Sports
Almost from the beginning of the college, BG women engaged in spirited competition in basketball. In 1918 two literary societies, the Emersons and the Wilsonians, formed women’s and men’s basketball teams. For several years, both the women and the men engaged in annual 5-game series and published the results in The Bee Gee News, the student newspaper. Interestingly, the final scoring was combined, with the club winning the most out of the six games being declared the victor (Bee Gee News, June 15, 1921).

As time went by, basketball proved to be a very popular sport for BG women. In the beginning, competition was in the form of intramural and interclass games. By the 1930s and 1940s, women were playing basketball at play days and sports days. In 1947, a BGSU basketball all-star team traveled to neighboring colleges to compete in tournaments. As the game’s popularity grew, the 1948-49 WRA sponsored a Michigan-Ohio Basketball Clinic to teach the fundamentals of the game to scores of women (Key, 1949).

In the early 1950s, the basketball club became one of the largest and most popular athletic clubs on campus. By 1955, the club had become a team that competed against Miami, Heidelberg, Toledo, Ohio Wesleyan, Ohio State, and Wittenberg (Key, 1954). Dorothy Luedtke, basketball advisor, remembered how she had to study up on strategy before she could coach the team: “I got a bunch of books! And had to read; I didn’t know anything about X’s and O’s; I only knew technique” (Feb. 5, 2005).
During the 1962-1963 academic year, the Falcons competed against Adrian College, Kent State University, the University of Dayton, and the University of Michigan, defeating all but Michigan (Key, 1963). Many years later, Marcia Conrad Saneholtz, who had been a member of the 1962-63 team as a junior, received a request for a picture of herself as a Bowling Green basketball player. In 2005, she recalled her feelings as she looked for such a picture and her delight upon finding one:

So I went back to the Bowling Green annual and looked up my junior year. There was a little paragraph about the women’s basketball team, and I think we played 4 or 5 or 6 games. I found no pictures, no names, or anything. So I thought, well, my senior year; there must be something. So, I looked in the annual my senior year: absolutely nothing about women’s basketball. And so then I started thinking, did I really play basketball my senior year? Maybe I forgot, because I know I student-taught. But I was gratified to see last night, in the team picture from ’63-’64, I was in it. So, I guess I did play in ’64!

During the 1960s, BGSU fielded two basketball teams, the “A” (varsity) team and the “B” (junior varsity) team. In March 1965, Coach Luedtke’s “A” team, having experienced only one loss in two years, defeated Ohio State University by a score of 33-30 (B-G News, March 2, 1965, p. 3). The following year, Pat Peterson began her five-year stint as head basketball coach. In 2009, Coach Peterson recalled her 1960s-era basketball coaching experience:

My early years of coaching and teaching at Bowling Green were some of the most rewarding years of my life. I loved teaching eager young skilled students and preparing them for competition against other schools. Especially gratifying was the rapport with students and the camaraderie of teammates. (August 8, 2009)

In 1971, Coach Peterson became head coach of the varsity volleyball team, and Sue Hager moved into position as head basketball coach. During Hager’s tenure as coach, her players invented Frieda Falcon, who performed at their home games. The backstory is that the first female
mascot had appeared on the scene in 1966. She was named “Mrs. Freddie Falcon” and was portrayed by a male cheerleader. Contrary to a common misconception, however, “Mrs. Freddie Falcon” did not become “Frieda Falcon.” According to basketball player Judy Brause (1970–74),

Frieda was created because Freddie was asked numerous times to come to our games. He showed up only once, for half a game; thus, Frieda was created by the women. She did not appear at men’s events because she was not recognized or funded by the University.”
(May 13, 2009)

It is important to note that Frieda was neither Freddie’s “little sister” or his “sidekick.” In her original incarnation, she was an independent woman! In 1980, the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics officially adopted Frieda, who was portrayed by Sue Sheard during the 1980-81 academic year.
National rules changes in the 1960s and 1970s included the addition of a rover in 1962, the switch from a 3-dribble limit to the continuous dribble in 1966, and the emergence of the full-court game in 1971. In an article published in the 1972-1973 DGWS Basketball Guide, Hager argued persuasively that players' physical conditioning would be the key to their success in full-court basketball.

In the late 1960’s, a student came up with the idea of using “Ladybirds” as a moniker for the women’s teams. The name took hold and for several years, the basketball team and some other women’s sport teams were called the “Ladybirds.” Subsequently, the women’s teams adopted the official school nickname, “Falcons” and, of course, are known as Falcons today. Although members of the media have occasionally referred to BGSU women’s teams as the “Lady Falcons,” BGSU has never officially used that nickname.

In 1974, media exposure for women’s teams began to expand to over-the-air coverage. As noted in the 1974 Key:

“Women’s sports were given an added ‘shot in the arm’ this year by WFAL sportscaster Denny Castiglione. Through his bi-weekly women’s sports program, he attempted to make up for the previous lack of women’s sports coverage by the media. On January 26, 1974, the first women’s intercollegiate basketball game was broadcast on WFAL.” (p. 172)
Hager experienced one of the most memorable moments of her coaching career on Jan. 18, 1975, when the Falcons defeated Ohio State by a score of 56-50 in a game played before hundreds of cheering fans in Anderson Arena (2009-2010 Media Guide).
Also, during the 1970s, the basketball schedule expanded considerably, and the Falcons competed in several tournaments sponsored by the Ohio Association of Intercollegiate Sports for Women (OAISW). When asked to describe women’s intercollegiate competition during those days, Hager replied:

*Intense, but we only practiced two days a week and played on Saturdays. If we had a close school, such as Ohio Northern or Toledo, we could play during the week. There were tryouts to get on the team. Some years 150 women would come to the [Eppler] North Gym to be selected for the 24 slots we had for “A” and “B” teams.* (August 8, 2009)

By 1976, Hager’s team had amassed a record of 55-20 and had placed second in three of the five OAISW basketball tournaments that had been conducted. She left coaching to continue her career as a physical education instructor and intramural director. The women’s and men’s athletics programs merged that year, and Hager assumed the title of acting associate athletic director, coordinating the women’s and men’s non-revenue sports.

With Hager’s departure from coaching, Nora Liu took the reins of the basketball team. Liu explained that her coaching experience included 2-hour varsity and junior varsity practices two or three times per week, no assistant coach or manager, ten semester hours per week of teaching, and the requirement to conduct and publish research in her field of exercise physiology.

*As I look back during my coaching years at BGSU, I have no idea how I did all those things by myself. I could not do it now even if I had 48 hours a day. But I did it all because I love basketball. The passion and desire to teach and coach basketball gave me strength and energy.* (July 25, 2009)

When Liu returned to full-time teaching in 1978, former Falcon athlete Kathy Bole assumed the head coaching responsibilities. Following a victory over Toledo and clinching a berth in the 1980 state tournament, Bole stated, “I am pleased with the team. We are getting good leadership from our seniors and the younger kids are producing” (BG News, February 26, 1980, p.7).
1980 KEY

1981 KEY
By 1982, women’s basketball had been incorporated into the Mid-American Conference, and the BG program had grown from a 19-game season to a 30-game schedule. Chris Tuttle and Melissa Chase became the first and second players, respectively, in the history of BG women’s basketball to score over 1,000 points in their careers. A noteworthy observation is that they accomplished this feat with the larger basketball and without the 3-point line.

Bole continued to coach the varsity basketball team through 1984, when she left the University for a career in the airline industry.

In honor of the 100th birthday of BGSU in 2010, Sue Hager and Larry Weiss, a longtime fan, teamed up with WBGU-PBS to produce a documentary about the women’s basketball program. The program features intriguing interviews with numerous former players and coaches and includes rich visual images that bring the story of BG basketball to life. Information about ordering the DVD is posted on the WBGU-PBS website.
The BGSU women’s intercollegiate cross country team made its debut in the fall of 1976. They opened the season with a disappointing third place finish in a triangular meet, but Coach David Williams was optimistic: “Right now, I’m running seven women for points and the rest for conditioning…when we get in good shape, we’re going to win some meets…in cross country, it isn’t important how you start, but how you finish the season…by then, we’ll be in good shape” (BG News, September 28, 1976, p. 11). Williams’ prediction came true, as the Falcon harriers finished their first season placing a respectable 21st out of 74 teams at the AIAW nationals in Madison, WI.

The following year, as the much-improved Falcons were preparing for the Northern Illinois Invitational, Coach Williams told his team that if they won, he’d shave his
mustache. As reported by Steve Sadler in the BG News, “True to his word, Williams is now clean shaven following the Falcons’ impressive performance which saw them defeat Illinois State, Northern Illinois, Augustana, and Southern Illinois” (October 12, 1977, p. 6). The BG harriers were beginning to make their presence felt, prompting Williams to state, “We put together our first winning season, and on that we will lay a foundation for years to come” (Key, 1978, p. 101).

In the fall of 1978, Coach Williams began to focus on his duties as head coach of the women’s track and field team. Three-time cross country NCAA All-American Sid Sink began his first year at the helm of the cross country team. After the team’s fourth place finish in the Western Michigan Invitational, Sink noted, “We’re just looking for improvement and hopefully to move up and beat someone that we didn’t beat before” (BG News, Oct. 17, 1978, p. 7). The Falcons met their goal as they won the Falcon Invitational and garnered a 13th place finish in the MAIAW Regionals (BG News, June 1, 1979, p. 18). Looking back on the 1978 season, Sink said, “There were a couple of reasons that it was so satisfying for me...One was the six girls I worked with. Their attitudes were tremendous. I felt I accomplished something because I saw a lot of improvement in the team as the year went along” (BG News, Sept. 25, 1979, p. 21). As Betsy Miller said, “You could see progress as the season went on, probably because we were a little closer this year” (Key, 1979, p. 150).

In 1979, the Falcons finished in the top half of each meet they entered and came in sixth out of 17 teams in the MAIAW Regionals. Senior Becky Dodson, owner of several records, won all-region honors and advanced to the AIAW Nationals (2009 Media Guide). As she prepared for nationals, Dodson stated, “I want to know at the end of the race that I can say I ran my best. If I can truthfully say to myself that I ran my best, I wouldn’t feel that I let anybody down” (BG News, Nov. 14, 1979, p. 6).

In 1980, Bowling Green won the inaugural women’s Mid-American Conference cross country meet, with Betsy (Miller) Ryan winning the individual title. Falcons Ryan, Stephanie Eaton, Karen McQuilkin, Terri Gindlesberger, Bev Lynch, and Kathy Kaczor were named to the All-MAC team (2009 Media Guide). At Midwest Regionals the following week, the BG harriers captured sixth place, and Ryan earned a place on the All-Region team. Ryan explained the temperament required to win in cross country competition: “That last mile, I was really hurting and afraid I wasn’t going to make it. When you start to think that way, it’s very easy to talk yourself out of it” (BG News, Nov. 4, 1980, p. 7).
Ryan’s positive attitude gave her the perseverance to capture 14th place and qualify for the AIAW nationals in Seattle, Washington (BG NEWS, NOVEMBER 4, 1980). Adding to the year’s accomplishments, Coach Sink was named MAC Coach of the Year, an honor he would win three more times as the Falcon harriers captured the MAC every year from 1980 through 1983 (2009 MEDIA GUIDE).

The BG harriers continued their winning ways in 1981, placing second in the Eastern Michigan Invitational and winning the All-Ohio meet. For the second consecutive year, they took first place in the MAC meet, where JoAnn Lanciaux won the individual MAC title. Lanciaux, Kaczor, Gidget Wickham, Gindlesberger, Lynch, Rosalie Cocita, and Sandra Cook won All-MAC honors. At the regional meet in East Lansing, Michigan, Lanciaux qualified for the NCAA nationals in Wichita, Kansas (BG NEWS, NOVEMBER 20, 1981). Lanciaux, Kaczor, Cocita, Gindlesberger, and Wickham were named to the All-Region team (2009 MEDIA GUIDE). Cook summed up the reasons for the Falcons’ success:

“I think we have a great team. Everyone is always encouraging each other and helping in any way she can. Sid is a great coach. He makes running fun, but he is strict about our training program. He’s the main reason why we have done as well as we have this year. I’m glad to be part of this team.” (BG NEWS, OCT. 9, 1981, P. 8)

In 1982, the Falcon harriers had a 7-1 dual meet record and won the MAC Championship for the third straight year (1983 MEDIA GUIDE). Lanciaux once again won the individual MAC title. She repeated on the All-Mac team along with teammates Cathy Schenkel, Kaczor, and Cocita. Lanciaux also repeated as a member of the All-Region team (1983 MEDIA GUIDE). Although they failed to meet their goals of defending their state crown and qualifying for the NCAA Championship, Coach Sink was complimentary of his athletes: “As a whole, the season was a very successful one. The girls came through for us at the right times to give us the MAC Championship in what has become a very balanced league...I’m looking forward to next year” (KEY, 1983, P. 155).

