



The 2004 Racial and Gender Report Card: Women's National Basketball Association

by Richard Lapchick
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2004 Racial and Gender Report Card for the Women's National Basketball Association showed that the WNBA was at the top of the game among pro sports leagues for both race and gender. The Report Card asks, "Are we playing fair when it comes to sports? Does everyone, regardless of race or gender, have a chance to make and run the team?"

When all categories were combined the WNBA got **As** both for race and gender, repeating its record in the 2001 Racial and Gender Report Card. In the combined grade for race and gender, the WNBA once again was number one with an **A** overall. It was the only league examined in the 2004 Racial and Gender Report Card that received an **A** for gender and an overall **A**. The NBA was the only men's league that received an **A** for race.

Using data from the 2004 season, the Institute conducted an analysis of racial breakdowns of the players, general managers and coaches. In addition, the Report includes a racial and gender breakdown of the management in the WNBA League Office and, at the team level, top team management, senior administration, professional administration, support staff, physicians and head trainers. Tables for the Report are included in Appendix I.

UCF's Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport publishes the **Racial and Gender Report Card** to indicate areas of improvement, stagnation and regression in the racial and gender composition of professional and college sports personnel and to contribute to the improvement of integration in front office and college athletics department positions.

Again, the Racial and Gender Report Card asks, "Are we playing fair when it comes to sports? Does everyone, regardless of race or gender, have a chance to make and run the team?" There is clearly significant room for progress in all sports, particularly in professional sports. With continued emphasis on diversity, not only by changing numbers but also by changing attitudes through diversity management training and other diversity initiatives, we believe sports organizations can be as dedicated in their hiring practices as they are on the playing field, to play the best people they have available.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

The percentage of African-American women in the WNBA was at an all-time high at 66.3 percent.

Among all the professional leagues covered in the Report Card, the WNBA League Office had the highest percentages of people of color (40 percent) and women (90 percent) in professional positions.

Val Ackerman, the only woman president of a major professional sports league, announced her resignation at the end of the 2004 WNBA season. Her successor is Donna Orender, who formerly was senior vice president of the PGA Tour.

The WNBA had three African-American general managers. At 23 percent, this was the best in the professional sports covered by the Report Card.

All eight women general managers in the 2004 Racial and Gender Report Card were in the WNBA.

When the WNBA was compared to the men's leagues, it had the best record for people of color in the following categories:

- League Office with 40 percent
- Assistant coaches at 45 percent
- General managers with 23 percent
- Team presidents with 16 percent
- Team senior administration with 19 percent
- Team professional administration with 31 percent

When the WNBA was compared to the men's leagues on the basis of gender, it had the best records in the following categories:

- League Office professional staff at 90 percent
- Team vice presidents with 28 percent
- Team senior administration at 42 percent (tied with Major League Soccer)
- Team professional administration with 44 percent

OVERALL GRADES

For the second time, the WNBA got **As** both for race and gender, repeating its record in the 2001 Racial and Gender Report Card. In the combined grade for race and gender, the WNBA once again led all professional sports with an **A** overall.

GRADES BY CATEGORY

Players

In the 2004 WNBA season, 33 percent of the players were white, 66 percent were African-American and one percent was Latina. Sixteen percent of the players were international, down two percentage points from the 2003 RGRC. There was a five percentage point increase for African-American players in the league and a two percentage point decrease for white players. The percentage of Latina players increased by less than one percentage point since the last Report Card.

WNBA Grade for Players:

Race: **A+**

WNBA League Office

The WNBA is the only professional league reviewed in the RGRC in which a woman has always served as president. From the League's launch through the end of the 2004 season, Valerie B. Ackerman was president. After the 2004 season, Ackerman announced her resignation and her successor was named in February 2005. Donna Orender, former senior vice president of the PGA Tour, is the new WNBA president.

The WNBA is operated as a separate and independent league from the NBA. According to information provided by the league, the WNBA League Office has a dedicated staff that includes full-time personnel in basketball and business operations, player personnel, marketing partnership sales and servicing, and public relations. However, with respect to other staff services, the league decided there would be significant efficiencies and cost saving opportunities arising from common ownership and related functions that must be performed by both leagues. As a result, WNBA staffing needs with respect to administration, advertising, product licensing, legal services, broadcasting, international development, event management, team operations, internet/technology services and general services are performed on a "shared" basis by NBA personnel who perform the same or similar functions.

