

## Launch of the Anita White Foundation

On September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011, a panel discussion to launch the Anita White Foundation (AWF) was held at the University of Chichester. It was attended by many people from the women and sport movement from the UK and overseas, as well as former and present students, staff and governors of the University of Chichester, academics from other universities, and members of the public. Delegates came from as far afield as Japan, Finland, the USA and Canada. Among them were 14 people who had attended the first international conference on women and sport held in Brighton in 1994.



The Vice Chancellor of the University of Chichester, Professor Clive Behagg, opened proceedings by referring to the university's history in supporting women's education and pledging its support for and commitment to the AWF in the future. A panel of distinguished experts; Professor Jay Coakley (Honorary Fellow, University of Chichester), Professor Kari Fasting (President of Women Sport International), Raija Mattila (Co-Chair of the International Working Group on Women and Sport) and Sue Tibballs (CEO of the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation) discussed three main questions.



*Attendees of the first international conference on women and sport held in Brighton in 1994*

### **Transcript of the opening remarks by Professor Clive Behagg (Vice Chancellor of the University of Chichester).**

“Good evening everybody, it is my huge pleasure to welcome you to the University of Chichester for the launch of the Anita White Foundation. As you know, the foundation will support an archive, and they are people and organisations represented here this evening who have agreed we can take their papers so international scholars will be able to come to Chichester and study the women and sport movement. The International Working Group on Women and Sport has formally endorsed this as a recognised repository for the movement and this gives me huge personal pleasure. In my other life I am a research historian regarding the history of radical organisations and I know how important and valuable these archives are because I have worked in them. If you do not have an archive then the

story does not get told. So this is a wonderful moment for the university and a personal pleasure for me.

As you will know, the Anita White Foundation will also be collecting and raising money for fellowships so that women from the developing world will be able to come here and study and take their perspectives back to their own nations. So the notion of reaching out to the world that was characteristic of the 1994 first international women and sport conference and the Brighton Declaration that grew from it will be sustained and embedded in the Anita White Foundation.

So it is a great pleasure to welcome people from right across the UK and right across the world because we have people here today from Japan, Canada, the United States, Finland, Norway, Greece, Czech Republic and probably a few other locations that I am not aware of. We have movers and shakers from the world of sport, policy makers, administrators, organisers and people who lead organisations from right across the world. WomenSport International relocated their executive meeting here so they could attend this meeting. We have Celia Brackenridge with us who is chairing the international conference that precedes the Olympic and Paralympic Games next year and we have at the last count, some 14 individuals who attended the original Brighton Conference which is wonderful. I will not run through all 14 but they include Ida Webb who was at one time the principal for Chelsea College, Jay Coakley, Kari Fasting and Sallie Barker who co-organised the event and of course Anita White who chaired the organising committee and chaired the event itself. So it is a remarkable evening for the university.

Standing here sandwiched between this eminent audience and this outstanding panel, every element of my being is saying to me, „get of the stage and let them get on with their work!“ And I will, but first I need to make a very simple and straightforward point but an important one because it bears on the nature of the Anita White Foundation.

The point is a simple one. You are currently sitting in an institution that takes sport very, very seriously. It is part of the DNA of the organisation. This is the University of Chichester – the smallest and one of the newest universities in the UK having received a university title in 2005 – yet we have been around for a long time. The campus you are sat in right now was originally Bishop Otter College. The buildings were originally built in 1850 and had a chequered early career but it re-opened – what we would now call re-branded but this was 1872 so the term was not used – as a women’s teacher training college. At that point, The Times newspaper on 20th June 1872 said, „Even women too, are getting their right in this quarter. At Chichester, we hear it proposed that the Otter Memorial College will be re-opened especially for the training of young women in order they take elementary schools. Let it be regarded as an experiment“. Between 1872 and the end of the First World War, because it was a church foundation, sport played a particularly significant part because it was a college that drew its energy from the traditions and ethos of muscular Christianity. Our archives show, as far as the curriculum was concerned, that sport was always offered a disproportionately large part of the curriculum. So sport is something we do and the same thing applies to our other teacher training college and that is in Bognor which is about seven miles up the road. That was established in 1946 as what was referred to as „an emergency college“. The emergency was that there were not enough teachers for reconstruction following the Second World War. At that time the focus was on social re-organisation and regeneration by virtue of the well-being of the individual. Bognor training college emerged as a physical education-specialist institution. So for two very different reasons, the organisation grew up with a focus on sport. That is something we have always cherished and one of the reasons why the Anita White Foundation will be so important and so significant to us.