Sink continued to coach the women’s cross country team until 1989. He served as coach of men’s track and cross country and as track and field coordinator for men’s and women’s track and field until 1998, when he was appointed assistant athletic director for compliance and certification. Sink retired in 2007.
In 1945, Iris Andrews organized the first fencing club on the BGSU campus, and the members competed against Ohio State and the University of Michigan (Iris Andrews, March 31, 1988). The 1949 Key included a photograph of the fencing club and noted that the highlight of its year had been a round robin tournament held at the end of the season. At that time, the club members were planning to conduct an annual series of regular matches.

There are no more records of fencing club activity until 1952, when an article in the B-G News (February 5) announced that the fencing club was planning a meeting. The 1954 Key listed fencing as one of the 10 clubs sponsored by the Women’s Recreation Association.

In January 1969, a coed fencing club was formally organized with support from the Health and Physical Education Department. Fencing course instructors were WHPE faculty member Beverly Zanger and graduate student and former Ohio State letter-winning fencer, Kenneth Mitchell. It was their intent to expand the sport from club to intercollegiate competition. In describing fencing to BG News reporter, Denny White, Mitchell said, “Fencing is posture building, a constant exercise in problem solving, and a builder of poise and hand-eye coordination. Quickness, hand dexterity, and combined coordination of hands, legs and mind are more important than size and strength.” Mitchell further noted that fencing was “a combination of jogging, ballet, and boxing” (BG News, December 5, 1969, p.16).
In the fall of 1970, Mitchell and Zanger offered an advanced fencing course that served as a bridge from the club team to intercollegiate status. Students who were enrolled in the course eventually competed as a varsity squad. In speaking of the future of the club, a BG News reporter stated, “Some lofty opposition is scheduled starting in December, including Ohio State, Detroit, Wayne State, and Wisconsin” (BG News, September 24, 1970, p.8). Other teams against which the fencing team competed during those years included Cuyahoga Community College, Kent State, Cornell, Case Western Reserve, and Cleveland State.

In 1971 and 1972, Mitchell coached the men, and Zanger coached the women. Although it was a coeducational team, the women and men competed separately, with the men competing in foil, epee, and/or saber categories, and the women only in the foil category (lighter blades and torso as the target). Electrical equipment was used to help train the fencers allowing them to develop quickness, leg strength, and endurance.

As the men’s team faced stiff competition from a number of schools in 1971, Zanger noted that there were some problems involved in scheduling women’s matches. Even so, she was optimistic, stating, “We have a difficult time finding women’s teams in the state of Ohio…but more and more teams are picking up as it is a good winter individual sport.” (BG News, Dec. 1, 1971, p. 11)

By 1975, Zanger was coaching both the women and the men. For financial reasons, the teams traveled together in a team bus, but in most meets, their scores were computed separately. The one exception to the separate scoring was in the Great Lakes Fencing Championship, which BG entered when it was held at Notre Dame in 1977.

The Falcon fencing teams were competitive during the mid-1970s, scheduling matches with teams from schools such as Ohio State, Cleveland State, Wisconsin-Parkside, Michigan, Miami, Kent State, Notre Dame, Oberlin, Windsor, Wisconsin, Culver Military Academy, and Case Western Reserve. In 1975, Zanger noted the improvement in the women’s performance: “This is the first year that there’s been much recognition for the sport. That’s because this is the first year we’ve really put on a pretty good showing” (BG News, February 20, 1975, p. 6). She noted that a number of three-year veterans had contributed to the improvement.
After losing the first four matches of the 1976 schedule, “the BG women then made a spectacular comeback effort as they won their next four matches, blitzing Windsor, 16-0; dumping Cleveland State, 13-3; slipping past Notre Dame, 9-7; and pasting Kent State University, 14-2” (Key, 1976, p. 158). Zanger characterized the women’s victory over Notre Dame as “the highlight of the meet” (BG News, February 19, 1976, p. 8).

In January 1978, the University Athletics Committee recommended that fencing be discontinued as an intercollegiate sport. The sport was dropped at the end of the competitive season, and Zanger returned to full-time teaching in physical education. Coed fencing continued to operate as a club sport for several years.

Coach Beverly Zanger noted a unique problem when Bowling Green hosted fencing matches in the Women’s Building during the early 1970s. “We had to rent from BG Rental a big generator because we did not have enough electricity going into the building. The buildings are so old and we had all of this electrical equipment used for fencing. So, we had to rent this generator that sat outside the building, and it had to be fed with gasoline. So, a team member kept running out and loading it with gasoline so we could pump the auxiliary electricity into those two gyms.” (May 5, 1988)
Field Hockey

Head Coaches

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Dorothy Fornia</th>
<th>1950-1953</th>
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<td>Debbie DeBottaro</td>
<td>1953-1954</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dorothy Luedtke</td>
<td>1954-1963</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patricia Peterson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joy Sidwell</td>
<td>1965-1968</td>
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<td>Carol Durentini</td>
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<td>Sue Gavron</td>
<td>1976-1978</td>
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<td>Pat Brett</td>
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Field hockey originated in England, where women players considered it the “King of Sports.” After physical educator Constance Applebee introduced hockey to U.S. women in 1901, it soon became very popular at schools in the East (Bee Gee News, December 18, 1924). Carolyn Shaw, who arrived at BGSU in 1923, had attended three colleges in Massachusetts—Smith, Simmons, and Wellesley. Consequently, she had experience in field hockey and immediately began teaching it in physical education classes. She also included hockey in the intramural program that she initiated the first semester she was on campus (B-G News, November 10, 1959; Key, 1924, p. 128). As BG’s first competitive sport for women, hockey quickly became very popular and retained this popularity for many decades.

Field hockey competition was very well-organized in the Midwest. By the time Shaw introduced it at BG, women had been playing the game for several years at Oberlin, Denison, Miami, and Ohio State (Bee Gee News, February 12, 1924). Throughout the area, hockey associations sponsored regional and national competitions at a variety of skill levels, and college players frequently were selected to play in those contests. It was no wonder, then, that BGSU field hockey flourished!
The earliest field hockey competition at Bowling Green was in the form of interclass and all-star games, with the first public interclass field hockey contest being played between the freshman and sophomore teams in the fall of 1926 (Bee Gee News, October, 1926; Key, 1926, p. 154). This annual match-up continued until 1934, when the Homecoming game became a contest between a team of visiting alumnae and the regular season intramural champions (Bee Gee News, October 31, 1934). During Homecoming weekends of subsequent years, the alumnae would play either the reigning intramural champs, a team composed of seniors, or an all-star team. This friendly competition became a Homecoming tradition that continued for many years.

The first dual intercollegiate sport competition for BGSU women occurred in 1935, when the WAA invited the University of Toledo to send a field hockey team to Bowling Green. A team of BG all-stars won the game by the score of 2-1 (Bee Gee News, November 27, 1935). After the game, members of the two teams got together for a steak roast. For several years, BG and Toledo scheduled annual field hockey matches, always followed by a social activity.

A Falcon field hockey club was organized in 1950, when a team went to the Great Lakes Sectional Hockey Tournament in Bloomfield Hills, MI (Bee Gee News, November 7, 1950, p. 4). Dorothy Luedtke explained the impetus behind forming the club:

\[\text{We had many students from the East, and we also had some students from schools that had field hockey. They were used to having national competition. We called it a club, but actually it was a team. There weren’t enough good field hockey players to have much competition in intramurals. So that is why the field hockey club started then. (March 31, 1988)}\]
In 1951, Coach Dorothy Fornia and three other physical education instructors accompanied 14 players to a Saturday afternoon match with Lake Erie College. On Sunday afternoon, they watched the Cleveland Field Hockey Association play (*B-G News*, October 9, 1951). The following year, the Falcons won the Buckeye Field Hockey Tournament held at Denison University. As a result of their performance in the tournament, Nancy Terry, Patricia Daugert, Jo Case, Betty Thomas, and Sue Carlisle were selected for the Buckeye I team. Selections for the Buckeye II team were Mary Pollock, Mary Lou Kieffer, and Barbara Brown. At the Great Lakes Tournament held later in the season, Terry, Daugert, Case, and Thomas were selected to represent the University in the National Field Hockey Tournament held at Sweet Briar College in Virginia (*B-G News*, November 25, 1952; *Key*, 1953, p. 91).

In addition to participating in regional and national tournaments, BG hockey teams of the 1950s competed against teams from the University of Michigan, Wittenberg, Ohio Wesleyan, Ohio State, Ohio University, Lake Erie College, Oberlin, and Michigan State (*Key*, 1953, 1957, 1958, 1959). Under Coach Dorothy Luedtke, the 1961 team had a 4-0-1 record, defeating Wooster, Eastern Michigan, Michigan, and Ohio University while tying Kent State. Luedtke characterized the team as one of the best that BG had ever had: “Much of the success of the team is due to the large group of seniors on the team who have played together for four years. This year, the team just seemed to click and the defense and offense gelled with fine teamwork” (*B-G News*, November 14, 1961, p. 5).

Patricia Peterson was hired as a physical education instructor in 1963 and was assigned the duty of coaching the field hockey team:

> After receiving my master’s degree from Indiana University in 1963, I knew that I wanted to teach and coach at the university level. Based on Bowling Green’s reputation as an outstanding institution for professional preparation in physical education, I applied and was hired as an instructor. Much to my delight, part of my assignment was also to coach the field hockey team. (May 8, 2010)
In 1965, Peterson, who had also been coaching the junior varsity basketball team, moved indoors to coach varsity basketball. Joy Sidwell took the reins of the field hockey team. After Sidwell’s three-year stint, Carol Durentini began what would become eight years at the helm. During those years, the Falcons competed against teams from schools such as DePauw, Ball State, Illinois State, Ashland, Oberlin, Lorain County, Eastern Michigan, Wooster, Wesleyan, and Ohio State and regularly participated in the state tournament.

Hockey talent was deep at Bowling Green, and Durentini would often field as many as three teams in the same season. The varsity would compete against the most formidable opponents, and the second and third teams would hone their skills against teams of comparable ability. Some years, the Falcons would develop their expertise along with many other teams at the Sauk Valley Field Hockey Camp in the Irish Hills of Michigan.

In order to save travel money, field hockey meets were frequently triangular affairs, which required Durentini to coach two or more games in a single day. She always kept a fresh supply of sliced oranges available to fuel her players’ energy. Many years later, Durentini reported that, after eight years of slicing oranges, she lost her taste for them and “still has trouble looking at oranges today” (May 13, 2010).

Coach Durentini was resourceful in those days when women’s teams had limited access to athletic support services. Her ingenuity was tapped to the extreme one year during the 1960s when the lines on the field had washed away before a Saturday morning tri-meet. Durentini solved the problem: “I sent all the players to every dorm on campus to find Ajax scouring powder, and that’s what we used to line the corners and the striking circles” (May 2, 1988).

During the 1970s, several Falcon stickers were recognized as standouts. In 1972-73, Cindy Hubbard and Cindy Williman were named to the all-Ohio team, and in 1975 Lorraine Procacci, Karla Ewald, and Karen Williams were selected for the Buckeye II team. The following year, Ginny McGee, who had played hockey and lacrosse in Pennsylvania before coming to BG, was also tapped for the Buckeye II team. McGee made the following observation: “...the women on the field hockey team are ‘closer’ at BG than in the East. The difference is that here people learn the sport at a later age so it’s easier to learn the team concept rather than the individual concept.” McGee went on to praise her coach saying, “She (Durentini) has really done a lot for field hockey and lacrosse at this university. She has a really good attitude” (BG News, Nov. 15, 1974, p. 8).
For several years, Durentini coached both the field hockey and the lacrosse teams. After the 1975 hockey season, she decided to focus her attention on lacrosse, and Sue Gavron was appointed to succeed her as hockey coach. As Gavron took charge of a young team, she said, “I really don’t know what to expect this season. The skill level of field hockey players is increasing, and Ohio schools have a reputation for being very competitive.... Hopefully, we can put it all together in a team effort” *(BG News, September 19, 1976, p. 18).* Under Gavron, the Falcons continued to compete against strong teams throughout the Midwest and to participate in the annual OAISW Tournament.

