

A ROCKY MOUNTAIN STUDENT PUBLICATION

COLLEGE AVENUE

THE SPORTS EDITION

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SPRING 2025

BEHIND THE CAMERA

THE IMPACT OF
SPORTS PHOTOJOURNALISM

JERSEYS, CARDS, AND HATS...OH MY!

THE HISTORY OF SPORTS
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FROM YOUR EDITORS

Welcome to College Avenue's Sports Edition! We took the traditional concept of a sports magazine and put our own unique spin on it, going beyond scores and stats to explore the deeper cultural and societal impact of sports.

Inside these pages, you'll discover compelling stories that explore more than the game itself. We delve into the world of sports memorabilia, LGBTQ+ athlete's experiences, pink-collar sports, and finally, we celebrate the power of sports photography.

Whether you're a die-hard sports fan or just curious about the broader impact of athletics, this edition offers fresh perspectives and thought-provoking insights. Get ready to see sports in a whole new way!

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CONTENTS



JERSEYS, CARDS, AND HATS
06 ... OH MY!

THE IMPACT OF SPORTS
16 PHOTOJOURNALISM

PINK COLLAR
10 SPORTS

FROM FIELD TO
22 FASHION

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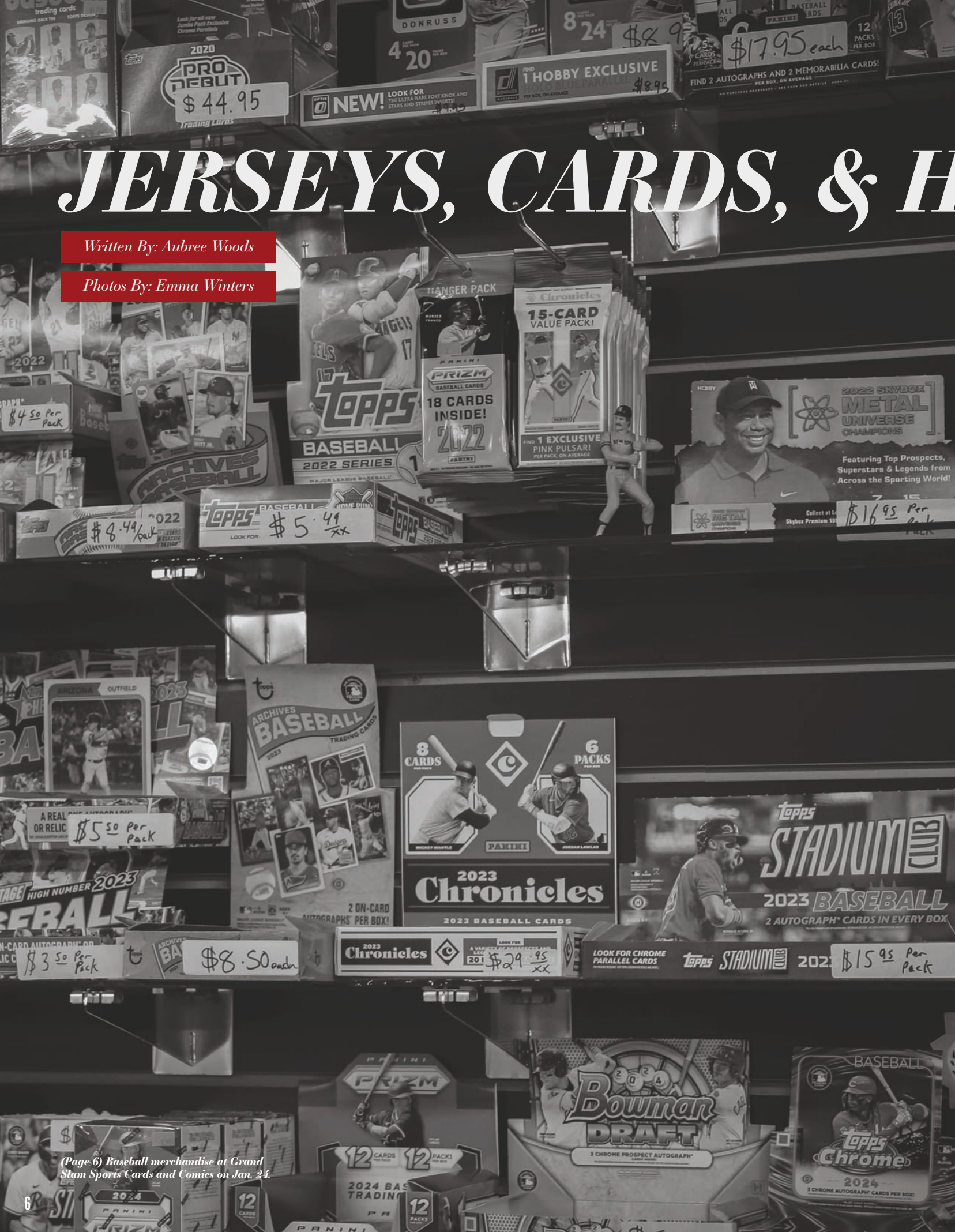
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JERSEYS, CARDS, & H