There is a point I make to our staff four or five times a week and I have not made it today so I will make it for you now! These are supposed to be turbulent times for higher education. We are told by the government and the media that we are engaged in a neo-Darwinian struggle for existence. Every university in the country is scurrying to find what it represents and to find its "identity". My point to the staff is always this – for an institution to thrive in its present and reach out for its future, it must understand and respect its past. If we want to know where we are going, we have to know where we have come from. That is why the Anita White Foundation is important for us and we will cherish our custodianship of it.

Anita was part of that process of focusing on sport and development sport because you all know Anita from her work as an international sportswoman, she was capped for England hockey 54 times, she led the England hockey team to World Cup victory in 1975, you will know her from her work with the Sports Council and Sport England and so forth. Anita came here when it was Bishop Otter College in 1971 and she came as a lecturer in physical education. She left in 1990 as a principal lecturer in human movement studies. I know the term "human movement studies" will take many of you back in time and is a good example of how language is a tardis. In that period, Anita established the sports studies programme that is so central to our provision. We know have hundreds of students on the programme and we have diversified as an institution for we no longer just train physical education teachers although 20% of teachers who teach throughout the UK came from Chichester. We have sports studies in all its guises and we focus on elite athletes. The honorary awards we make include Sarah Ayton, Sarah Webb, Pippa Wilson and Shirley Robertson because every medal winner in British sailing who has performed in the last four Olympics has done some of their preparation at this institution.

I give you this thumbnail sketch of us not because of corporate puff but it is why we treasure the Anita White Foundation because it links our past to our future. It is an absolute delight to me that Anita has allowed her name to go forward and for us to name the Foundation after her. It took a lot of doing and we put a lot of resources into persuading Anita because she is a naturally modest person and is always anxious to share her achievements with other people.

It is a great pleasure for the university to be hosting this and I wanted to say enough to assure you that the Foundation will be safe in our hands, that we will cherish it and maintain it down the years because it will be part of who we are going forward.

I will hand over to Liz Pike and firstly thank her for all the work she has done drawing this together this evening and also all the work she has done in establishing the Foundation. I hope you will be able to support the foundation and I hope you have a great evening. Thank you."



*Guests at the event*

## Questions to the panel

### **Question 1. Reflecting on the significance of the Brighton Declaration, what have been the main outcomes since 1994 and what are the continued challenges?**

Raija Mattila thanked Dr Anita White for her role in organising the Brighton conference in 1994 which changed the world of women in sport. She then summarised the principles underpinning the Brighton Declaration, indicating that the signing of the Declaration is only the first step in a process as signatories are encouraged to translate the signing into plans of action and practical steps. Since 1994, 265 organisations have signed the Brighton Declaration and countries and organisations continue to sign up to it, one of the most recent being the International Student Sport Federation (FISU). A full list of signatories was provided to those who attended the discussion and is available at: [www.iwg-gti.org](http://www.iwg-gti.org).

With regard to continued challenges Raija considered that while much progress has been made in some parts of the world, women and girls are still under-represented in participation and leadership in sports. The next conference of the International Working Group on Women and Girls in Sport (IWG) is to be held in 2014 in Finland, at which an evaluation of progress in the 20 years since the Brighton Conference will be presented. Raija stressed the importance of recognising the diversity of women's experiences, women who live under the threat of violence and other significant limitations, and the need for education of girls and women.

A question was then posed by Helen Tan from the University of Bolton: "Principle 6 of the Brighton Declaration discusses the importance of women in leadership positions. How do you think the barriers to more women achieving high level positions have changed over the years since the Brighton Declaration was written?"

Jay Coakley suggested that seeking equity is a never-ending process, once one goal is achieved, another inequity occurs, and so it is important never to give up on dealing with these issues. He suggested that there are fewer legal exclusions of women than in the past, and fewer men in control positions who take a non-negotiable stance to opening positions for women in positions of power. Jay also suggested that women today have greater confidence in their ability to handle leadership positions.



*Raija Mattila and Kari Fasting*

## **Question 2. What are the current priorities for the Women and Sport movement?**

Kari Fasting suggested that it varies a lot in different areas of the world, but that there remains considerable inequality and the overall priority should be to overcome the inequalities that women experience in areas such as access to sports facilities, homophobia, salaries, and prize money. She singled out two key areas for consideration: the lack of female coaches; and the safety of female athletes/ prevention of sexual exploitation in sport.

Kari outlined three broad strategies for gender equality: equal treatment, positive action/discrimination, and gender mainstreaming. The latter is the newest strategy, and Kari emphasised the importance of presenting statistical information regarding budgets for women and men in sport to enable people to see where resources are being allocated.

