# Title IX Tied Our Hands at Olympics

by Phyllis Schlafly August 29, 2008

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The Olympics demonstrated again what competition, hard work and determination can produce, as numerous world records were shattered. American swimmer Michael Phelps and gymnast Nastia Liukin gave us much to cheer.

But U.S. athletes won in spite of Title IX regulations, which impose gender quotas on sports for institutions that receive any federal money. Title IX has crippled our national competitiveness.

Title IX regulations have forced educational institutions to eliminate men's teams until the number of men and women on sports teams is the same ratio as the number of men and women enrolled in academic classes. In the numerous colleges that are now 60 percent female in academic enrollment, Title IX requires that men's teams be eliminated until only 40 percent of the athletes are men.

Title IX quotas have caused the elimination of all but 19 men's college gymnastics teams. This deprives boys of the scholarship incentive to take up gymnastics as a sport in high school and takes away the competition needed to improve their skills in college.

The effect of this injustice hit us hard in Beijing. The Chinese (who are not restricted by feminist nonsense) destroyed our men's gymnastics team and won seven out of eight gold medals, while our men's gymnastics team failed to win a single gold medal in eight events.

Then there is men's freestyle wrestling, a sport that the United States had repeatedly dominated at the Olympics. Over the years, we had won a very high percentage of medals in wrestling.

But Title IX's gender quotas have forced the elimination of 467 wrestling teams from our colleges. This has nothing to do with lack of funding, since wrestling is one of the most inexpensive of sports; it's due to feminist ideology that demands eliminating macho sports in order to meet the foolish Title IX quotas.

The devastating outcome in the 2008 Olympics was predictable. America won only one medal, which was in men's freestyle wrestling's lightest-weight class, and that was won by the son of illegal aliens who did not wrestle in college.

The Americans who won in Beijing typically did so in spite of Title IX. Michael Phelps, who won eight gold medals (about one-fourth of all U.S. gold medals) trained privately and didn't compete on a college team.

Many men's swimming teams have been eliminated due to Title IX quotas, and future American winners will likely avoid college. Why bother attending college if you can't play the sport you love?

Historically, the United States dominated diving competitions just like swimming but, because diving has a small-team size, many of these programs have been eliminated in favor of large-squad-size sports such as rowing. American men and women divers were repeatedly eliminated from contention for medals.

Title IX's gender quotas end up hurting women as much as men because they distort the availability of women's teams in college. Small-squad sports like women's gymnastics and fencing have been eliminated in favor of large-squad sports which lack the same intense dedication and interest.

Nastia Liukin, our star gymnast who won five medals, was born in Russia and trained at her family's private gymnastics club. She attended Southern Methodist University in 2007, and SMU is bragging on its website about her Olympic achievements.

But SMU dropped its small women's gymnastics team and instead has a large women's rowing team, and so had nothing to offer Liukin. SMU is 55 percent women and has publicly announced that it wants to be 55 percent in women's athletes.

A glance through other U.S. medal winners reveals a high percentage of athletes who did not benefit from any school athletic program. Several Americans, for example, won medals in shooting even though virtually all schools have banned rifle or shooting teams to appease the liberals.

Kristin Armstrong won a gold medal for America in cycling, but she went to high school in Japan where her military family was living. Now 35 years old, she is another self-made female athlete who apparently did not benefit from Title IX.

The cost of quotas is more than our defeat by the Chinese at the Olympics and a loss in U.S. competitiveness. Prior to Title IX quotas, both our male and female athletes went on to become community leaders and model citizens who inspired and motivated the next generation.

It wasn't helpful when our last female Olympic swimming star, Amanda Beard, posed nude for Playboy and then bombed this time. Today's aspiring athletes lack the great role models of the past, and Title IX is not working.

The George W. Bush Administration kept in force the ridiculous quotas originated by the radical feminists in the Carter Administration. We wonder whether the next administration will learn the lesson of the 2008 Olympics or remain intimidated by the anti-male feminists.