Written By: Aubree Woods

Photos By: Emma Winters



(Page 6) Baseball merchandise at Grand Slam Sports Cards and Comics on Jan. 24.



HATS.

OH MY!

THE HISTORY OF SPORTS MEMORABILIA AND FANATICISM

The simple act of watching a sporting game has never been enough to satisfy the taste buds of sports fanatics around the country. Instead, national sporting leagues are also characterized by the extravagant displays of loyalty fans harbor towards their favorite teams.

Collectible items like playing cards, autographed baseballs, and even fan apparel did not appear in the United States until the rise of professional sports in the early 1900s.

The Boston Red Sox were one of the first professional sporting teams to capitalize on the newfound demand for sporting merchandise amongst the American people. By 1950 various other teams and leagues had joined in on the fun, which created a booming market for collectibles.

Grand Slam Sports and Comics in Loveland, CO, has been providing Coloradans with collectibles for 34 years. Kevin Keen, the owner of Grand Slam Sports, opened his shop at only 17-years-old and whilst still in high school, alongside his friend and former business partner.

Keen shared that as a child he always aspired to sell cards, and after a shoulder injury halted his football and track career, the opportunity presented itself.

"I'm not sure why I always had such a fascination with this stuff," Keen said. "I like sports, but my dad was never really into them, so I didn't get it from them. I mean every picture you see when I'm a kid, I'm wearing that stuff. Lo and behold, I've owned a card and comic shop for 34 years."

Since the store opened in 1992, the card collecting and memorabilia industry has changed rapidly with new technology.

"I've seen the changes, and the world has just gotten smaller. Our ability to reach out and find other people that are interested in a certain card has never been easier. It's not just the people in your schools or community; it's people all across the world." Keen shared.

Additionally, technology and the increase of popularity of cards have made it nearly impossible to collect complete sets.

"Now there are just more and more sets. There are unlimited cards you can collect. You'll never be done." Keen said. "There is a new attention to the hobby since the pandemic, and there are new people getting into it with fresh eyes, whether they're trying to collect for fun or collect for value."

High-value playing cards have even been making striking headlines on mainstream news outlets. Paul Skenes, a pitcher for the Pittsburgh Pirates, has a card circulating that is one of one, autographed by Skenes, and includes a patch logo from the jersey he wore in the first game. The Pittsburgh Pirates have even placed a bounty on this card, offering two season tickets behind home plate for 30 years, two autographed Skenes jerseys, and more.

The Women's National Basketball League has also become popular amongst collectors in recent years. Caitlin Clark, a player for the Indiana Fever who quickly came to fame playing college basketball at the University of Iowa, recently broke the record for the highest sale of any WNBA sports card. The one-of-a-kind autographed card was sold for \$234,850.