With the exception of the Connecticut Sun, all WNBA teams are located in NBA cities. NBA team front offices in those cities are responsible for many of the day-to-day operations of the WNBA teams. Each WNBA team employs dedicated coaches, trainers and public relations representatives and, like the League Office, "shares" most of its common non-player personnel with the NBA team operator.

At the professional staff level in the WNBA League Office, African-Americans occupied 40 percent of the posts, while whites held 60 percent. This represents a four percentage point

increase for African-Americans and a five percentage point increase for whites. Latinos decreased by nine percentage points.

Women filled 90 percent of WNBA professional staff positions in 2004, which is a five percentage point decrease from the last report. Renee Brown, senior vice president of Player Personnel and an African-American woman, was the only person of color in a vice president position. Ann Sarnoff, chief operating officer, Paula Hanson, senior vice president, Team Business Development, and Mary Reiling Spencer, vice president, Marketing Partnerships, were the other female senior executives in the WNBA League Office.

Grade for WNBA League Office:

Race: A+
Gender: A+

Head Coaches

In the WNBA, the percentage of African-American head coaches increased 13 percentage points from 18 to 31 percent, while white coaches dropped from 82 to 69 percent. The percentage of female head coaches decreased from 41 to 38 percent. There were no Asian-American or Latino head coaches in the WNBA.

There were four African-American head coaches in the 2004 WNBA season:

Trudi Lacey, Charlotte Sting
Michael Cooper, Los Angeles Sparks
Dee Brown, San Antonio Silver Stars
Michael Adams, Washington Mystics

Along with Lacey, there were four more women head coaches at the helm during the 2004 season:

Carrie Graf, Phoenix Mercury
Susie McConnell-Serio, Minnesota Lynx
Anne Donovan, Seattle Storm
Patty Coyle, New York Liberty

At the start of the 2005 season, there were two African-American head coaches (Trudi Lacey and Henry Bibby, Los Angeles Sparks), and the same five women as in 2004.

WNBA Grade for Head Coaches:

Race: A+
Gender: B+

Assistant Coaches

The WNBA had the highest percentage of people of color as assistants, with a 12 percentage point increase (from 33 to 45 percent). There were no Latino or Asian assistant coaches. The percentage of white assistant coaches dropped from 68 to 55 percent. Women holding these positions increased from 55 to 58 percent

WNBA Grade for Assistant Coaches:

Race: A+
Gender: A+

Top Management

CEOs/Presidents

Susan O'Malley, president of the Washington Wizards/Mystics, was the only female president/CEO in the NBA and WNBA.

Steve Mills, president of the New York Knicks and New York Liberty, and Ed Tapscott, president of the Charlotte Sting, are the African-Americans who are presidents of both NBA and WNBA teams.

General Manager/Principal-in-Charge

The WNBA had three African-American general managers in 2004. All women general managers in the sports reviewed in the Report Card were in the WNBA.

In the 2004 WNBA season, there were three African-Americans in the position of principal in charge of day-to-day operations. Since not all teams had one person designated with this responsibility, the following three women were 23 percent of the 13 individuals that were clearly assigned to this role:

Judy Holland-Burton, senior vice president, Business and Basketball Operations, Washington Mystics
Penny Toler, general manager, LA Sparks
Clarissa Davis-Wrightsil, chief operating officer, San Antonio Silver Stars

In the 2005 season, Trudi Lacy was also general manager for the Charlotte Sting.

Including Davis-Wrightsil, Toler and Holland-Burton, there were 10 women in this post in the WNBA in 2004. These 10 women account for 77 percent of the individuals in this position. The other seven women were:

Carol Blazejowski, senior vice president and general manager, New York Liberty
Karen Bryant, chief operating officer, Seattle Storm
Kelly Krauskopf, senior vice president and chief operating officer, Indiana Fever
Kristin Bernert, vice president of business operations, Detroit Shock
Danette Leighton, senior director of business operations, Sacramento Monarchs
Kelly Chopus, vice president of business operations, Charlotte Sting
Jay Parry, chief operating officer, Phoenix Mercury

WNBA Grade for General Manager/Principal in Charge:

Race: A/A-
Gender: A+

Team Vice Presidents

The WNBA increased from just one vice president of color last year to five at the start of the 2004 season. The five African-American vice presidents were:

Ed Tapscott, executive vice president, Charlotte Sting
Kathryn Jordan, vice president, Communications, Indiana Fever
Nona Lee, vice president and associate general counsel, Phoenix Mercury
Wayne Cooper, vice president, Operations, Sacramento Monarchs
Judy Holland Burton, senior vice president of Business and Basketball Operations, Washington Mystics