In 1978, Coach Gavron moved into full-time teaching in the School of HPER, and the athletics department employed Pat Brett for the dual role of coaching both the field hockey and track and field teams. As Brett embarked on the season, she said, “...this will be an exciting team to watch. With the depth we’re developing, we’re going to rank with the major powers of field hockey in the state” *(1978 Media Guide).* In her first year at the helm, the Falcon stickers had a 5-7-1 regular season, which included a 6-1 loss to Ohio State and a 5-1 loss to Ohio University. Their performance at the OAISW tournament was vindicating, however, as they came in 4th in the 16-team field. They again lost to Ohio State and Ohio, but only by scores of 1-0 and 2-0 (overtime), respectively. Brett was proud of the team’s showing at state, noting, “We finally played the way I thought we were capable of playing all season. We surprised a lot of people” *(BG News, November 8, 1978, p. 8).*

The 1979 season was somewhat discouraging, but in 1980 Coach Brett was confident that with 9 of 12 letter winners returning plus a group of highly regarded first year players the Falcon stickers would enjoy a winning season: “We have a chance to beat a majority of the teams we play, but the key is consistency. They were brilliant at times last season, but they’ll have to be brilliant more often” *(1980 Media Guide).* Unfortunately, the competition once again proved too strong for the Falcons.
As Brett looked toward the 1981 season, she said, “This is probably the best field hockey team Bowling Green has ever had, but it’s going to be a matter of fitting pieces into the puzzle....On a given day, anybody in the MAC can beat anybody else in the league” (1981 Media Guide). Competing for the first time under NCAA rules and as a recognized Mid-American Conference sport, the Falcons lived up to Brett’s expectations and had one of their best seasons ever. They posted an 11-6-3 record, had a streak of 14 games without a loss, held down the top spot in the MAC team standings for three weeks, and garnered a three-way tie for second place in the MAC tournament (Key, 1982, p. 127).

Early in 1982, the BGSU field hockey tradition came to an end. In response to statewide budget cuts, the athletics department discontinued intercollegiate teams in field hockey, wrestling, and women’s and men’s indoor track. In making the announcement, athletics director Jim Lessig stated,

“This is one of the most painful decisions that any athletic program has to make. We feel particularly bad about the young athletes who came to this campus to participate in one of the programs that has been dropped. We realize that we have to be part of the University’s overall financial cutback.” (BG News, February 26, 1982, p. 1)

Coach Brett continued as head track and field coach until 1984, when she left BGSU for a career in the business world.
Maintaining that the principal thing for golf enthusiasts to remember is to always play the game for the pleasure derived from it, vivacious Betty Hicks emphasized that “fun” should be the uppermost objective of all young players.

Miss Hicks, an extremely likable, petite brunette, has been visiting Bowling Green for the past five days as part of a tour scheduled by the Women Professional Golfers’ association of which she is vice-president. While on campus, the famous golf luminary talked before a group representing the Athletic Federations of Ohio College Women and demonstrated various shots and techniques for them. She also instructed all women physical education majors and took over golf service classes on Monday and Tuesday.

The outstanding woman athlete of 1941, Betty has won nine major golf championships and numerous other sectional and invitational matches. Foremost among her laurels are the National Amateur Championship of 1941 and the 1944 All-American Open title. She is the holder of 40 course records with an average of 72.

Field Game

In her interview the comely golfer remarked on the many opportunities for talented women in the professional golfing field due to the great need at this time for capable people to do promotional work.

Asked what her biggest golfing thrill has been, the hard driving fairway expert immediately broke into a grin and replied that the greatest thrill was “winning the National!” and that the most gratifying shot she has ever made was the 1-foot putt that beat Mrs. Estelle Lawton Pake on the 18th hole in the semi-finals of the same championship.

Softball and badminton are sports from which Betty now gets more enjoyment and relaxation than she does from the game that made her famous. “Like anything else,” she said, “golf can become

MISS MARILYNN SMITH, an outstanding woman golf professional, will offer a golf clinic and exhibition Monday at 3 p.m. at the University golf course.

Miss Smith won recognition as a women’s intercollegiate golf champion and also copped the Kansas State championship.

She is going east for the fourth and final round of the Weathervane Transcontinental Golf Tournament and is stopping off here while enroute.

Acting in the capacity of adviser to the A. G. Spaulding Co., provides Miss Smith ample opportunity to tour the country making appearances, playing in tournaments, as well as taking care of her business duties.

While in Bowling Green Miss Smith will play a 9-hole exhibition match with Miss Spork of the University women’s physical education staff.
Across many years, a unique feature of the BGSU women’s golf program was the rapport that existed between professional golfers and the University physical education faculty, who arranged for the pros to come to BG to engage in a variety of activities. The earliest recorded visit occurred in May 1947, when Betty Hicks, winner of nine major tournaments and vice-president of the Women’s Professional Golf Association (WPGA), came to campus. During her 5-day stay, Hicks conducted a demonstration for a group representing the Athletic Federation of Ohio College Women, taught several golf classes, and spoke to women physical education majors. Hicks’ career advice foreshadowed the sport management academic program that would emerge more than 30 years later, as she remarked on “the many opportunities for talented women in the professional golfing field due to the great need at this time for capable people to do promotional work” (Bee Gee News, May 7, 1947, p. 3).

Four years later, Marilynn Smith, a co-founder of the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), came to BG to conduct a clinic at the University golf course. While on campus, she played an exhibition match with Shirley Spork, a BGSU physical education instructor and also a co-founder of the LPGA (Bee Gee News, May 18, 1951).
In 1965 and 1966, the women’s physical education department, in cooperation with the LPGA, sponsored National Golf Schools. Spork, by then a regular on the LPGA tour, and Penny Boussoulas, physical education instructor and coach of the BGSU golf team, were co-chairs of the Schools. Eight years later, Spork returned to BG to conduct a golf clinic and hit the symbolic “first ball” in the inaugural event of Grand Opening Week of the back nine holes of the University Golf Course (BG News, June 20, 1974; Daily Sentinel Tribune, June 18, 1974).

Bowling Green students have a long history of enjoying golf. As early as 1930, golf was included among the sports sponsored by the WAA. It proved to be quite popular, and in 1936 BGSU golfers competed against teams from Toledo and Heidelberg in a Sports Day held at the University of Toledo (Bee Gee News, May 13, 1936). Early in 1941, Jean Drake Hendrickson organized BG’s first women’s golf club with the purpose of fostering “interest and enjoyment in golf among the women students of the campus.” The club was open to women who either had had nine weeks of golf instruction or could pass the “efficiency” test (Bee Gee News, Feb. 26, 1941).
LPGA GOLF SCHOOL chairmen Shirley Spork (left) and Penny Boussoulas (center), a woman’s HPE instructor at the University, along with Swing Clinic hostess Marilyn Smith discuss some golfing methods with another interested golfer, President Jerome. The clinic held Tuesday at the University Golf Course highlighted the week-long school.
In 1957, BG sent a foursome to the Ohio Intercollegiate Golf Tourney at Ohio State (Key, 1957). Two years later, Agnes Hooley, the club’s sponsor, brought more structure to the group, announcing that the golf club would meet “at 3:30 every Tuesday, regardless of weather conditions” (BG News, Oct. 6, p. 5). The same year, in a WIA-sponsored Sports Day with Eastern Michigan, Wooster, and Oberlin, BG golfers captured the top three places (B-G News, Nov. 10, 1959). In a 1961 tri-match on the Scarlet course in Columbus, a BG foursome prevailed over teams from Ohio State and Ohio University. The medalist was Falcon Lorraine Abbott, who ultimately became a professional golfer (B-G News, May 12, 1961).

During the late 1960s, the Falcon golf team matched up well against teams from schools such as Ohio State, Kent State, and Michigan State. They also turned in fine performances in the annual Midwest tournament, the precursor to the MAIAW. These accomplishments occurred with few resources. Many years later, Coach Dolores Black remembered how the team obtained enough shag balls to finish the season: “We played Central Michigan, and a little stream went through the course. On one hole, almost every ball would go in the stream and we retrieved many of them” (May, 1988).

Noel Jablonski (1967-1971), recalled what being on the golf team meant to her in those days:

“I have many wonderful memories about the BG golf team...It was great fun to pile four or five of us and all of our gear into Ms. Black’s big ol’ car to drive across the Midwest to compete in Illinois and Indiana. We stayed in motels, ate in restaurants, and developed friendships with players from other schools. We had to manage our schoolwork and time, cooperate with one another, and encourage each other. We were on the course in Bloomington, Indiana, in 1970, when the Kent State uprisings were closing universities in Ohio. I remember the golfers from Ohio University trying to decide if they could finish the tournament because they had received word that their school had shut down. Every competitor helped to deal with the situation.” (May, 2005)
By the 1970s, Black’s team had become very competitive with teams from across the Midwest. In 1972, BG won the team championship at the Ohio Invitational Tournament, with Falcon Sue Barkhurst winning medalist honors (BG News, May 17, 1972). To top off the victory, Carolyn Treece carded a dramatic hole-in-one! The BG golfers repeated the state title in 1973, and Jill Wilhelm played in the AIAW national tournament at the University of Georgia. The Falcons were state runners-up to the Buckeyes in the 1974 Ohio Invitational, which was held in conjunction with the Falcon Women’s Invitational (BG News, May 22, 1974).

In the fall of 1974, the Falcons dethroned Ohio State to win the Ohio Association of Intercollegiate Sports for Women (OAISW) Tournament on the BGSU course (BG News, Oct. 18, 1974). The Falcon Invitational was again held at the same time, and the Falcons came in third behind Kentucky and Michigan State. Coach Black was proud of her players, stating: “The girls just did a tremendous job. It was good to beat Ohio State” (BG News, Oct. 18, 1974, p. 8). In the spring season, the Falcons improved to second place in the Falcon Invitational (BG News, April 17, 1975).

At the 1975 Ohio State University Invitational, held on the Scarlet course, Bowling Green placed 6th in a 14-team field that included top golfers from schools such as Kentucky, Alabama, Penn State, and Michigan State (BG News, May 21, 1975). Falcon Cindy Bye added to the excitement with an ace on the 8th hole! The spring season ended with a 5th place finish in the OAISW and Falcons Peg Gibbons and Karen Parshall qualifying for the AIAW national tournament at Michigan State (BG News, May 21, 1976).
Coach Black returned to full-time teaching in 1976, and Sally Hattig assumed the coaching role. The BG linksters began the season with a third place in the Wisconsin Invitational, prompting Hattig to remark, “The girls really looked good in Wisconsin, but I knew the Bowling Green women golfers have always placed well in tournament play” (BG News, Sept. 19, 1976, p. 19). The spring season ended with a third place finish behind Michigan State and Ohio State in the BG Invitational, where Falcon Karen Parshall was the medalist (2009-2010 Media Guide). Parshall was invited to play in the 1977 AIAW national tournament, which was held in Hawaii.

In 1977-78, Hattig became the coach of the softball team, and Janet Parks began a 4-year stint with the golfers. In her first year, the Falcons placed 2nd at the Central Michigan Invitational, 4th at Cincinnati, and 6th at Purdue. A high point of the season was Karen Parshall’s third consecutive selection for the AIAW national tournament. Held in Haines City, Florida, the 1978 AIAW was the culminating event for Parshall, who had been the top Falcon golfer for four years.