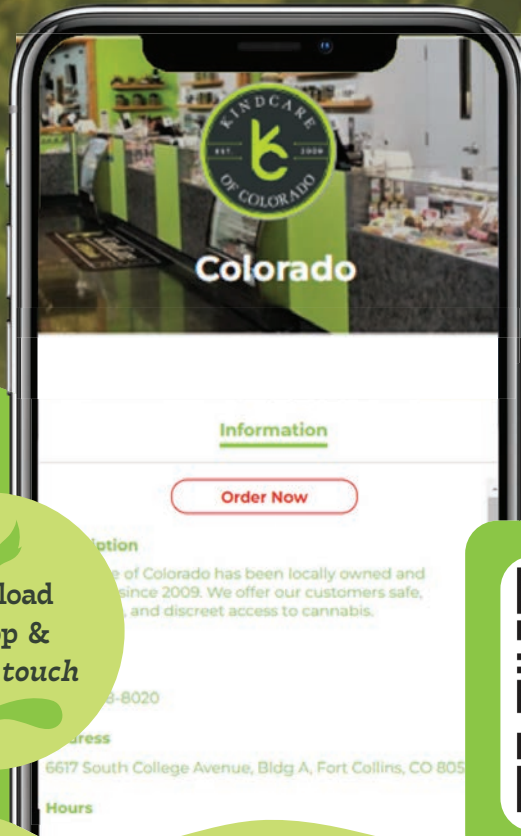
"I think this proves how hyperbolic and quick moving the culture has become," Keen said.

Despite the influx of high-value cards and rapidly changing technology, Keen predicts the industry will continue to thrive. "When the hobby is working right, it's people that are just trying to find a way to show the thing they're a fan of, the player they like, or the team that they support."

"Our ability to reach out and find other people that are interested in a certain card has never been easier. It's not just the people in your schools or community; it's people all across the world."



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PERFECTING THE AESTHETIC

LAR SPORTS

Written by: Maria Kantak

Why are women exposed to judgement for not only their athleticism, but their appearance and physique as an athlete? Why do female athletes face discrimination, limited media coverage and unfair pay despite their achievements? Why do patriarchal pressures seep their way into women's sports?

It should come as no surprise that women are ruthlessly judged for their appearance and ability by harsh societal standards. It even determines their value and success.

Aesthetic Sports

Aesthetic sports are defined as appearance-related sports. They incorporate style and appearance into their judgment. This could be what the athlete wears, how they land or point their toes as well as their physique, body shape and weight.

The National Institute of Health website categorizes aesthetic sports as things like dance, gymnastics, cheerleading and figure skating. Non-aesthetic sports are soccer, basketball, softball, hockey etc.

The United States champion figure skater Tonya Harding was notoriously judged for her appearance in a sport that historically prioritizes a feminine and graceful aesthetic over pure athletic ability.

As Tonya's character said in the film *I, Tonya* (Craig Gillespie, Director, 2017), "...it's a sport where the friggin' judges want you to be this old-timey version of what a woman is supposed to be."

Even though Harding was the first American woman to land a triple axel, she was met with many challenges and harsh judgments in the world of figure skating.

"In skating, they [women] are also required to be graceful and perform with their arms and face, while men are just expected to jump and spin, no performance

necessary," Abbie Lambrecht, a figure skater for the Denver Synchronicity team and Fort Collins figure skating club, said. "Alexandra Trusova managed to land all of the jumps the men did and still didn't win. She landed bigger and more difficult jumps than her competitors and still didn't win. This proves women are held to a higher standard."

Emphasis of female physique is intertwined as a selling point for these aesthetic athletes.

Gender Discrimination in Sports

Even in the world of non-aesthetic sports, women's teams are overlooked, downplayed and subjected to unfair standards. They rarely receive the same treatment as their male counterparts even when they outperform them.

This is shown in the 2019 lawsuit filed by the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team against gender discrimination. They were continuously paid less and received less financial support as a team despite being more successful than the U.S Men's National Team.

"...women are held to a higher standard."

In May 2020, Judge R. Gary Klausner dismissed the unequal pay portion of the lawsuit but allowed the women to continue with a discriminatory work conditions claim.

