

# Women in Sport – Discussion Questions

- In what ways did the entry of women into the world of sports open doors for women in other public spheres where they hadn't been allowed before? How can sports create more equal opportunities in society?
- We saw the examples of Mary Bonnie Baker and Alyssa Nakken breaking gender barriers in sport – why is representation at high levels of sport (both the Olympic Games and professional leagues) so important? What are some of the barriers that still exist in these areas today?
- Throughout Canadian history, societal expectations of how women should act or portray themselves limited their opportunities in sport. For example, Mary Bonnie Baker and other players in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League were expected to maintain a feminine image off and on the field, such as wearing lipstick, a skirt, prohibited to have any short hair styles, and they weren't allowed to smoke, drink or swear. Do you think women are still subjected to double standards in sport (not necessarily based on their appearance)?
- In many sports, women have professional leagues in North America (WNBA – basketball, NRL – ringette, CWHL – hockey). Why don't these leagues have as much visibility as the men's leagues? What things must change in order for women's sports to be taken as seriously as men's? What do you see as the biggest challenge(s) facing women in sports today?
- We saw how at the Olympic Games there still isn't gender parity for events. Do you think that the government, or national sporting organizations, have a responsibility to fund and promote those sports that don't have equality or is it up to individuals to show a demand for them?
- What are your thoughts on the Olympic Games in Tokyo planning to include mixed gender competitions, specifically archery, judo, shooting, swimming, table tennis, track and field, and triathlon? Are there other sports that would be easy to mix genders? Are there any sports that will always remain gender specific?
- Moving forward what are going to be some of the big questions or issues in regards to gender in sport?
- What are some ways that you, as an individual, can help reform gender roles in sports? What are some things you can do to better understand how women and girls experience sport and support them to stay in sport?
- Regardless of how you identify, have you ever experienced a situation in which you felt excluded based on your sex or cultural background? How do you think major sporting organizations can help mitigate the issue of exclusion?