The 1978-79 season was a rebuilding year for the young Falcons. The competition was stiff, but Parks believed that competing with strong players would eventually be to the Falcons’ advantage: “We’re the only team I know of that consistently plays Big Ten and Southeastern Conference teams every weekend...the girls realize the caliber of teams they go up against...they can learn a lot from better golfers” (BG News, April 6, 1979, p. 8). The following year, their experience against the high-powered teams began to pay off, as the Falcons won the 1979 UNC-Wilmington tournament, with Kris McKelvey earning medalist honors. In the MAIAW tournament at Purdue, BG came in 7th of 18, defeating the other MAC schools in the tournament. The Falcons’ experience playing in the winds of Bowling Green worked to their advantage when the second day of the MAIAW tournament turned out to be exceptionally blustery. BG was one of the very few teams whose scores went down as the winds went up. Parks said, “I never heard our players say anything about the wind. They didn’t seem to notice it” (BG News, Oct. 24, 1979, p. 8).
Fall 1980 was a record-setting season for BG. The Falcons came in 2nd in the Longwood (VA) Invitational, where they set school records for 18-, 56-, and 54-hole team scores (BG News, Sept. 21, 1980). Kris McKelvey’s score of 73 tied the 18-hole individual record that Shelley Dye had set at the 1979 Indiana Invitational. McKelvey also set individual records for 56-hole and 54-hole totals (1980 Media Guide). The season concluded with BG’s best-ever finish in the MAIAW tournament—5th place in a 19-team field. Coach Parks was pleased with the record and proud of her team, noting: “We beat a lot of Big Ten schools and beat Michigan State for the first time” (BG News, Oct. 14, 1980, p. 7).

When Parks returned to full-time teaching in 1981, professional golfer A. J. Bonar assumed the coaching responsibilities. Early in the season, Bonar told his players what they would have to do in order to improve: “The prescription is clear. We are going to have to work harder than everyone else at specific skills. We are also going to have to function with the family-type unity that we have shown so far this season” (BG News, Sept. 20, 1981, p. 24).

The Falcons took Coach Bonar’s prescription to heart, and 1982 was a banner year for Bowling Green golf. The team set a new 18-hole record of 307 in the spring Cincinnati Invitational and tied it in the fall Boilermaker Classic. Sally Robinson (Cincinnati Invitational) and Claire Batista (Spartan Fall Invitational) tied the low individual 18-hole record of 73. The Falcons won the fall 1982 Wolverine Invitational, registering BG’s first NCAA D-I victory and defeating Michigan State for only the second time in the history of BGSU women’s golf. As Bonar looked toward the next season, he had high hopes, saying: “I feel that the 1982-83 season is the beginning of a new era in women’s golf at Bowling Green...this is only the beginning. We are bringing in talented players and are on the verge of having a major collegiate program” (1983 Media Guide).

Bonar coached the women’s and men’s teams through 1984, when he left BG for San Diego to become the golf director of the San Diego Golf Academy. He currently operates the AJ Golf School in Rancho Santa Fe, Ca.
In the fall of 1965, Betty Jean Maycock came to BGSU to study for her master’s degree and to start a gymnastics club. Maycock was well-prepared for this assignment as she had participated in the 1959 Pan American Games and had won gold medals in the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome as well as in the 1961 U.S. State Department’s Good Will Tour of Russia. As she embarked on her goals at BG, Maycock noted, “Gymnastics is exploding at the present time all over the country, probably due to the television coverage of national competition… and the Olympic Games…. The gymnastics club being established will later enter competition with other universities” (B-G News, October 12, 1965, p. 6).

During the next few years, the Falcon gymnasts had a three-pronged approach—performing as a club, as an exhibition group, and as a team. As a team, they competed against other universities such as Ohio State, Eastern Michigan, Kent State, and Miami. As an exhibition group, they performed during the halftimes of men’s basketball games, and as a club, they taught the basics to beginning-level university students and conducted clinics for area secondary and elementary schools. Decades later, Maycock [Roys Harrington] reminisced about those early days: “Gymnastics competitions at the collegiate level were more like exhibition matches because the sport was still in its infancy stages in the U.S. I guess our team—the first of its kind at BGSU—represented pioneering and could be considered a breakthrough. Gert Eppler made it all possible” (survey, 2009).
When Maycock Roys left the University in 1970, former BG gymnast Coni Hartley Martin was appointed coach. Characterizing gymnastics as “women’s most demanding sport,” Coach Martin explained, “Women don’t have the power of men in gymnastics, so they rely more on leverage and momentum…developing the beauty of their body movement” \(BG\ News\, February\ 18,\ 1971,\ 8\).

In the fall of Martin’s first year of coaching, the gymnasts found themselves practicing on the cold, hard marble floors of Memorial Hall because, as Martin explained, “We signed up for the men’s gym originally, but evidently the men signed up for the same time, and both teams received permission to use the men’s gym from two different authorized people” \(BG\ News,\ February\ 18,\ 1971,\ p.\ 8\). By second quarter, however, the South Gym in the Women’s Building had become the practice facility for the women’s team. This space, known today as the Mary Elizabeth “Eli” Whitney Dance Studio, must have been quite conducive to skill development because the Falcon gymnasts quickly became very good. Later that year, they had become so proficient that they captured second place in the Division II field of 10 teams in the 1971 Midwest Intercollegiate Women’s Gymnastics Championships, being outpaced only by the University of Michigan. Falcon Franny Lowe won individual championships in the uneven parallel bars and floor exercise events \(BG\ News,\ March\ 5,\ 1971\).

The Falcon gymnasts continued to develop over the next two years, always scheduling tough competition and focusing on individual improvement rather than on winning. As gymnast Laurel Dodd stated, “Friends—that’s the most I get out of it. The competition is more with yourself than with anyone else. Usually we don’t feel like we’re competing against the other team. We’re just trying to do our best” \(BG\ News,\ March\ 1,\ 1973,\ p.\ 8\). Even with the emphasis on participation, improvement, and camaraderie rather than victory, they captured second place in the 1972 Midwest meet (Class II), and senior Beth Edwards qualified for the floor exercise competition at the national meet sponsored by the Division for Girls and Women’s Sport (DGWS) \(BG\ News,\ March\ 29,\ 1972\).

In 1974, Coach Martin [Stanley] left the University, and Charles Simpson took the reins of the gymnastics team. As Simpson began what would become a 24–year odyssey, he explained his approach and expressed admiration for the gymnasts’ work ethic: “We’ve been getting used to each other….I’ve spent the majority of practices seeing what the kids can do and teaching them new skills. I admire the kids for the tremendously hard work they’ve been doing” \(BG\ News,\ January\ 10,\ 1975,\ p.\ 6\).
With Simpson’s arrival, the focus on the competitive aspect of the team intensified. As with other BGSU sports, gymnastics offered both varsity and junior varsity opportunities. As Simpson explained: “There were two levels of competition held on the state and regional levels. My main team competed at level I, and the less highly skilled gymnasts at Level II. Level II was discontinued in the late ‘70s” (April, 2010). In Simpson’s first season, the Falcons had a 6-2 regular season record and came in second to Kent State at the 1975 Ohio Association of Intercollegiate Sports for Women (OAISW) meet (Level I). The highlight of the state meet was sophomore Theresa Hoover’s championship in the balance beam. The Falcons went on to participate in the 1975 MAIAW regionals at Illinois State (BG News, March 6, 1975).

In 1975-1976, the Falcons again came in second in the OIASW meet. They placed ahead of Ohio State, Youngstown State, and Miami, but lost the top spot to their nemesis and perennial powerhouse, Kent State. The Falcons’ strong showing qualified them for the MAIAW at Wisconsin-Eau Claire, which led Coach Simpson to remark, “The teams are going to be strong out there, but we're going to show them what Ohio has, besides Kent State” (BG News, March 11, 1976, p. 7).
By the 1976-77 season, the Falcon gymnasts had completed the evolution to a highly competitive team. Many years later, standout gymnast Cheryl Vasil recalled a moment that marked this transition: *At the end of my freshman year we competed in a Regional tournament with many states and colleges represented. I won a 2nd place medal in vaulting and Coach Simpson grabbed my medal and jumped around. He was so darn excited to see our team starting to be competitive at a higher level* (Survey, 2009). The gymnasts finished that year with an 8-2 record, and, for the third straight year, came in second to Kent State in the OAISW meet.

As 1977-78 season dawned, Simpson declared, “*Our goal is to be No. 1....With the fine talent on the team this year, we should go a long way*” (1977-78 Media Guide). The Falcons did have an excellent season, winning 14 of their 15 regular season meets. Although they once again ranked second to Kent State in the OAISW, the margin of difference had shrunk from 15.45 points in 1976 to only 1.75 points in 1978. Plus, this year the Falcons could brag about sophomore Cheryl Vasil’s first place finish in vaulting!

After four years of being runners-up to Kent State in the OAISW meet, the 1978-79 Falcons were determined to be the first team in the history of OAISW gymnastics to defeat the Golden Flashes. Toward that goal, they practiced three hours a day, five days a week. Ultimately, their hard work paid off as they carried a 16-2 regular season record into the state meet, where they finally prevailed over Kent to win their first OAISW title (BG News, June 1, 1979). Another highlight of the 1978-79 season occurred when first-year student Linda Baxter captured 7th place in the all-around competition at the MAIAW, thus qualifying for nationals (BG News, March 29, 1979). Baxter was only the second Falcon gymnast in history to qualify for a national meet and was the first to do so at Level I competition. She was also the first Falcon gymnast to qualify for nationals since the advent of the AIAW.

As the 1979-80 season dawned and with the coveted state championship under his belt, Coach Simpson observed: “*Our goal in the past has always been to beat Kent State. Now is the time to set new goals and work toward them*” (1979-80 Media Guide). The Falcons were up to the challenge as they had an undefeated regular season (11-0-1) and placed only seventenths of a point behind champion Ohio State in the OAISW meet (1980-81 Media Guide).
During the next two seasons, the Falcon gymnasts continued to excel. In 1980-81, Simpson’s 7th season with the team, they finished 2nd to perpetual rival Kent State in the inaugural MAC gymnastics meet and 3rd in the final OAISW gymnastics meet, which was held at Miami University. Individual gymnasts began to shine, as Mary Anne Kruppa was state champion in floor exercise, and Dawn Boyle and Laurie Garee were MAC champions in vaulting and balance beam, respectively (1981-82 Media Guide).

The 1981-82 Falcons were spectacular as they stole the show before a home crowd at the MAC meet. They not only won the championship, but they also took three of the five individual MAC titles: Laurie Garee—all-around competition and uneven bars and Dawn Boyle—floor exercise. Their team performance gained the Falcons a bid to the first annual NCAA Northeast Regional Gymnastics meet, which was held in Pittsburgh (1982-83 Media Guide).

Charles Simpson, who was selected MAC gymnastics coach of the year in 1983, continued coaching the gymnastics team until his retirement from BGSU in 1996. In 2007, he was inducted into the BGSU Athletics Hall of Fame. Two years later, Simpson looked back on his coaching career and stated: *It was the best of times and the worst of times. We cried a lot and laughed a lot. We worked hard…*I loved every one of them (survey, 2009).
In the fall of 1970, HPER graduate assistant Annella Petkovich, approached Sue Hager about starting a women’s lacrosse team in the following spring. As Carol Durentini recalled,

“Sue didn’t want to start a lacrosse team unless someone would continue with it. So, since I was the coach of the field hockey teams, she asked me if I would take over lacrosse when Annella completed her degree. I assisted Annella that first year and went to a lacrosse camp in the Poconos that summer.” (February 15, 2010)

Typically, women students entering BGSU did not have prior experience in lacrosse. Most of the players acquired interest and skill through Durentini’s lacrosse courses. In spring of 2009, Betsy Kenniston (1975-1979) recalled: “I was a physical education major, and chose lacrosse as one of my beginning level activity classes in the spring of my freshman year. I quickly fell in love with this sport, and tried out for (and made) the team in the winter of my sophomore year.”

As the lacrosse program opened its 1971 season, an article in the BG News explained differences between the women’s and men’s games, making sure to mention the proper attire of those days: “No physical contact is the major difference between the men’s game and the women’s version…the 100-yard distance between goals remains the same in both male and female sports...Customary dress for the ladies will be kilts and tunics” (April 7, 1971, p. 7). In an interesting approach to skill development, the women’s and men’s teams would occasionally scrimmage against each other to help the
men focus on their footwork and stick-checking skills rather than on body checking. Later, Durentini noted that women’s rules rendered lacrosse “a type of sports ballet” that relied on agility rather than physical contact (BG News, April 19, 1973, p. 8).

