

Appendix A
Application Form (Revised 08/2003)

**Request for Review by the CSUS Committee
for the Protection of Human Subjects**

(Submit 11 copies of this form and any attachments to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects,
River Front Center, Room 215. Please **type** your responses or use a word processor.)

Project Title: Women's Experiences of Professional Football

Name(s) and affiliation(s) of Researchers:

Mailing address (or Department and CSUS mail code):
Sociology Dept, mail code: 6005

_____ Anticipated starting date

Name of faculty sponsor (for student research)

E-mail address of sponsor

1. Who will participate in this research as subjects (e.g., how many people, from what source, using what criteria for inclusion or exclusion)? How will their participation be recruited (e.g., what inducements, if any, will be offered)?

The 20-30 participants of this research study will be players and coaches of the Sacramento Sirens women's professional football franchise. There is also a chance that players on other teams may be informed of the study by Siren players, and contact the researchers. If this occurs, women playing for other teams in the Women's Professional Football League will be included in the study. The criteria for inclusion in the study is that the women have either played for a professional women's football team, or have tried out for a team. Coaches will also be included in the study for their perspective on the experience.

The participants will be recruited through an e-mail request on our behalf from a player for the Sacramento Sirens who has previously participated as a guest speaker in Prof. Berg's Global Perspectives on Sport course. She will provide our contact information and a description of the study, and women interested in participating will be free to contact us if they so choose. Participation will be entirely voluntary, and no inducements will be offered.

2. How will informed consent be obtained from the subjects? Attach a copy of the consent form you will use. If a signed written consent will not be obtained, explain what you will do instead and why. (See Appendix B for examples of consent forms and a list of consent form requirements. Also see *Informed Consent* earlier in this manual.)

When interested participants contact us, we will obtain verbal consent from them prior to setting up an interview for the study, and signed written consent will be obtained at the beginning of

the interview session, prior to the first question. The written consent form will also have a separate signature line for those participants who agree to have their interview audio taped for transcription purposes. The written consent form is attached to this application.

3. How will the subjects' rights to privacy and safety be protected? (See *Level of Risk* earlier in this manual.)

Level of risk for this study is minimal. Privacy will be protected by the use of fictitious names for individuals and for teams when reporting the results of the interviews. Identifying information such as the team name and home city will not be reported. Any identifying references to specific player position will be omitted from reports, however reference to more general team status, such as member of offensive line or defensive line may be important to place the women's comments in context, but such specification will be included only where necessary. Audio tapes will be stored in a secure location and destroyed after transcription is completed.

4. Summarize the study's purpose, design, and procedures. (Do not attach lengthy grant proposals, etc.)

This study proposes to examine the backgrounds and sports experiences of women who play or have played professional women's football. The study will examine how women perceive both their individual experiences within the sport, as well as their experiences as part of a team. Women will be asked about how their participation in professional football has impacted their lives, and how their lives off the field impact their sport experiences.

We will be building grounded theory, and therefore will allow the women to guide our discovery. The primary method of gathering data for this study will be through in-depth interviews. The interviews will be unstructured, one-on-one, interviews and will begin with broad questions related to women's backgrounds and will then address more specific experiences in football. The direction of the interview may vary, depending on the responses given by the subjects, however an interview guide will be used to prompt the interviewer regarding broad areas to attempt to cover. Basic demographic data will be collected at the start of the interview. The interview should be approximately 1-2 hours in length, and will be audio taped for transcription purposes. Accompanying an article touting the Sirens as "Sacramento's Best" women's professional football team, a picture depicting 3 professional football players, clad only in their jerseys (bare legs exposed) was run in a local magazine in October, 2003. At the end of the interview, players will be shown the picture and asked about their impressions of photo, and how they feel about it being used to promote the team.

A brief follow-up interview (approximately 15 minutes) will also be conducted with interviewees who consent. This interview will inform the women of our general findings from our analysis of the complete set of initial interviews, and ask them to provide feedback regarding those findings.

5. Describe the content of any tests, questionnaires, interviews, etc. in the research. Attach copies of the questions. What risk of discomfort or harm, if any, is involved in their use?

The study consists of one 1-2 hour interview, and one 15 minute follow-up interview. After receiving signed informed consent to interview, as well as to tape the interview, we will begin

by asking a few demographic questions, then build some rapport by allowing the women to discuss the main purpose of the interview – football and their experiences with the game. Once begun, the remaining questions will be ordered as the topics emerge from the interviewee’s responses. To the extent that probing is necessary, we will then move to questions related to the interviewee’s past experience with sports of any kind, then family background and social support. Again we anticipate that the ordering of questions will differ across interviews, but as topics come up, we will attempt to probe further to address as many of the topics on our guide as possible.

The risk of psychological discomfort involved with the majority of questions should be low, however to the extent that we will be asking about family relationships, teammate relationships, and relationships with coaches there is always a chance that discussing such relationships may cause some level of psychological discomfort. There is a slightly higher risk of discomfort related to questions of whether or not they have ever experienced any negative reactions, or in particular homophobic reactions, from others related to their playing professional football. To the extent that these questions may bring to mind past negative experiences or cause stress due to the personal nature of sexuality issues, this particular line of questioning has some risk of causing psychological discomfort, however the probability of discomfort is quite low.

The interview guide is attached, and we have more specifically scripted those probes related to issues that may cause some level of discomfort.

Interviewees who agree will also be contacted for a follow-up interview. As specified above, this interview will inform the participants of our general findings from our analysis of the complete set of initial interviews, and ask them to provide feedback regarding those findings. There is no anticipated risk of psychological distress in this interview.

6. Describe any physical procedures in the research. What risk of discomfort or harm, if any, is involved in their use?

No physical procedures will be used for this study.

7. Describe any equipment or instruments and any drugs or pharmaceuticals that will be used in the research. What risk of discomfort or harm, if any, is involved in their use?

No equipment, instruments, drugs, or pharmaceuticals will be used in this study.

8. Taking all aspects of this research into consideration, do you consider the study to be “exempt”, “no risk”, “minimal risk”, or “at risk”? Explain why. (See *Level of Risk* earlier in this manual.)

This level of risk for this study could best be described as “minimal”. As described above (see #5) we do note a low risk of psychological discomfort with some of the questions, however the probability of harm or discomfort should be no greater than during any type of psychological examination that asks the participants to reflect upon their everyday relationships and past experiences.

Signature of Researcher

Date

Signature of Faculty Sponsor
(for student research)

Date

Questions about the application procedures for human subjects approval may be directed to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects or to any member of the committee. Questions about how to minimize risks should be directed to a committee member. Applicants are encouraged to contact a committee member whose professional field most closely corresponds to that of the researcher. See the *Opportunities* newsletter or www.csus.edu/rsp/HumanSubjects.htm for the current year's due dates when submitting an application.