The number of female vice presidents also increased from five in the last RGRC to 13 in 2004. Along with Jordan, Lee and Holland Burton, the other female vice presidents are:

Kristin Bernert, vice president, Team Operations, Detroit Shock
Kelly Chopus, vice president, Business Operations, Charlotte Sting
Lynn Angello, vice president, Corporate Sales, Phoenix Mercury
Nona Lee, vice president and associate general counsel, Phoenix Mercury
Alison Fox, executive vice president, Community Relations, Spurs Sports and Entertainment, San Antonio Silver Stars
Lori Warren, vice president, Finance, San Antonio Silver Stars
Paula Winslow, vice president, Human Resources, San Antonio Silver Stars
Rhonda Ballute, vice president, Customer Service and Ticket Operations, Washington Mystics
Ann Nicolaides, vice president, Marketing and Game Operations, Washington Mystics
Donna Ruiz, vice president, Human Resources, Sacramento Monarchs

WNBA Grade for Team Vice Presidents:

Race: B-
Gender: D+

Senior Administration

In the 2004 WNBA season, 12 percent of senior administrators were African-American, while three percent were Latino and two percent were Asian. Whites held 81 percent of the senior administration positions. Forty-two percent of senior administrators in the WNBA were women.

In the WNBA, there were two females and no people of color serving as chief financial officers in 2004. Women held 43 percent of the public relations director posts while 71 percent of public relations directors were white. There were no African-American public relations directors in 2004. Latinos and Asian-Americans each occupied 14 percent of the total.

The 2004 season was the first time that the individual WNBA teams had a community relations director separate from that of their NBA counterpart. The league did an exceptional job of diversifying the position. Whites occupied 38 percent, African-Americans occupied 50 percent, and Asians occupied 13 percent. Women occupied 88 percent of the positions.

WNBA Grade for Senior Administration:

Race: B+
Gender: A

Professional Administration

On team professional administrative positions in the 2004 season, whites decreased by six percentage points to 69 percent, while African-Americans increased by eight percentage points to 22 percent. Latinos had five percent and Asians had three percent. The percentage of women holding professional administrative positions decreased from 53 to 44 percent.

WNBA Grade for Professional Administration:

Race: A+
Gender: A

Physicians and Head Trainers

There was significant loss for both women and people of color in the position of team physician in the WNBA. There were no team physicians of color in the WNBA 2004 season, a drop of 12 percentage points from the 2003 Racial and Gender Report Card. Females in this position dropped from 22 to eight percent, although that remains the highest percentage of female physicians in any of the pro leagues.

In the WNBA, African-American head trainers increased from seven to 15 percent. There was one Asian head trainer, representing eight percent of the total. Whites fell nine percentage points from 86 to 77 percent, while the percentage of women increased from 88 to 92 percent.

Support Staff

In the 2004 WNBA season, whites held 59 percent of the support staff positions. African-Americans held 35 percent (up eight percentage points), while Latinos held five percent and Asians held three percent (down one and two percentage points, respectively). Women held all of these positions.

WNBA Grade for Support Staff:

Race: A+
Gender: A

HOW GRADES WERE CALCULATED

As in previous reports, the 2004 Racial and Gender Report Card data shows that professional sport's front offices hiring practices do not nearly reflect the number of players of color competing in the game. However, to give it perspective for sports fans, the Institute issues the grades in relation to overall patterns in society. Federal affirmative action policies state that the workplace should reflect the percentage of the people in the racial group in the population. Thus, with approximately 24 percent of the population being people of color, an **A** was achieved if 24 percent of the positions were held by people of color, **B** if 12 percent of the positions were held by people of color, and **C** if it had only nine percent. There were no grades for race below this level.

For issues of gender, an **A** would be earned if 40 percent of the employees were women, **B** for 35 percent, **C** for 30 percent, **D** for 25 percent and **F** for anything below that. The Institute once again acknowledges that even those sports where grades are low generally have better records on race and gender than society as a whole.

METHODOLOGY

All data was collected by a research team at the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport in the University of Central Florida's DeVos School of Sport Business Management.

Baseline data was gathered from media guides for WNBA teams. The data was placed in spreadsheets; each team had its own spreadsheet, with each position broken down by race and gender. The team data was then combined into one master spreadsheet.

In addition to team data, the WNBA League Office provided data on its personnel. The findings were put into spreadsheets and compared to data from previous years. After evaluating the data, the report text was drafted; it references changes to statistics from previous years.