The lacrosse team finished the 1973 season with a 7-1 mark, which included a 13-1 rout of a team composed of players from various Midwest schools. Throughout the rest of the 1970s, the lacrosse team continued its winning ways, sporting a 52-9 record from 1975 through 1976. The prowess of BG players was acknowledged regionally as Falcons were consistently among those selected to play on Midwest I and II teams in U.S. Women’s Lacrosse Association (USWLA) national tournaments.

In 1975, Durentini responded to increased student interest in lacrosse by adding a second team. She acknowledged that the junior varsity would not play many matches because most other schools could field only one team (BG News, April 4, 1975). Nonetheless, the “B” team did play several matches during the season, preparing several of its members for eventual elevation to the varsity.

At the 1975 Midwest Women’s Lacrosse Association (MWLA) Tournament, Durentini’s coaching peers selected her to coach the Midwest I lacrosse team in the USWLA national tournament at Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA. The excellent performance of Midwest I in the first match prompted Durentini to observe, “I think we surprised the people from the East. They didn’t think we’d be as strong as we were” (BG News, May 29, 1975, p. 8).

In 1976, the club had a 12-2 record, the best in its history, and they also performed well in the MWLA Tournament at Earlham College. During the season, they defeated traditional powerhouses such as Oberlin, Wittenberg, and Wooster. As a fitting conclusion to her lacrosse career, senior Ginny McGee was named to the Midwest All-Star team for the fourth straight year. Jill Durnwald [Fick], a player on the 1976 team, reminisced about her experience playing for Coach D: “Many of her players (including me) never played lacrosse before college. So she truly was as much a teacher as a coach. And we were very competitive, thanks to Miss D’s patience and teaching. She pushed us to be the best we could be, on and off the field” (Spring, 2009).
The following year, Durentini led the Falcons to a 9-4-1 performance. In the spring of 1977, citing the dearth of high school lacrosse programs in Ohio and in the greater Midwest area, the University Athletics Committee recommended replacing women’s lacrosse with fastpitch softball, which was played in many Ohio high schools (BG News, April 20, 1977). After Coach Durentini and several players presented a petition and made persuasive arguments for the continuation of the team, the committee agreed to reconsider (BG News, May 13, 1977). During the same time period, a Title IX review committee from Washington, DC made a visit to BGSU, and Durentini presented her case to them. Ultimately, even though softball was added, women’s lacrosse was retained.

In 1977, Durentini left for a one-year leave of absence to begin work toward a doctorate, and former men’s lacrosse coach Mickey Cochrane took the reins as interim coach. “It’s nice to be back coaching the game … We’ll start out concentrating on our defense, but gradually be putting more emphasis on the offense so we can play well at both ends… We want to have a balanced team, which is what you have to do to win” (BG News, April 7, 1978, p. 10). Cochrane’s approach paid off as the Falcon laxers again had a winning (5-4-2) season.

In January 1978, the Athletics Committee recommended that both the women’s and men’s lacrosse teams be dropped, as well as synchronized swimming and fencing. President Hollis Moore approved dropping the latter two sports but recommended that both lacrosse teams be continued, while phasing out their grants-in-aid. The Committee concurred with this recommendation.

In the fall of 1978, Coach D returned to BG and resumed coaching both field hockey and lacrosse. The 1979 laxers went 9-2-1, outscoring their opponents 149-84 (BG News, April 4, 1980). Graduation took its toll, however, and only four players
returned for the 1980 season. The 1980 and 1981 seasons were
the only losing seasons the Falcon laxers ever experienced. A
bright spot in the 1980 season was Debi Springer’s selection
to compete in the national tournament at Swarthmore College
(1980 KEY SUPPLEMENT).

In 1981, Durentini relinquished her coaching duties in order
to devote herself full-time to teaching in the School of Health,
Physical Education, and Recreation. She had coached the
varsity lacrosse team for 10 of its 11 seasons. During those
years, which included one year under the guidance of Mickey
Cochrane, eight Falcons were selected for the Midwest I or II
teams that played in the USWLA National Tournament: Patti
Denise Nearhoof (1975), Debi Delaney (1975), Tina Bryant
(1977), Cindy McDonald (1977), Julie Lewis (1979), and Mary

Also in 1981, the Athletics Committee recommended
continuing women’s lacrosse for the next year. In a July 14
memo, however, Athletics Director Jim Lessig informed the
committee that Interim President Michael Ferrari had declined
to approve a search for a new coach. Ferrari had based his
decision on the University’s precarious financial condition and
outlook. Consequently, women’s lacrosse was discontinued as
a varsity sport.

Many years later, in a panel discussion at a Title IX conference
held at BGSU in 2005, Mary Jo Beers-Takash (1971-1975)
captured the spirit of the BGSU lacrosse team:

\[
\text{We competed against Ohio University, Ohio Wesleyan, }
\text{Wooster, Earlham...and we traveled...we had a little van,...}
\text{and some of the students drove their cars. We had a shoestring}
\text{budget. Our coach had to make sure that maintenance lined}
\text{the fields, get the officials, and set up transportation. But we}
\text{didn’t know any different. It was wonderful! I was excited}
\text{to be able to participate in intercollegiate activities, and we}
\text{just had a ball! From 1972 to 1979, we had 8 players that}
\text{made 12 appearances on the Midwest teams at Nationals...a}
\text{very, very, very successful program. We were sad to see it go.}
\text{(February 5, 2005)}
\]

In 2009, Tina Durnwald (1980) echoed Beers-Takash’s
sentiments: “I was one of the lucky ones to have played lacrosse
for four years at BGSU. We fought a hard fight, but in the end,
when the athletic committee decided to drop lacrosse...it was a
very, very sad day. It was a financial decision, but it broke many
hearts...”
Softball has been popular among BGSU women for many decades. Before the women played softball, though, they played both indoor and outdoor baseball. Women began playing both versions of baseball in physical education classes at least as early as 1924. Indoor baseball, which was typically played with a large “mushy” ball, no gloves, and bases that were only 27 feet apart, was a winter sport played in the gymnasium. In the fall and spring, the physical education classes engaged in the outdoor version of baseball, which would not have been unusual for college women of those years. BG women played baseball until the mid-1940s, when “softball” began to be mentioned in the yearbook. By the 1960s, softball had become the name of the game at Bowling Green.

In the early 1950s, the on-campus enthusiasm for softball was extended into the community when physical educator Dorothy Fornia started a girls softball team in Bowling Green. Many years later, Lynne Fauley Emery, who had been a student at Bowling Green High School at the time and later became a history professor at Long Beach State, expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to play:

One summer, one of the professors at Bowling Green organized a softball team for girls. That was the first, but we only played in the summer, and then she left the state. Interestingly, she went to Long Beach State—it was Dr. Fornia—and I ran into her at Long Beach and had to hug her because I got to play softball one summer because of her! (February 5, 2005)
The first extramural softball team at the University was formed in 1965, when Pat Peterson, who was playing on a summer league faculty/student softball team, responded to the students’ request for a team of their own: “The young women were wanting a softball team, and they came to me and asked if I could be the softball coach...so I became the softball coach at that time.” (Interview, 2001)

In 1966, Coach Peterson took the helm of the varsity basketball team, and Dolores Black began to coach the softball team in the fastpitch version of the game. Black was instrumental in persuading the University grounds crew to build a softball diamond, complete with a sand infield and a backstop, at the corner of North College Drive and East Reed Street. In Black’s first year, the Falcons won all three of their games, a highlight being a 22-7 defeat of Michigan State at East Lansing (B-G News, May 17, 1966). In her second season, the softball team compiled a 2-1 record. In 1968, BG hosted Wayne State, Ohio State, and Kent State in a tri-match that was plagued by a constant downpour of rain. By the time the last game was called because of rain, Bowling Green had defeated Wayne State, lost to Kent, and hit two home runs against Ohio State (B-G News, May 8, 1968). According to Cheryl Renneckar, the Falcon pitcher at the time, “It rained and rained...we begged and begged to continue playing, but the rain won” (March 15, 2010).

After the 1969 season, Black left softball to fill the golf coaching vacancy that had been created upon the resignation of Coach Penny Boussoulas. Sue Hager then assumed the softball coaching responsibilities. During Hager’s two years with the team, which had converted to the slowpitch version of the game, the Falcons provided strong competition for teams from schools such as Central Michigan, Defiance College, Ohio Northern, and Kent State. In 1988, Hager reminisced about the lack of support systems such as equipment managers and groundskeepers for women’s sports. Hager noted that one time, it had been raining and the field could not be lined until the morning of the game. The lime that would ordinarily have been used to line the field had been used earlier in the week to dry out the bases.

“So, the only choice was to run to the grocery store. I sent one of the students. She came back with three big boxes of Bisquick. So we used it...we were inside and had the meeting with the teams and ready to go out and it had rained in the meantime and the field was damp and can you imagine running across a line of Bisquick? The ball was real gooey...we don’t forget those things.” (March 31, 1988)
Janet Donahue succeeded Hager as the coach of the intercollegiate softball team for the 1971-72 year. When Donahue left Bowling Green after the 1972 season, the softball team was discontinued because no one on the faculty was available to coach (Sue Hager, March 12, 2010).

In the fall of 1977, fastpitch softball was revived at BG when Coach Sally Hattig sent out a call for try-outs. Over 100 women signed up, and they began practicing in mid-January of 1978. Hattig selected a 17-member team from the nearly 85 final candidates. The Falcons opened their first season in a game against Indiana State at the softball field northeast of the Ice Arena. Although supported by the BGSU department of athletics, the players had to purchase their own uniforms. (*BG News*, April 6, 1978). In 2010, Hattig reflected on her BGSU coaching experience: “The program was growing and trying to provide competitive opportunities for young women. It was a challenging experience for the students to prepare for and compete at a higher level” (Survey, 2009).

In 1978, former Falcon athlete Kathy Bole was hired to coach both softball and basketball. As Bole looked forward to the season, she predicted that the Falcons would be facing a tough schedule and stated that she didn’t know what to expect, adding; “I do anticipate the women’s softball team to be strong. We have a goal of looking for continual improvement” (*BG News*, March 29, 1979). After getting off to a slow start, the team did improve and reached the finals of the State tournament, losing the championship game to Ohio State. The 1980 season also saw improvement as the Falcons upped their winning percentage to .400 and again came in second in the State tournament. This time, they defeated Ohio State but lost to Youngstown State by one run.

In 1980, Bole vacated her softball coaching position to focus on coaching basketball. In so doing, she became BG’s first full-time, female coach of a single intercollegiate sport (*BG News*, June 26, 1980). As she left the softball team, Bole expressed mixed emotions:

> “The softball team has finished second in the state both years I have coached it, and I would like to continue with the sport. Yet the softball team as well as the basketball team, deserves a coach who can be with them 100 percent of the time.” (*BG News*, June 26, 1980, p. 7)
As former Falcon standout Sandy Haines took the reins of the softball program, she remarked, “I'm very excited about the season...you don't finish second in the state two years in a row because of luck. We have good players, and that's why I'm confident we'll do well this season” (1981 Media Guide). The 1981 season did bring improvement, as Haines led the team to a 15-13 record.

The 1982 season opened with 15 returning letter winners and 2 new pitchers, and Coach Haines was optimistic: “It’s realistic to believe we have a chance of making the NCAA Regional field...and that means we'll have to have the best, or one of the best records among teams in West Virginia, Ohio, and Delaware” (1982 Media Guide). Haines’ optimism was well-founded as the 1982 Falcons posted a 28-19-1 showing, the best in the history of the program. Their performance earned a berth in the NCAA Regional Tournament, where they lost in the finals to the number one seed, California State-Fullerton. When Haines left BG the following year, her overall winning percentage of .557 (57-45-3) was the highest achieved by any coach since the re-emergence of the softball program in 1977. As of 2010, Haines’ record remained unequaled. Haines left the University in 1982 to pursue a career in the financial industry.
CAC 1981

CAC 1982
In the fall of 1948, the following notice appeared in the Bee Gee News:

**SWIMMING TEAM ORGANIZED**: Any good swimmers on campus. Come out and join the women's swimming team which is being organized tonight at 7:30 in the Nat. You do not need to be a member of Swan Club to join. Some meets have already been arranged. (October 27, p. 6)

Judging from their record, some excellent swimmers came out for this team, which was dubbed the “Splashers.” By 1951, the Splashers had a national intercollegiate standing of fourth place and had attained national recognition in competition against Western Ontario, Purdue, Ohio State, Michigan State, Ohio Wesleyan, and Michigan State Normal (Key, 1951).