It wasn't until February 2022 that the U.S. Soccer Federation paid out a \$24 million settlement agreement including tens of millions of dollars in back pay for the players.

Why did it take these women speaking out to bring attention to these discrepancies? Why were these conditions allowed to persist?

"People need to understand that these female athletes are people too," Lambrecht said. "They play the same sports as men do and deserve the same respect and treatment men get."

C OF BEING OVERLOOKED

Media Representation

Social stigmas around women's sports have created a long standing unfair playing field. Women's leagues typically get less coverage, less popular media spots and times for advertising.

This cocktail of let downs gives the teams a poor chance at pulling more people into the stands and justifying advertising contracts for money revenue.

Assuming viewers don't want to see women's sports has led to a lack of representation and respect for women in sports.

A research study in November 2024 by Parity, a company that matches female athletes with brands for endorsement deals, collected data showing an upward trajectory in interest and viewership in women's sports.

The rise of female athletic influencers, cultural shifts and advocacy for gender equality have helped spark this surge in interest.

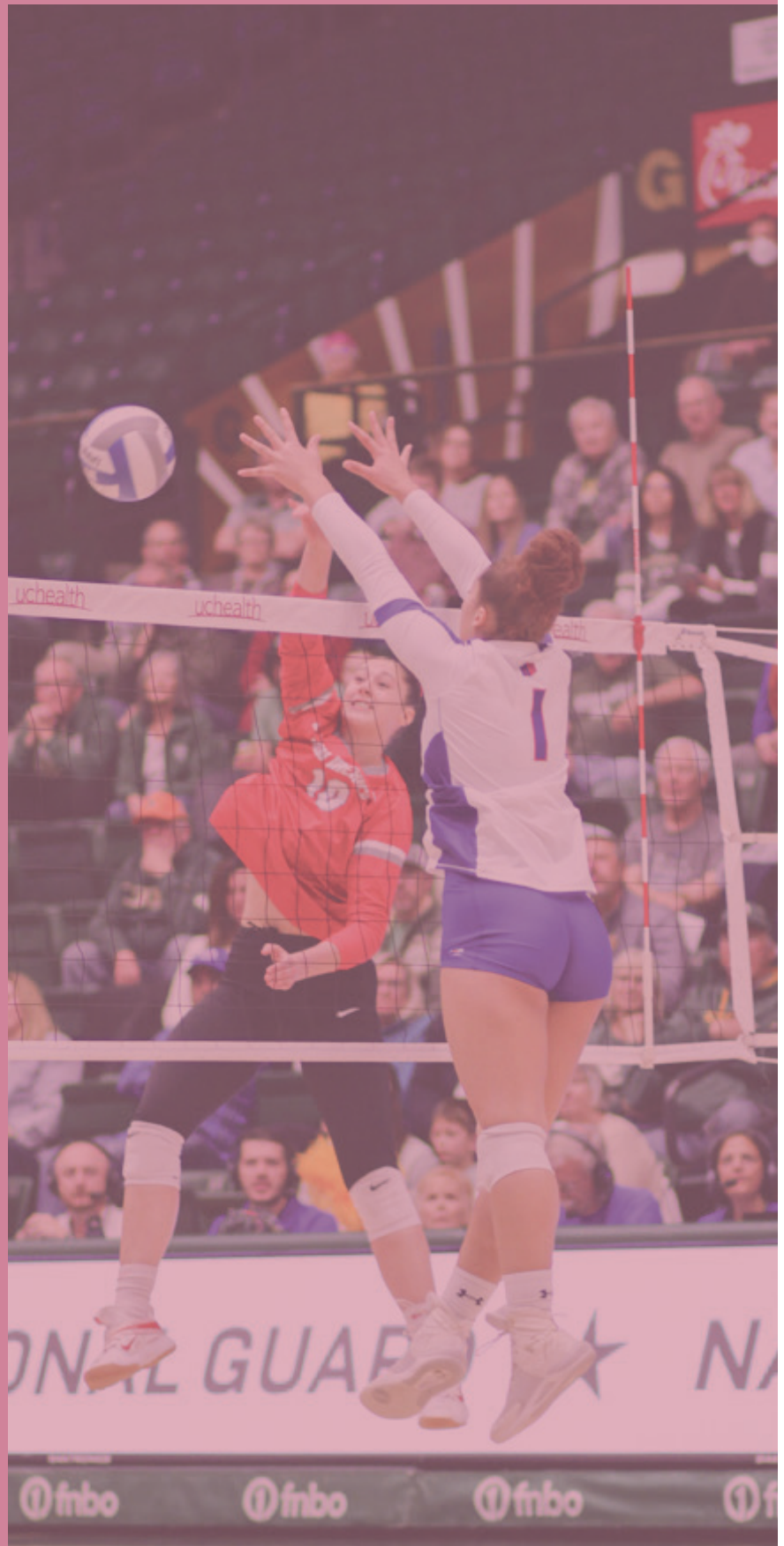
"Womens sports offer a different perspective of sports," Lambrecht said. "They have this unique ability to inspire not only just boys, but other kids as well. You like to see people like you doing what you want to do so you can look up to them."

