

THE LAST 50 YEARS OF WOMEN'S SPORTS: MILESTONE MOMENTS

Interest in women's sports and female athletes is at an all-time high. But it took a lot of little moments along the way to finally break through.



1 TITLE IX PASSES: On June 23, 1972, President Richard M. Nixon signed Title IX into law. Its requirement for male and female students to have equal access to “educational programs and activities” paved the way for an explosion in female participation in sports.

2 BATTLE OF THE PAYCHECKS: In the annals of sports, 1973 is famous as the year Billie Jean King beat Bobby Riggs in their historic “Battle of the Sexes” tennis match. But 1973 is also the year in which the US Open offered equal prize money to its male and female champions, making it the first major professional sports tournament to do so.



3 WATCH PARTY: The 2024 NCAA women's basketball tournament championship game averaged nearly 19 million viewers, besting the men's audience for the first time. Higher viewership and more access are driving the cost of broadcast rights for women's sports to an all-time high.

4 GAME ON: This year the WNBA attracted its most fans in 13 years, ticket sales for NWSL games are up 26 percent, and nearly 100,000 people watched a women's college-volleyball game live. Loyal, engaged fan bases are setting records for live attendance at women's sporting events and driving investment in facilities for teams and players.



5 SCORING CHAMPION: With her 3,668th point scored, Iowa's Caitlin Clark in March became the all-time leading scorer in college basketball history—male or female. Her pursuit of the record helped women's sports gain national attention.