The Splashers’ success might have been due, in part, to the forward thinking of Dorothy Luedtke, their young coach. Luedtke was not fond of the old tank suits traditionally worn by swimmers and, instead, purchased a more modern version of swimming attire. Clearly, she was ahead of her time, and her selection of suits caught the attention of her colleagues: “People were upset with me because I bought black nylon suits for my racing team. They thought that was a little risqué” (March 31, 1988).
Luedtke’s Splashers continued to attract highly skilled, experienced swimmers who relished the idea of competition. In 1952, for example, Sue Mignerey came to BG from Connecticut, where she had set several freestyle records and reigned as the women’s state champion. At BG, Mignerey served as captain of the Splashers and broke three records in the Natatorium (B-G News, May 11, 1954). By 1955, with no more than one loss in each of their seven years of existence, the Splashers had added Ohio University, Miami University, and Denison to their schedule (Key, 1955).

During the 1950s, competition in “form swimming” was often included in the women’s swim meets. Years later, Iris Andrews explained:

*In the first swimming meets that we had, we had speed and form. We had to always include form swimming. Now, have you ever tried to judge form swimming? They did the sidestroke and the breaststroke. The winner of the sidestroke was whoever could glide the farthest and look the prettiest.* (March 31, 1988)

Occasionally, one of BG’s competitors in these combined meets was the University of Western Ontario in Canada. In 1950, the Splashers defeated Western, with Falcons Joan Wickes and Sallie Buck winning first place in several speed events, and Joyce McCreery and Marie Kenney coming in first in the synchronized duet category (Bee Gee News, Dec. 1, 1950). In 1955, the Falcons lost to Western, even though Mignerey won two speed events, Adella Grove took a first in diving, Connie Wood prevailed in synchronized solo, and Fran Isch and Lynne Fauley won the synchronized duet category (B-G News, Dec. 9, 1955).
In 1956, Iris Andrews, who had been directing the synchronized swimming team since 1945, assumed leadership of the Splashers. In her first year, BG edged out Western Ontario by a score of 53-52. In the speed events, the relay team of Pat Monasmith, Shirley Browning, Zenobia Premo, and Gladys Griesmer took first place in the 200-yard freestyle. Winners in the synchronized events included Linda Tieman (solo), Annalda Toriskie and Browning (duet), and Jeanne Carlson, Grove, Tieman, and Toriskie (team). During Andrews’ 4-year stint, the Splashers also competed against universities such as Michigan State and Ohio State and in the Invitational Swimming Meet at Miami University (Key, 1957).

Former Splasher Dona Rae Whittaker Vogel coached the team from 1960 through 1962, and they competed against swimmers from schools such as Kent State, Ohio University, Miami University, and Wooster College. The Falcons continued to attract talent from beyond Ohio as the co-captains of the 1961 team were Brazil-born Karen Murphy, who had swum for an American team in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and New Jersey native Edwina “Eddy” Fink, who had been a member of the 1957 AAU All American Swimming Team. A high point of the year was Patricia Dow’s intercollegiate record-setting time in the 50-yard backstroke (B-G News, Nov. 10, 1961). Many years later, Vogel looked back on her coaching experience, noting: “Teaching classes, working with students, developing organizational skills, along with balancing the responsibilities of a marriage, graduate studies, and coaching was preparation for many challenges yet to come” (Survey, 2009).
In 1962, Andrews returned to the Splashers, and in the fall of 1963, Paula Weber and Noreen Wolcott turned in DGWS (Division for Girls and Women’s Sports) record-breaking performances in a meet at Miami University. Weber set a new national record in the 50-yard butterfly, and Wolcott shattered the national record in the 50-yard backstroke (B-G News, Nov. 15, 1963). The following year, Wolcott represented the Glass City Aquatic Club at the AAU national championships and finished 6th in the 100-yard backstroke (B-G News, April 24, 1964).

Jean Bailey Campbell took the swimming and diving helm in 1966 and remained as coach through 1977. The Splashers changed their name to the Bowling Green Women’s Intercollegiate Swimming and Diving Team, and their competitiveness, team spirit, and championships continued to increase.

In 1967, the women were happy to be assigned regular practice hours rather than having to work around the men’s swim team practice times. As swimmer, Pat Tabbert stated,

*The whole team is quite enthusiastic. The freshman girls are great! We all want to go far and we feel we can. We’ve had a lot of practice, too. In the past, the guys were given their choice of hours to swim and we were to fit in any other time. This year we have regular practice hours assigned to us.* (B-G News, October 27, 1967, p. 4)

Referring to themselves as “Campbell’s Swimmin Women” and sporting towels monogrammed with, “M’m! M’m! Good!” the swimming and diving teams of the 1970s took an amazing array of honors and championships. After a second consecutive undefeated season in 1969-70, BG News sports reporter Vin Mannix praised Campbell: “This team was a conglomeration of ‘walk-ons,’ (no grant-in-aiders) whose raw talents were molded into an unbeaten season by a woman, too chipper to be called simply ‘coach,’ and who zips around in her son’s 1971 TR-4” (Dec. 5, 1970, p. 10). The Falcons went on to additional undefeated seasons in 1971, 1972, 1974, and 1978 (1981-82 Media Guide).

By the end of the 1973-1974 season, the Falcons had earned 25 straight victories and only one loss over the previous five years. As they gunned for that 25th win, Coach Campbell pointed to her swimmers in the pool and stated, “This is an unusually lonely business. They bury their heads in the water and get nothing but hurt, pain, and agony.” Their hard work paid off, though, as Campbell observed, “We’ve got kids breaking their own records like crazy this year, and our relay times have consistently improved” (BG News, Feb. 22, 1974, p. 7).
During the 1970s, the Falcons were a force to be reckoned with, as they won the OAISW championship every year from 1974 through 1980 (1980-81 Media Guide). Falcon swimmers qualified for the Association of Intercollegiate Athletic Women (AIAW) national meet every year from 1973 through 1981, finishing among the top 35 teams in the nation several times. They also dominated the annual Midwest regional meet and won an international championship at the 1975 International Invitational held at the University of Waterloo in Ontario, Canada. (1976; 1980-81 Media Guides). To top it off, between 1974 and 1977, ten BGSU swimmers earned the designation of AIAW All-American: Barb McKee (100-yard backstroke-1974, 1975); Gail Sailer, Valerie Newell, Betsy Fisher, Becky Siesky (200-yard freestyle relay-1974, 1975); Siesky, Newell, Fisher, McKee (400-yard freestyle relay-1974, 1975); McKee, Sharon Ackron, Fisher, Siesky (200-yard medley); and Holly Oberlin, Lee Wallington, Barb Simmons, Leslie Heuman (200-yard medley relay-1977) (2009 Media Guide; BG News, April 2, 1975; Newell, 2010). In looking back on her experience, 1972-1975 team co-captain Valerie Newell identified values that she had gained from competing in swimming: “Above all, is my comfort with competition…. Being competitive and understanding how to be competitive in life and career have been central to my achievements” (Survey, 2009).
### 1974 AIAW Swimming Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Coach</th>
<th>Team Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arizona State University</td>
<td>Mary Pyne</td>
<td>Barbara Meyer, Carol Ragsdale, Cindy Stath, Sherry Tulin, Sally Tull, Linda Whitney, Lea Whiteman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California State University</td>
<td>Billie L. Penman</td>
<td>Therese O'Brien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California State University</td>
<td>Leonard Chapel</td>
<td>Lynn Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California State University</td>
<td>AT HAYWARD</td>
<td>Renee Dickenson, Lynn Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California State University</td>
<td>AT LONG BEACH</td>
<td>Debbie Cope, Vicky Smedley, Sally Paterson, Mary Schmidt, Debbi Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California State University</td>
<td>AT LOS ANGELES</td>
<td>Coach Sue S. Powell, Marilyn Brandin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucknell University</td>
<td>Kelsi L. Montgomery</td>
<td>Kim Warner, Kathleen O'Day, Chris Pender, Jamie Reddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Michigan University</td>
<td>Nancy Norman</td>
<td>Barbara Bumstead, Nancy Wilkie, Janet Yano</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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In addition to coaching the Falcon swimmers and divers in 1976-77, Campbell directed Swan Club, the varsity synchronized swimming team that also staged annual water shows. In 1977, she relinquished her position as swimming and diving coach in order to focus on the synchronized team. Upon leaving the tankers, Campbell stated, “I would love to turn the world over to a group of my girls. There is no jealousy or back-biting, only love and cheers….This is a fantastic group, and they will certainly go places” (Key, 1977, p. 152). Speaking of her expectations of the next coach, she mused, “I don’t care if they have a PhD as long as they care about what happens to the women because they’ve been like a family to me” (BG News, April 21, 1977, p. 9).

In 1977, veteran men’s swim coach Tom Stubbs assumed coaching responsibilities for both the women’s and men’s teams. In his first year, the “Swimmin’ Women” were undefeated, gliding into first place at every dual and invitational meet of the season and winning the state title (BG News, March 9, 1978). During Stubbs 4-year tenure as coach, the Falcons boasted a 29-5 dual meet record and captured three consecutive state titles (1978-1980) (1980-81, 1981-82 Media Guides). In 1980, seven Falcons qualified for AIAW nationals, where the 200-yard freestyle relay team of Debbie Dourlain, Leslie Heuman, Holly Oberlin, and Cathy Bujorian earned AIAW All-American honors (BG News, April 5, 1980). The following year, the 400-yard freestyle relay team of Bujorian, Terry Alexander, Donna Homberger, and Lisa Mansfield qualified for nationals in Columbia, SC (BG News, March 5, 1981, p. 8).
CAC 1976-77
The 1980-1981 season culminated in a Falcon victory in the inaugural MAC Women’s Swimming and Diving Championship, where the team of Dourlain, Homberger, Cathy Schmitz, and Alexander were champions in the 200 medley relay. Mary Jane Harrison (3-meter) and Lisa Fry (1-meter) won the diving titles and were named co-MAC Divers of the Year (1981-82 Media Guide; MAC Records). Following the meet, Stubbs praised his team, stating, “It was a total team effort. They really held tough through some tough circumstances....They competed like true champions in my mind” (BG News, March 5, 1981, p. 8).

In 1981, Stubbs retired from coaching. He continued as aquatic director and resumed his teaching position in the School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. Ron Zwierlein, former falcon swimmer and diver, was named head coach of both the women’s and the men’s teams. In Zwierlein’s first year, the women transitioned from AIAW to NCAA competition. As he acknowledged Miami’s home pool advantage at the MAC championship meet, Coach Zwierlein expressed confidence in the Falcons noting, “I’ll still take our chances against anyone” (BG News, Feb. 26, 1982, p. 7). Although they finished second to Miami in the MAC, several Falcons again won individual MAC championships: Homberger (200 freestyle, 100 backstroke, 200 backstroke), Amy Kindy (500 freestyle), Alexander (butterfly); Alexander, Lauri Nichols, Kindy, Homberger (400 free relay); Kindy, Midge Hill, Nichols, Homberger (800 free relay); and Homberger, Schmitz, Alexander, Kindy (400 medley relay). Following the meet, Zwierlein praised his team’s passion and unity. “The team spirit and enthusiasm pushed our members to goals that someone of the same physical ability would not have achieved. They’re a family-type of a team” (Key, 1982, p. 166). Clearly, in 1982, the Falcon swimmers and divers were still demonstrating the enthusiasm and cohesion that had been part of the team since they first were known as the Splashers!