If the recent movement in women's sports popularity has shown us anything, it is that people are interested in women's sports; they just don't have access to them in the same way they do men's sports. The lack of consistent media exposure sets women's sports up for failure.

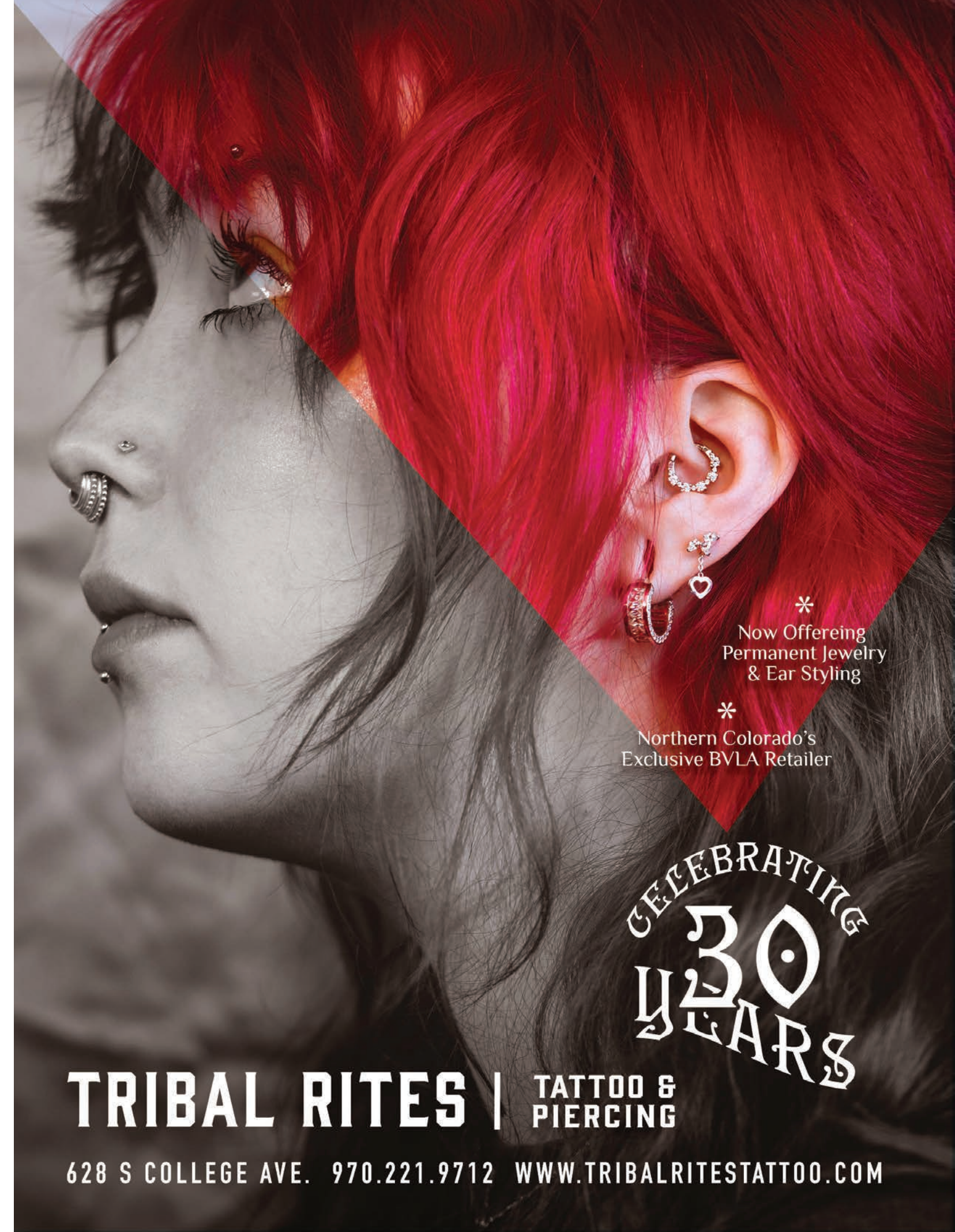
Female athletes are making headlines, driving significant economic impact and paving the way for marketing and engagement strategies.