The report draft was sent to the WNBA League Office so the draft could be reviewed for accuracy. In addition, updates were requested for personnel changes that had occurred during or after the seasons being reported. The WNBA responded with updates and corrections that were then incorporated into the final report.

The report covers the 2004 season for the WNBA. Listings of head coaches were updated as the opening of the 2005 season. Grades, however, were calculated according to the reporting periods noted herein.

ABOUT THE RACIAL AND GENDER REPORT CARD...

This is the 13th issue of the ***Racial and Gender Report Card (RGRC)***, which is the definitive assessment of hiring practices of women and people of color in most of the leading professional and amateur sports and sporting organizations in the United States. The report considers the composition – assessed by racial and gender makeup – of players, coaches and front office/athletic department employees in our country's leading sports organizations, including the National Basketball Association (NBA), National Football League (NFL), Major League Baseball (MLB), National Hockey League (NHL), Major League Soccer (MLS) and Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), as well as in collegiate athletics departments.

This marks the first time the Report Card is being issued sport-by-sport. The complete Racial and Gender Report Card, including all the leagues and college sport, will be issued after the release of individual reports on the NBA and WNBA, MLB, NFL, NHL, MLS and college sport.

The ***Racial and Gender Report Card*** is published by the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, which is part of the College of Business Administration at the University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando. Dr. Richard Lapchick has authored all reports, first at Northeastern and now at UCF. (Until 1998 the report was known as the *Racial Report Card*.)

Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport serves as a comprehensive resource for issues related to gender and race in amateur, collegiate and professional sports. The Institute researches and publishes annual studies on hiring practices in coaching and sport management, student-athlete graduation rates and racial attitudes in sports. Additionally, the Institute conducts diversity management training. The Institute also monitors some of the critical ethical issues in college and professional sport, including the potential for the exploitation of student-athletes, gambling, performance-enhancing drugs and violence in sport.

The Institute's founder and director is Dr. Richard Lapchick, a scholar, author and internationally recognized human rights activist and pioneer for racial equality who is acknowledged as an expert on sports issues. Described as "the racial conscience of sport," Lapchick is chair of the DeVos Sport Business Management Program in the College of Business Administration at UCF, where the Institute is located. In addition, Lapchick serves as president and CEO of the National Consortium for Academics and Sports (NCAS), a group of more than 220 colleges and universities that helps student-athletes complete their college degrees while serving their communities on issues such as diversity, conflict resolution and men's violence against women.

DeVos Sport Business Management Program

College of Business Administration, University of Central Florida

The DeVos Sport Business Management Program is a landmark program focusing on business skills necessary for graduates to conduct successful careers in the rapidly changing and dynamic sports industry while also emphasizing diversity, community service and sport and social issues. It is the only program in a business college to offer a two degree option, allowing students to earn a master's of business administration (MBA) degree in addition to the master's of sport business management (MSBM) degree. The program was funded by a gift from the Richard and Helen DeVos Foundation and RDV Sports, with matching funds from the State of Florida.

APPENDIX I

Players		
-	%	#
2004		
White	32.7%	66
African-American	66.3%	134
Latino	1.0%	2
Asian-American	0.0%	0
Other	0.0%	0
International	16.0%	33
2002		
White	35%	x
African-American	61%	x
Latino	<3%	x
Asian-American	<1%	x
Other	<1%	x
2001		
White	34%	x
African-American	63%	x
Latino	3%	x
Other	x	x
2000		
White	33%	x
African-American	65%	x
Latino	2%	x
Other	0%	x
1999		
White	32%	x
African-American	64%	x
Latino	2%	x
Other	0%	x

x=Data not recorded

**League Office
Professional Employees**

		%	#
2004			
	White	60%	6
	African-American	40%	4
	Latino	0%	0
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Other	0%	0
	Women	90%	9
	Total	x	10
2002			
	White	55%	12
	African-American	36%	8
	Latino	9%	2
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Other	0%	0
	Women	95%	21
	Total	x	22
2000			
	White	55%	11
	African-American	35%	7
	Latino	5%	1
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Other	5%	1
	Women	85%	17
	Total	x	20
1998			
	White	69%	9
	African-American	23%	3
	Latino	0%	0
	Asian-American	8%	1
	Other	0%	0
	Women	69%	9
	Total	x	13

*Note: Data provided by the WNBA league offices.
x= Data not recorded*

**League Office
Support Staff Personnel**

		%	#
2004			
	White	0%	0
	African-American	100%	2
	Latino	0%	0
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Other	0%	0
	Women	100%	2
	Total	x	2
2003			
	White	50%	1
	African-American	50%	1
	Latino	0%	0
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Other	0%	0
	Women	100%	2
	Total	x	2
2001			
	White	50%	1
	African-American	50%	1
	Latino	0%	0
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Women	100%	2
	Total	x	2
2000			
	White	100%	3
	African-American	0%	0
	Latino	0%	0
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Women	100%	3
	Total	x	3