Zwierlein continued to coach the swimming teams through 1984 and the diving teams through 1986. In 1984, he was appointed associate director of the student recreation center and later served as the director of recreational sports, interim vice president for student affairs, director of BGSU athletics, and senior vice president for student affairs. Zwierlein retired from BGSU in 2004.
Swan Club / Synchronized Swimming

Head Coaches

Jean Drake Hendrickson 1939-1941
Gertrude Eppler 1941-1945
Iris Andrews 1945-1976
Jean Bailey Campbell 1976-1978

Swan Club was initiated in December of 1939, when Jean Drake invited 32 students from her swimming classes “to practice water formations for a swim pageant, as part of the [natatorium] dedication program” (Bee Gee News, Dec. 6, 1939, p. 4). Although there is no verifiable record of their having performed at the dedication, the creation of this group, originally known as the “Rhythmic Swimmers,” marks the first time that synchronized swimming was organized at BGSU. In a 1940 Bee Gee News article, members of this group declared, “We ‘thinner clads’ are really proud of ourselves, for we swim, we swim together, and, moreover, we swim together with music. With the strains of ‘Beautiful Ohio’ in our ears, we girls make what we hope will be a perfect circle” (May 1, p. 2).

In 1940, Drake selected 18 charter members of “Swan Club,” who then tested prospective members (aka pledges) on speed, form, distance swimming, and diving (Bee Gee News, May 1, 1940). As noted in the 1945 Key, Jean Drake [Hendrickson] “transformed the BGSU girls from chickens to ducks that first year” (p. 95). In spring of 1940, the Swan Club staged the first of several annual water demonstrations for visiting students on High School Day Scholarship Days (Bee Gee News, May 8, 1940).

In the spring of 1941, Hendrickson left her official position at the University. The following fall, Gertrude Eppler, the newly hired head of women’s HPE, began the first of her four years as director of Swan Club. The next year, Hendrickson volunteered to assist Eppler with the club, and the two of them directed the very first Swan Club Show. For two nights in April 1942, the natatorium was packed for “Aqua-fiesta,” an aquatic show with a Latin American theme (Key 1942, p. 64; Bee Gee
Swan Club/Synchronized Swimming

The Swans also put on formation swimming demonstrations at several of the intercollegiate swim meets, for physical education teachers at a convention held on campus, and for the Bowling Green Woman's Club.

In 1942-43, Kathryn Ruh, the physical education critic in the Bowling Green public schools, served as Eppler's assistant. In the spring of that year, the club presented a water pageant that was a “burlesque on the daily life of a WAVE” (KEY, 1943, p. 95). The following year, Eppler and Ruh continued to co-sponsor Swan Club, and the “Aquacade” was again the highlight of the year (KEY, 1944, p. 170).

By 1944, there were three sponsors of Swan Club—Eppler, Ruh, and the new dance teacher, Jane Shoemaker (BEE GEE NEWS, Nov. 8, 1944). In presenting the third annual aqua production titled “Wynken, Blynken, and Nod,” the 32 club members were aided by the Modern Dance Club, Alpha Phi and Alpha Chi Omega singers, several members of the speech and music departments, and art students, who assisted with costumes and special masques (BEE GEE NEWS, MARCH 29, 1945). The narrator of the show was Eva Marie Saint, who later became an Academy Award winning star of the silver screen (BEE GEE NEWS, APRIL 11, 1945).
When Iris Andrews arrived on campus in the fall of 1945, she replaced Eppler as advisor to Swan Club. As had been the case from the beginning, membership in the club was restricted to highly skilled swimmers as described in the 1946 *Key*: “Demonstrating great skill in aquatic sports by swimming eighteen lengths of the pool, surface diving, and by fulfilling many other rigid requirements, a girl may become a Cygnet, or pledge, of the Swan Club. A hilarious informal initiation is given the Cygnets before they become proud owners of their Swan pin” (p. 143).

Andrews’ first show, “The Loves of Apollo,” was presented during Homecoming in the fall of 1946. For 30 years, her Swan Club shows were a campus tradition that generated enormous interest and served as a point of pride on the BGSU campus. These shows were extravaganzas in every sense of the word. Bearing titles such as *Scentimental Journey* (featuring numbers such as *Shalimar*, *White Shoulders*, and *Tabu*), *Aqua Carousel*, and *Sands of Time*, each show had a theme around which all the numbers were coordinated. Swan Club shows featured complicated and dramatic aquatic routines set to music and often accompanied by dancers, campus vocal groups, and members of the men’s swim team, who were affectionately nicknamed the “Drakes.” Several shows offered the additional flair of dramatic readings and living statuary.
Many people who attended Andrews’ Swan Club shows still remember the signature underwater chain that served as the traditional finale for the performances. In an article about the 1968 show titled *Heads and Tales*, Andrews described this chain:

*This year’s big precision finale will be composed of 12 “Swan” pirates who execute the difficult 12-man underwater chain to “March of the Cueballs”...This intricate chain is very difficult; we’re the only university in the country that does it. (B-G News, May 2, 1968, p. 5)*

Twenty years later, Andrews could still describe that chain in detail:

*We had a 12-person human chain where you linked your feet around the other person’s neck and laid out straight around the pool. And the person at the deep end would go down and they would swim in unison. And the first person would go down and stay down and stay down and swim under water until the last person, the twelfth person, was submerged. And at one point in time, the pool would be absolutely calm, because everyone was underneath. Then they would emerge one by one, going the opposite direction. (March 31, 1988)*
Another unique aspect of Swan Club was that the annual show was truly a family affair. As Andrews was busy coaching the swimmers in preparation for the show, her sister, Winnie Wood, was creating the dramatic costumes that became a hallmark of the productions. Jean Bailey Campbell, who ultimately succeeded Andrews as coach of the Swan Club, remembered them well: “Those costumes that Winnie made were absolutely phenomenal!” (March 8, 2010).

From 1952 through 1956, another family member was closely associated with Swan Club. Winnie Wood’s daughter, Connie, chaired the Swan Club publicity committee, performed in the annual shows, and won first place in the solo and duet (with Eve Williams) in several intercollegiate competitions. Many years after her Swan Club days had come to an end, Connie Wood Anderson was asked to identify people who had exerted the greatest influence on her during her college sport experience. Her response exemplifies the family atmosphere she experienced in Swan Club: “Iris was my aunt and Bergen [Dorothy Luedtke] was her roommate...my mom made the costumes for Swan Club. I knew all of the faculty on a personal level from having met them as a child and remaining in touch after graduation. I considered them all personal friends” (Survey, 2009).

As early as the 1940s, Swan Club entered synchronized swimming meets. As the 1946 Key reported, “The club took on a competitive aspect this year and vied its form and speed with that of clubs from other campuses” (p. 161). Many years later, Coach Jean Campbell explained the difference between show swimming and competitive synchronized swimming: “Competitive synchronized has no relation to show swimming...What is involved is the performing of figures, similar to figure skating. Scoring is done similarly to that done in diving (BG News, January 7, 1977, p. 6).

As a leader in synchronized swimming programs for college women, the BGSU Swan Club sponsored Ohio’s first synchronized swimming workshop in April 1948. Representatives of colleges in Ohio and Michigan attended the event, and soon thereafter, Bowling Green was competing with schools across the Midwest and beyond. As noted in the previous chapter, Bowling Green synchronized swimmers did exceptionally well in the “form swimming” competitions that were occasionally included in intercollegiate swim meets. At a 1952 meet at the University of Illinois, for example, BG Swans won two second places and a fourth place against 125 competitors representing 15 Midwestern colleges and universities (B-G News, March 7, 1952). They were similarly successful in several international competitions held at the University of Western Ontario (B-G News, Nov. 16, 1956).

As winners of the 1954 AAU meet in Detroit, and the Intercollegiate Meets held at BG in 1955 and Miami University in 1957 (Key, 1955, 1957), the BG Swans distinguished themselves in intercollegiate
synchronized swimming competition in the United States. In 1960, BG hosted the Intercollegiate Women’s Synchronized Swimming Meet for the second time. Competitors included Kent State, Illinois State Normal, Ohio State, Michigan State, Purdue, Eastern Michigan, Ohio Wesleyan, Miami University, Baldwin Wallace, and Beloit (B-G NEWS, April 29, 1960). The same year, they were invited to participate in the annual water show by the Association of Synchronized Swimming for College Women at Skidmore College in New York (B-G NEWS, October 7, 1960). During these years, the synchronized swimmers also competed with teams from Michigan, Vassar, Illinois, Ohio University, Central Michigan, and Cincinnati and boasted several champions, including Jo Ann Layford, Margaret Constable, and Bonnie Harris (B-G NEWS, March 2, 1967).

Between 1951 and 1971, Andrews made the Swan Club a known power by capturing an amazing 20 consecutive Midwest team championships (BGSU PRESS RELEASE). As she prepared for the 1971 show, she discussed the history of Swan Club with BG News reporter, Meg Crossgrove. Noting that Swan Club was nationally known for its water shows, Andrews explained:

> We have performed all over the East and the Midwest at invitational meets of the best synchronized swim clubs in the country. We have always placed in the top three at the meets and have held many ‘firsts’…Our university has a reputation as one of the outstanding colleges in the country for women’s synchronized swimming. (BG NEWS, Feb. 24, 1971, p. 5)

When Andrews returned to a full-time position on the faculty in 1976, her 30 years of work had ensured BGSU a place among the premier synchronized swimming groups in the United States. Jean Campbell, who was coaching the swimming and diving team at the time, accepted the additional challenge of directing Swan Club and coaching the synchronized swimming team. Campbell continued the high standards for the annual show and competition that had come to be expected of BG’s synchronized swimmers. In her first year, BG competed well against schools such as Ohio State, Michigan, Western Michigan, Western Illinois, and Miami. After one year of coaching both speed and synchronized swimming as well as producing the water show titled *The Taming of the Shrew*, Campbell decided to retire as swimming and diving coach to devote her full attention to the synchronized swimmers. She explained, “Precision, ability and body language are the keys to synchronized swimming, and the team will take up a vast amount of
time. The synchronized swimmers require more individual coaching than the swim team does. You almost have to be right there in the water” (BG News, April 21, 1977, p.9).

As was the case with many other sports at BG, Campbell had both an “A” team and a “B” team. In her final year as coach, both teams competed in invitational meets at the University of Michigan, Western Michigan, and Northwestern University. They also participated in the BGSU Invitational, a MAC invitational, the OAISW state championship, the MAIAW Regionals, and the AIAW National Synchronized Swimming meet. In addition to taking first place at the MAC and Western Michigan invitational, the Falcon “A” team also won the championship in their division at the state meet, where Connie Cooper won the state solo title, and placed third in the Midwest Regionals (BG News, April 13, 1978). In the year’s culminating event, they captured 6th place among the 21 teams at the AIAW meet, where Cooper, Marilyn Humphrey, Margo Humphrey, and Mary Heitman won All-American Honorable
All together now... Stroke!

BGN, FEB. 24 1971
Mention honors (*BG News*, April 18, 1978). In addition to the competition, the Swans staged a show titled *Alice in Wonderland*. That spring, Jean Campbell left the University for Paris, Texas, where she currently resides, teaching swimming and conducting a children’s community theatre.

