

"She's the sort of Scandinavian blonde that makes you pine for the fiords."

This is not a passage from a steamy romance novel set in an exotic European playground. It is a description of the skip of Norway's Olympic woman's curling team that appeared on the sports pages of a Canadian daily newspaper. It's the kind of women's sports coverage that makes some people cringe.

"It's a blatant example of inappropriate coverage of male-female sport in (newspapers)," says Diana Palmason, the manager of the woman's program of the federal Fitness and Amateur Sport.

Palmason was referring to the male-written article whose headline implied it was describing the gold medal won in Calgary by the woman's

regard of their athletic accomplishments infuriates women's sports authorities. They say the media largely ignores female sports at the amateur, varsity, and professional levels. When women's sports are covered, the articles are sexist and portray women as sexy objects who take up sports as a diversion or an opportunity to writhe around in skimpy outfits.

Women's sports are ignored by daily newspapers because the athletes are usually not professionals, says Gail Blake, Carleton's assistant director of athletics (women).

Papers get most of their sports stories from American wire services, which report professional male sports like football, baseball, and hockey. The local daily English paper "leaves little room for local sports," says Blake.

"It's the perception that sport is the last bastion of male supremacy... (and that) the only interest is in professional sports and men's sports," Blake says.

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curling team skipped by Canadian Linda Moore. But Canada's victory was buried in the twentieth paragraph, taking a backseat to the attractiveness of the Norwegian skip who lost to Moore.

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The mainstream media's emphasis of female athlete's attractiveness and dis-

The women's athletics director wrote a letter to the paper saying the sports department fails to report scores from Carleton female teams even though results are phoned in.

"Female athletes train just as hard as male athletes and are just as proud to represent our university," Blake wrote in the recently-published letter.

"Not only are Carleton's female athletes being treated as second-class athletes, but they are being ignored by

your sports staff," she wrote.

It's not just university women, but "women's sports in general is being ignored," says Blake.

"If it's a woman's team, (the newspaper) only reports it if women are doing extremely well," says the director. But articles about university men's sports are so detailed they "seems to say what size the men's shoes are."

The injustice of women athletes goes beyond the media failing to report scores from organized sports. Athletics encompasses physical activity from jogging to aerobics, says Danette Steele, the managing director of the Canadian Association of Women and Sport.

Women on television aerobics shows are portrayed as "people who are obsessed with exercise for a body beautiful," Steele says. "This is the image your are supposed to look like: skinny, etc."

"The media is a very important agent for reproducing stereotypical roles," Steele says, such as the idea that women exercise to look good for men.

But women do physical activity to feel good about themselves, she says.

The media portrayal of women's exercise stems

from "the male where women participating in fit get thin rather than they can draw strength."

A PhD student on the TV show Minute Workout the program was to promote exercise women, but to male audience, official from Fitness Amateur Sport.

Palmason says pictures "focus



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