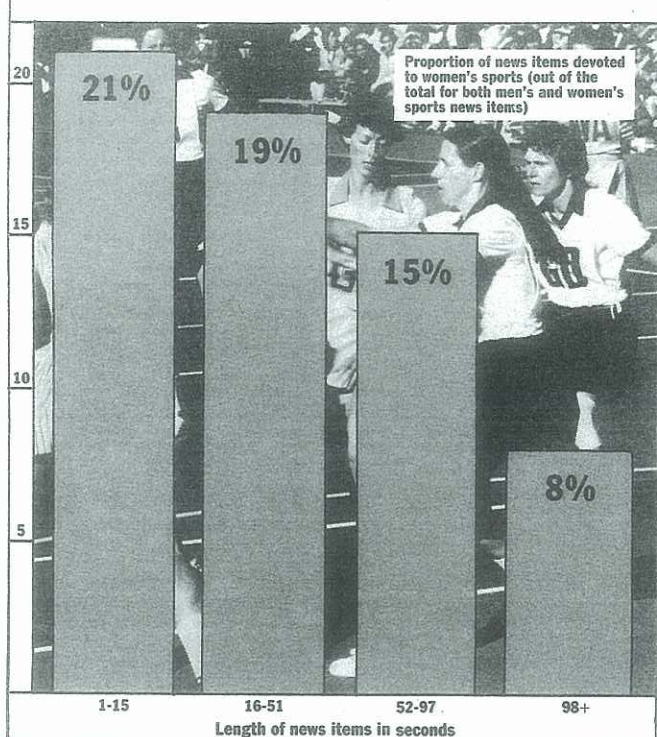


news items increases.

The timing of our survey meant that we expected a high proportion of sports news time to be devoted to winter sports. The amount of coverage given to seven sports featured on the 6.30pm news is shown (right) in minutes and seconds, with the organisation's 1983 membership figures in brackets:

Men's sports	
Rugby (200,000)	64m 02s
Cricket (58,437)	26m 06s
Rugby League (24,600)	21m 12s
Soccer (62,436)	19m 12s
Women's sports	
Tennis (n/a)	9m 46s
Golf (38,890)	17s
Netball (116, 840)	9s

Figure 3: Length of TV news items concerning women's sports



The high proportion of rugby news time is disproportionate to other sports membership, but the imbalance is extreme in the comparison between rugby and netball, or rugby and any other women's sport. The Rugby Union is one of two winter sports organisations in New Zealand with over 100,000 members. The other is the Netball Association. Rugby received 427 times the length of coverage that netball received. Men's cricket had 174 times more coverage than netball. Rugby league had 141 times netball's coverage, and men's soccer had 132 times the coverage.

Like netball, women's golf fared badly, though the New Zealand Ladies Golf Union Inc is the second largest solely women's sports organisation in the country. The highest-scoring women's sport was tennis, which totally comprised Wimbledon coverage. Though men's tennis coverage also featured Wimbledon, it contained other news, including items on New Zealand players. The argument that male New Zealand tennis players are of a higher standard than their female counterparts holds little sway when both Brenda Perry and Belinda Cordwell have higher world rankings than our top three male players.

ITEMS OF special interest or importance are sometimes mentioned during previews to the main news or the preview to the sports news segment. Women's sports were never mentioned on the main news previews, or shown on the main news. On the other hand, seven men's sports news items were previewed on the main news (with one item — on men's yachting — shown during the main news). Of the sports news previews, four were for women's sport, and 21 for men's sport. The four women's sports items previewed were all of non-New Zealand athletes competing internationally: two about Wimbledon, and two about Zola Budd. Rugby was previewed most often — in fact, 29 percent of previews spotlighted rugby. All women's sport together accounted for only 10 percent of ONE's news previews.

The leading item in any news broadcast has a significant impact. During our survey, women's sport was shown first on the sports news segment of ONE's evening news only four times (three items on Wimbledon; one about Zola Budd). Items on men's sport led the sports news 27 times, with mixed sports accounting for the remaining 11 lead stories. Significantly, rugby accounted for 43 percent of the leading items.

Visually, the most appealing and interesting television is action film, rather than newsreaders or static displays (scoreboards and still photographs). When it comes to sport on ONE's 6.30pm news, 80 percent of the action film during our survey was of men's sport, 14 percent women's sport, and six percent mixed sport. (These statistics exclude items relating to sports administration and racing.) Over half the film for women's sport was of tennis at Wimbledon, while the most popular women's winter sport — netball — had no film presentation at all during the survey. Twenty-three percent of the action film

was of rugby, with men's cricket rating second at 12 percent.

At this stage, it is worth noting that men's cricket received the second largest amount of sports news coverage in our predominantly winter-time survey (just over 26 minutes in all, compared with more than an hour for rugby, and slightly more than 26½ minutes for all women's sports combined). A large proportion of the cricket coverage was of non-New Zealand games, with extensive footage of the West Indies playing England. Women's cricket did not have any action film coverage, and received a total of only 37 seconds coverage, even though the national women's cricket team was on tour during the survey time.

The imbalance between men's and women's sports news is heightened when the mixed news category is analysed more closely. In most of these items, information about male competitors predominated. For example, one athletics item, classified as "mixed", showed a photograph of Anne Audain yet gave more details about Rod Dixon. A "mixed" tennis item talked about the administration of mixed tennis, but showed film only of men playing tennis. Similarly, an item about "mixed" swimming discussed both sexes but only featured film of male swimmers.

THE IMBALANCE in the presentation of sports news items about men and women far exceeds the larger numbers of males participating in sport. It perpetuates the stereotypes of masculinity and active sports participation, and femininity and passive spectatorship.

The mass media have a fundamental role in moulding social reality. In a major review for Unesco, Margaret Gallagher stressed that "the mass media as a cultural force do not simply reflect but subtly and indirectly help to shape social reality".

As a result, television is in a uniquely influential position to enhance the role of female athletes, by drawing attention to the fact that many women are able sportspersons and that many also achieve a newsworthy standard of excellence in their own class and field. Indeed, the Broadcasting Act requires the BCNZ to "provide and produce programmes which *inform, educate, and entertain*", as well as to "cater in a *balanced way* for the *varied interests of different sections of the community*" (our italics).

We have emphasised these sections of the act because we believe that this study of the presentation of sport on ONE's flagship news programme establishes beyond doubt that the corporation is failing to achieve its set functions and stated responsibilities. A ratio of 88:12 between men and women in sports coverage does not constitute "balance". In no way can it be said that nine seconds of netball coverage "inform" or "educate" fairly. There is no doubt that television news coverage of only 10 female sports (compared, for example, with 25 male sports) is not catering "for the varied interests of different sections of the community".

The time is well overdue for television to represent accurately the social reality of sport in New Zealand. ■