This surge of popularity is rewriting the playbook for brands and advertisers and changing the dynamic of the sports world by proving the importance of marketing women's sports.

Despite these promising changes, women's sports still suffer even when they outperform men's teams. Sports media is the future of women's sports. Let's hope that progress makes perfect for these athletes.



Photos By: Avery Coates & Tessa Glowacki



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Story & Photos By: Avery Coates

American culture and sports go hand in hand. Through sports, we come together in our communities to show support for a common goal. Super Bowls and World Cups spark parties and lasting memories. But none of that would be possible without sports media. Without sports media, fans would have to attend every game to know what happened. Sports photography in particular has the power to capture a moment of glory, tell a story, and document history being made.

It can give fans a look into life outside of game time and makes a larger-than-life, all-star seem human.

My favorite part though, is the happiness that sparks within people. Telling stories has always been my passion, and being able to capture a moment of triumph for the joy of others

Growing up, the extent of my sports knowledge revolved around dance and dance reality shows. My family didn't watch Sunday Night Football, I didn't know what March Madness was, and I never watched the Super Bowl until 2016 when the Denver Broncos won.

If you told young Avery that she would be pursuing a career in sports she'd probably laugh in your face. I wasn't even interested in sports when I started at Colorado State University. It wasn't until I photographed my first CSU Men's Basketball game in 2021 that I fell in love with the chaos at sporting events.

After that, I shot every Men's Basketball game I could until I was eventually selected to travel with the team to Las Vegas, Nevada for the Mountain West Men's Basketball Tournament. I think that was the moment I realized I could have a career in sports if I wanted to. Throughout the past three and a half years at CSU, I have continued to shoot basketball while adding volleyball, soccer, football, tennis, and hockey to my resume.

In October of 2023, I started working as a social media intern for the Colorado Eagles, the American Hockey League affiliate of the Colorado Avalanche. By that point, I was completely hooked. It was my first taste of working with a professional team and I loved it. There's something about the chaos of running around trying to capture content, the joy of experiencing a win, and the array of people I meet that makes me feel alive. I hope to experience that for the rest of my career.

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RAM REPORT

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FROM FIELD TO FASHION



Written By: Tiana Shonoiki

Sports have spanned centuries, evolving in tandem with the culture around them, mirroring the values, styles, and innovations of each era. As sports have transformed, so too have the aesthetics and functionality of their uniforms, adapting not only to the demands of the athletes but also to shifting societal ideals. Over time, uniforms have come to reflect America's growing acceptance of sexual autonomy and evolving perspectives on the human body, embodying both the inclusivity and changing cultural norms.

The Beginning Thread

Sports uniforms, in their earliest iterations, were designed with the singular goal of distinguishing teams from one another.