Shirley Rogerson (President of Funtington & West Stoke Women's Institute), asked the panellists: "There seems to have been a great improvement in the amount of coverage sportswomen get in the media in the UK in recent years. Is there still more progress that needs to be made?"

Sue Tibballs responded by indicating the difficulty in tracking media coverage of women's sport but suggested that only approximately 3-5% of sports coverage is dedicated to women in the traditional media. However in the social media, approximately one-third of content is dedicated to women, indicating that there is more interest in women's sport than is covered in the traditional media. Women's sport has also migrated from the sports pages to the women's press, which enables some female athletes to secure sponsorship deals. Sue suggested that the key priorities for women in sport should be the media, leadership, participation, and commercial interest since only approximately 0.5-1% of commercial investment in sport is dedicated to women.

Jay Coakley outlined ways to educate the media by providing information packs to the media prior to events in order to change the way that commentators articulate their coverage – so that the focus is not only on quantifying the amount of coverage but also influencing the style of coverage.



*Jay Coakley*

### Question 3. What can we expect from the 2012 games? To what extent will they be “gender equal”?

Sue Tibballs indicated that the number of medals available still favours males. However, viewing figures indicate that more females than males are watching the Olympic Games. The cultural impact of 2012 will mean that people will see women doing sport, which for many is still very radical. Sue indicated that it is frustrating that there has not been more robust planning around legacy, or a focus on women and girls as a legacy outcome.



Rosie Mayglothling (Technical Co-ordinator, GB Rowing Team) asked the panellists “Do panel members feel that the lower numbers of women and women’s teams trying to qualify for London 2012 is a direct consequence of the lower number of places available for women at the Games?”

Kari Fasting responded that statistics indicate near equal participation of women athletes at the Olympics: 46% of athletes in Beijing 2008 were women, and women are included in 25 of the 26 available sports (men in 24 of 26) in London 2012. However, there continue to be events in which women cannot participate and it is very disappointing for top level athletes who want to compete in the Olympic Games to find that their event is not included. Kari recalled the experiences of Anita White who retired from playing elite hockey in 1976 having been unable to play at the Olympic Games as women’s hockey was not included until the 1980 Games. Had women’s hockey not been excluded she might well have been a gold medallist. The number of women’s and men’s teams included in the hockey competition was not equal until 2004, and it was no coincidence that at this time the President of the International Hockey Federation was a woman.

Raija Mattila added that the percentage of female athletes is even lower in the Paralympic Games, but that the IPC had established a Women’s Committee which, in 2010, adopted a toolkit to get more disabled women involved in sport.

The next question came from Louise Mansfield (Canterbury Christ Church University): “One of the main legacy outcomes for the London 2012 Games is to increase participation in sport and physical activity. One recent intervention is the Change 4 Life Brand aimed at the getting the least active school children involved in sport. The evaluation of the first year of this intervention reveals that participation is skewed towards boys 2/3 to 1/3. What strategies might we use to try to ensure that such gender inequality is not a lasting legacy of London 2012?”

Jay Coakley suggested that so-called „experts“ often design and implement programmes and, when the programme does not work, assume that there are barriers in the lives of participants which need to be eliminated, or blame the girls themselves for failure to participate. Jay indicated that the problem may be a lack of a sense of ownership in certain programmes if the programme is imposed without knowing the people for whom the programme has been designed. There is a need to start by understanding the participants, and to develop programmes that come out of the way that they live their lives, their interests and values, in order to understand how physical activity can fit into their lives in ways that are satisfying and valued to them.

Sue Tibballs overviewed the results of some research which indicated that girls are as interested as boys in participating in competitive activities, although neither are necessarily interested in the outcome of competitions. She indicated the scandal that girls leaving school are half as active as boys, proposing this as a political issue which needs to be addressed.

Kari Fasting questioned the relevance of this discussion to the legacy of the Olympic Games, as it assumes that girls should be inspired by top-level athletes, which is not necessarily the case.

Anita White closed proceedings by thanking all contributors and attendees and congratulating the University of Chichester for forming a unique partnership with the Women and Sport movement and establishing the AWF. She was particularly pleased that this initiative would both celebrate the past in the Archive held on the University's Bognor Regis campus, and also provide opportunities for the future in the fund which will enable women from developing countries to study at the University of Chichester.

She called for current students to take this work forward, to continue to make progress, and indicated that the University of Chichester has an important role to play in the future of the women and sport movement. Anita ended the event by officially launching the Anita White Foundation.