*Note: Data provided by the WNBA league offices.
x= Data not recorded*

Head Coaches

		%	#
2004	White	69%	9
	African-American	31%	4
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Latino	0%	0
	Women	38%	5
	2002	White	82%
African-American		18%	3
Asian-American		0%	0
Latino		0%	0
Women		41%	7
2001		White	75%
	African-American	25%	4
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Latino	0%	0
	Women	44%	7
	2000	White	69%
African-American		31%	5
Asian-American		0%	0
Latino		0%	0
Women		44%	7
1999		White	75%
	African-American	25%	3
	Asian-American	0%	0
	Latino	0%	0
	Women	50%	6
	1998	White	60%
African-American		40%	4
Asian-American		0%	0
Latino		0%	0
Women		70%	7

x= Data not recorded

Assistant Coaches		
	%	#
2004		
White	55%	18
African-American	45%	15
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	0%	0
Other	0%	0
Women	58%	19
2002		
White	68%	27
African-American	33%	13
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	0%	0
Other	0%	0
Women	55%	22
2000		
White	75%	27
African-American	22%	8
Latino	3%	1
Asian-American	0%	0
Other	0%	0
Women	61%	22
1999		
White	74%	17
African-American	22%	5
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	4%	1
Other	0%	0
Women	52%	12
1998		
White	63%	2
African-American	31%	5
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	6%	1
Other	0%	0
Women	50%	8

x= Data not recorded

CEO/President		
	%	#
2004		
White	84%	11
African-American	16%	2
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	0%	0
Women	8%	1

x= Data not recorded

General Manager/ Director of Player Personnel		
	%	#
2004		
White	77%	10
African-American	23%	3
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	0%	0
Women	77%	10

x= Data not recorded

Vice Presidents		
	%	#
2004		
White	89%	42
African-American	11%	5
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	0%	0
Women	28%	13

x= Data not recorded

Senior Administrators		
	%	#
2004		
White	81%	74
African-American	12%	11
Latino	3%	3
Asian-American	2%	2
Other	1%	1
Women	42%	38

x= Data not recorded

Key Positions			
	PRD	DCR	CFO
2004			
White	71%	38%	100%
African-American	0%	50%	0%
Latino	14%	0%	0%
Asian-American	14%	13%	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Women	43%	88%	25%

*Note: PRD=Public Relations Director /
DCR=Director of Community Relations /
CFO=Chief Financial Officer
x= Data not recorded*

Professional Administration		
	%	#
2004		
White	69%	268
African-American	22%	86
Latino	5%	18
Asian-American	3%	14
Other	<1%	3
Women	44%	170

x= Data not recorded

Physicians		
	%	#
2004		
White	100%	13
African-American	0%	0
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	0%	0
Other	0%	0
Women	8%	1
2002		
White	88%	x
African-American	6%	x
Latino	0	x
Asian-American	6%	x
Other	0	x
Women	22%	x

x= Data not recorded

Head Trainers		
	%	#
2004		
White	77%	10
African-American	15%	2
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	8%	1
Other	0%	0
Women	92%	12
2002		
White	86%	12
African-American	7%	1
Latino	0%	0
Asian-American	7%	1
Other	0%	0
Women	88%	14
2000		
White	88%	1
African-American	6%	1
Latino	0%	0
Other	6%	1
Women	88%	10
1999		
White	92%	11
African-American	0%	0
Latino	1%	0
Other	1%	0
Women	83%	11
1998		
White	100%	10
African-American	0%	0
Latino	0%	0
Other	0%	0
Women	100%	10
<i>x= Data not recorded</i>		

Support Staff Personnel

	%	#
2004		
White	59%	10
African-American	35%	6
Latino	6%	1
Asian-American	0%	0
Other	0%	0
Women	100%	17
2002		
White	75%	x
African-American	14%	x
Latino	6%	x
Asian-American	5%	x
Other	0%	x
Women	53%	x
2000		
White	75%	
African-American	21%	x
Latino	1%	x
Asian-American	1%	x
Other	1%	x
Women	60%	x
1999		
White	90%	x
African-American	10%	x
Latino	0%	x
Asian-American	2%	x
Other	1%	x
Women	68%	x

x= Data not recorded