Over the years, their purpose evolved. What started as a practical means for identification gradually took on cultural and aesthetic significance. Teams started experimenting with logos, colors, and designs that were reflective of team identity and spirit.

For example, the Chicago Bulls' iconic red, black, and white uniforms or the New York Yankees' simple yet memorable pinstripe uniforms.

Women in Athletics

For much of history, sports were considered a male-dominated practice, with women either excluded or relegated to the sidelines. For years, women faced not only societal restrictions but also physical barriers when it came to participating in athletics, particularly due to restrictive and uncomfortable clothing deemed appropriate for them. Uniforms for women were initially designed with modesty and femininity in mind, often at the expense of practicality and performance.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, female athletes were often expected to wear long skirts or dresses with bloomers underneath.

Sex and the Culture

The 1960s and 70s were decades of profound cultural transformation in the United States. Fueled by the counterculture

movement, political tensions, and the struggle for civil rights, new attitudes towards sex, gender, and personal expression began to emerge.

These years were defined by a generation determined to break free from the conservative norms of the past, ushering in an era of greater freedom and individual rights. As they ignited change, people looked for new ways to live and express themselves.

A significant achievement during this time was the push for gender equality, leading to landmark moments, such as the passage of Title IX in 1972. Title IX made discrimination by gender illegal on all accounts. Essentially, Americans were to be treated equally, regardless of their sex or gender.

These reforms began to seep their way into fashion, as clothing styles became brighter, more flamboyant and more revealing.

Both men and women embraced long hair, bold patterns, and heeled boots, emulating icons like Twiggy and Jimi Hendrix. Bikinis, miniskirts, and flared pants became symbols of the revolution, defying traditional notions of modesty and reshaping ideas of masculinity versus femininity.

Fashion was not just about aesthetics but also practicality. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in the post-World War II era, women comprised over 38% of the workforce. So, clothing needed to be more functional and comfortable.

Sportswear became more athletic and functional, with an emphasis on performance rather than modesty. Champion exemplified this shift, as one of the first brands to cater to men and women. Their Lady Champion line launched in 1968 and featured everyday sportswear that prioritized comfort and freedom of movement.

Breaking boundaries

By the 1980s, societal norms around modesty and gender began to loosen, allowing for more freedom in self-expression and denominating great change for LGBTQ+ visibility.

Kaylee Koffler, a freshman studying

apparel design at Colorado State University said, "...the 80s, when a lot of people weren't afraid to bend roles, wear makeup no matter their gender, etc. was when there was a large change for the fashion industry."

Around this time, the embrace of gender fluidity found its way into mainstream wear, with people like Madonna and Michael Jackson popularizing bold, loud clothing.

Where are we now?

Today, sportswear is an expression of individuality but also a blend of society's shifting views on gender, the human body, and personal style.

The body positivity movement has been a powerful force in reshaping the sportswear industry, challenging traditional beauty standards that have long dominated advertising and fashion. For years, campaigns featured mostly thin, toned models who embodied an often unrealistic and narrow ideal of the "athletic" body.

While this versatility reflects a more inclusive approach to uniform design, allowing athletes to select what makes them feel strongest and most comfortable, it also allows athletes to advocate for their own comfortability and style. Ironically breaking typical uniformity of uniforms.

"Society has definitely strayed away from the stereotypical, gendered silhouettes of fashion, with the rise of baggier shapes in women's apparel compared to slimmer clothing," Koffler says.

The evolution of sports uniforms reflects both changing attitudes toward gender and the growing pride in the human body. From the restrictive skirts and bloomers of the early 20th century to the sleek, functional designs worn by athletes today, sports clothing has been a barometer of the shifting cultural landscape and continues to evolve as new generations push the boundaries of sports.

Photographs By: Sofia Raikow
Illustrations By: Sarah Thomas

(All Photos) Ellie Keating and Ava Hulsebus model athletic wear in Campus Crossing at Ram's Pointe apartment gym on Saturday, February 1.



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