After the 1978 season, synchronized swimming was dropped as a varsity sport, and the Swans began to function as a club team under the leadership of assistant swim coach Sandy Cox. In the 1979 AIAW National Synchronized Swimming Championships, Margo Humphrey and Kris Humphries were named All-Americans as they led Bowling Green to a second consecutive 6th place finish. In its final three years, Swan Club was once again a “family” affair as former Swans directed the annual shows: Patti Wallace Welt (1980) and Kay Siegel (1981, 1982) (*KEY*, 1980; *BG News*, April 15, 1982). The Olympic-sized Cooper pool, however, lacked the intimacy of the venerable Natatorium, which had been demolished in 1979, and the long-loved annual Swan Club extravaganza was discontinued.
Women’s tennis competition at BGSU began in the 1920s with interclass and intramural matches played in the commons area outside of University Hall. In 1925, two tournaments were held, an elimination tournament and a ladder tournament. In the spirit of the “every girl in a game” philosophy of the time, players who lost in the elimination tournament were allowed to enter the ladder tournament:

Women’s tennis Head Coaches:

- Betty Menzi (1951-1954)
- Mary Spooner (1954-1955)
- Agnes Hooley (1955-1959)
- Penny Boussoulas (1959-1962)
- Agnes Hooley (1962-1967)
- Janet Parks (1967-1976)
- Joan Weston (1976-1980)
- Deb Kurkiewicz (1980-1983)
The college has organized two tennis tournaments for women. The first is the regular elimination tournament, to find the winning player from the Freshman and Sophomore classes. The final INTER-CLASS match between the winners of the class tournaments will be played on Field Day, June 4th. Fifty of our tennis enthusiasts have entered this tournament. The second tournament is called a ladder or perpetual tournament. All those eliminated from the regular tournament may enter this ladder tournament. The names are arranged on a ladder and any player may challenge another player whose name is within three rounds above her. If the challenger wins, the two names change places on the ladder. If the challenger loses, the names remain in the same position. The name at the top of the list on June 6th, represents the winner of this tournament. By this method no one is eliminated, but each may continue to play until the end of the tournament. (BEE GEE NEWS, MAY 15, 1925, PP. 9, 10)

Women interested in competitive tennis organized into a club during the 1948-1949 academic year. The same year, Alice Marble, a professional tennis star and friend of Gertrude Eppler’s, came to BGSU and presented a talk titled “The Will to Win.” Preceding the program, the tennis club held a reception for Marble (BEE GEE NEWS, MAY 18, 1949). Forty-two years later, the world learned that BG’s guest of honor, who was also known as the “Queen of the Tennis World,” had been a spy for U.S. Army Intelligence during World War II. (MARBLE, 1991)
In 1951, physical education instructor Betty Menzi was advising the tennis club. Like several other women’s sports at BG, an interesting aspect of the club was its focus on both competition and instruction. In addition to sponsoring competition in the form of an all-campus tournament, the club offered a tennis clinic and gave members opportunities to gain experience and training in playing the game. The 1951 club selected representatives to play in the Ohio College Women’s Singles Tournament, and the following year, BG hosted the Ohio State Women’s Singles Tennis Championship.

The 1954 tennis club held try-outs twice a year, sent players to the Ohio State Women’s Intercollegiate Tennis Tournament, visited several other campuses to compete, and hosted other tennis clubs at BG. The instructional aspect was maintained as the members met on Saturday mornings to practice and to receive instruction from Mary Spooner, physical education instructor and club sponsor.

Agnes Hooley assumed the coaching responsibilities in 1955, and three years later, the BG netters made it to the semifinals in singles and doubles at the 1958 Ohio Women’s Intercollegiate Meet at Oberlin College. Penny Boussoulas followed Hooley as sponsor of the tennis club, and in the Women’s Sports Day held in October of 1961, the BG netters prevailed over Wooster in doubles play (B-G NEWS, Oct. 17, 1961).

In the early 1960s, Agnes Hooley again took the reins of the tennis club, which practiced on the courts between Memorial Hall and the Men’s Gym. She remembered the difficulty she had keeping men off the courts when the women were practicing:

No one seemed to listen until one young man walked behind a young lady returning a serve and was cut across his forehead as she was in the middle of her backswing. After that the gate was locked when we practiced! (BG NEWS, June 1, 1976, p. 6)
In 1964, the Falcons placed third out of 17 colleges in the state tournament held at Kent State. “Losing is hard to accept anytime,” said Hooley, “but it was easier considering our players in the tournament lost to the eventual winners or runners up” (B-G News, May 15, 1964, p. 5). The following year, BG hosted approximately 20 other colleges and universities at the All-State Tennis Tournament and placed second. University President Bill Jerome was the featured speaker at the closing banquet (B-G News, May 18, 1965).

When Janet Parks took the helm of the tennis team in 1967, she realized that the budget was insufficient for the type of schedule required for the skill level of the players. In a 1976 BG News interview, she reminisced about those days:

Money was always a problem for us. In 1968, our budget was $300, so we had to find ways of raising our own money. I can remember one year when we collected pop bottles and used the deposit money to finance a trip. We collected nearly $150! (June 2, p. 6)
In 1968, members of the tennis club were still participating in both extramural and intramural competition. The intramural teams competed against each other, and the extramural team competed against other colleges. Continuing the original club’s focus on instruction, members of the extramural team helped beginners once a week on the courts between Memorial Hall and the Men’s Gym. As extramural team member Mary Miles noted, “Experience isn’t necessary. We hope to emphasize that one of the purposes of the tennis club is to teach beginners” (B-G News, April 25, 1968, p. 7).

The 1968 varsity Falcons placed fourth in the Ohio College Women’s Tennis Tournament at Wittenberg. The next year, Parks dropped the instructional component of the club, choosing instead to work on honing the skills of the advanced players. (BG News, June 2, 1976). The 1969 and 1970 teams improved on the Falcons’ record by placing second and third, respectively, in the state tournaments. In 1971, BG hosted the annual Ohio College Women’s Tennis Tournament again, and the Falcons tied with Miami and Ohio State for the state championship.

The best season in the team’s history occurred in 1972, when BG went undefeated (12-0) in the regular season and came in second to Ohio State in the state tournament. The most satisfying victory of that year was the Falcons’ defeat of Ohio State in a regular season match—on the OSU home courts! Another highlight was the selection of #1 singles player Toni Meiss [Scherzer] for the USLTA national tournament at Auburn University, where she won her first-round match.

The Falcon netters were third in the state in both 1973 and 1974. A highlight of the 1974 OAISW tournament, which was held at BG, occurred when University President and accomplished tennis player Hollis Moore delivered the keynote speech at the banquet. He discussed his ideas about strategies leading to Title IX compliance in a talk titled “In Defense of a Soft Second Serve.”

In 1975, the Falcons recorded a 10-1 regular season and sixth place in the OAISW. The following year, Parks’s last as tennis coach, the Falcons improved to third place in the state. In an interview with BG News reporter Sue Caser, Parks reflected on the status of women’s tennis:

Tennis is finally coming into its own. Attitudes toward the game have changed and people have more of an opportunity to play. It is less of an elite sport, and the stigma is no longer attached to the ‘woman athlete.’ Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs did more for the game of tennis than they themselves probably realize. (June 2, 1976, p. 6)
Under new coach Joan Weston, the 1977 Falcon netters continued the Falcons’ winning ways. They captured second place in the state tournament at Ohio Wesleyan and progressed to the Midwest Regional Tournament at Ohio State. Seven of 8 letter winners returned for the 1978 season, and Weston was optimistic:

*All of our returnees did a lot of playing in the summer; and it was really evident when they came back this fall. They seem to have strengthened their consistency, which is really important.* (1978 Media Guide)

BG hosted the 1978 Ohio Large College Women’s Tennis Tournament, and the Falcons tied for third place, again progressing to the MAIAW tournament.

After a disappointing 1979 season, Weston acknowledged that there were a number of younger players and that 1980 would be “a developing year.” She expressed confidence, however, that “*If they get over their first match nervousness, they will be all right*” *(BG News, April 4, 1980, p. 6)*. In this final season for Coach Weston, the youthful Falcons managed a 4-6 record and fifth place finish in the OAISW tournament. Weston left Bowling Green for a teaching position at Berea College.

As new coach Deb Kurkiewicz took over the coaching responsibilities in 1980, she was eager to share her playing and teaching experience with the BG players:

*This is a great personal challenge considering the level of competition women’s tennis has reached in the last few years at the college level. But I’m confident my background as a player and an instructor can help the players here improve their games. I want them to know when they’re doing something well, and I especially want to help them make changes to help their game when they’re not playing well.* (1981 Media Guide)

The 1981 tennis team sported a 9-3 record, a fifth place finish in the first-ever MAC women’s tennis tournament, and third place in the state. The following year, as the Falcons were heading into the 1982 MAC tournament, Coach Kurkiewicz stated, “I think that all the girls have a decent chance. If they play well, like most them are right now, then I think we’ll surprise some people” *(BG News, April 29, 1982, p. 5)*.

Kurkiewicz’s confidence was well-placed, as the Falcons improved to 4th place in the 1982 MAC, and the coaches selected Falcons Chris Bischoff and Cindy Scheper to the all-conference team *(BG News, May 4, 1982)*. Kurkiewicz continued coaching Falcon tennis through the 1985 season.
A track and field program started at BGSU in the 1920s, when Carolyn Shaw created a special area on the Training School playground between Hanna Hall and what is now Kohl Hall. At 4:00 p.m., Ms. Shaw would section off this area for a discus and javelin throw, a 50-yard dash, 60-yard low hurdles, and a running high jump. In the years to follow, an annual track meet between the first-year and second-year college women was a highlight of the athletics program (*B-G News*, November 10, 1959). For many years, track and field events were included in intramurals and were very popular during field days.

By the mid-1960s, the track and field teams coached by Bonnie Motter were competing with other universities such as Kent State, Findlay College, and Ohio University as well as participating in the annual Ohio Relays. Motter also organized competitions among BGSU physical education majors and minors. Interest was high in 1968, as approximately 40 participants showed up for the event, which consisted of discus, softball throw, standing long jump, running long jump, dashes of various lengths, several relay races, 80 meter hurdles, and a 440-yard run (*B-G News*, May 23, 1968).

In the fall of 1970, 25 women signed up for the track and field team under the direction of Sally Parent [Sakola]. In discussing her plans for one home meet and two away meets during spring quarter, Parent remarked,

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### Track & Field

#### Head Coaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bonnie Motter</td>
<td>1965-1968</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sally Parent Sakola</td>
<td>1968-1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ellie Robillard</td>
<td>1972-1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cathy Buell</td>
<td>1973-1974</td>
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<td>Cathie Schweitzer</td>
<td>1974-1975</td>
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<td>David Williams</td>
<td>1975-1978</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pat Brett</td>
<td>1978-1984</td>
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New coach Ellie Robillard started a pre-season training program in February 1973 and narrowed the team to 15 members. She credited the cinderwomen with “having ‘real dedication’ for being able to last through the vigorous workout schedule” (BG News, May 9, 1973, p. 8). After several tracksters turned in excellent times in taking fifth place in the Eastern Michigan Invitational and second in the BG Invitational, Robillard noted, “I am very proud of these performances as well as the overall performance of the whole team. Although the team is well-balanced, I believe our strength comes from our sprinting team, with strong help from the efforts of the field event team” (BG News, May 9, 1973, p. 8).

Cathy Buell guided the Falcons in the 1973-74 season. The following year, under the leadership of new coach Cathie Schweitzer, the Falcons came in second in the All-Ohio, where Linda Helmink (javelin) and the 880-yard medley relay team of Helmink, Betsy Uhlman, Polly Koch, and Jan Samuelson won state championships (BG News, May 13, 1975). A highlight of the year was Jenny Gill’s 8th place pentathlon finish in the 1975 AIAW national meet at Oregon State University (BG News, April 22, 1976; BG News, May 13, 1976).

David Williams, who had been serving as assistant coach, took the reins of the track and field program in the fall of 1975 and began an outstanding 5-year stint in which the BGSU track and field team continued to build its reputation as one of the best teams in the state and region as well as being nationally competitive. Williams’ teams won three consecutive All-Ohio state championships and Mid-American Invitationals (the precursor to the MAC championship that would begin in 1981), while turning in numerous record-setting individual and team performances.

Williams’ team won its first state title in 1976 at the Ohio Twilight Relays at Ohio State. Following the victory, Coach Williams noted: “It was a nice feeling to beat the Buckeyes and actually be able to say, ‘We’re number one in the state.’” (BG News, May 11, 1976, p. 6). Deb Romsek, ran away with individual titles in the 400-meter hurdles, the 100-meter hurdles, and the 440-yard dash, and joined Stanene Strouss, Lynne Heckman, and Samuelson as champions in the mile relay (1977 Media Guide). After a Falcon victory at the Mid-American Invitational, Gill (pentathlon), Romsek (400-meter
CAC 1979

CAC 1980
hurdles), Strouss (880-yard dash) and the mile relay team of Samuelson, Romsek, Heckman, and Strouss competed in the 1976 AIAW Nationals at Kansas State, where the Falcons ranked 30th among the 145 teams represented. Romsek and Gill finished 4th and 7th, respectively, earning All-American status in their events (BG News, May 15, 1976; May 18, 1976).

By the 1977 season, the story of the Falcon cinderwomen had become one about championships, both team and individual. Once again, BG won the team championship at the All-Ohio and at the Mid-American Invitational. State titles went to Romsek (400-meter hurdles), Pam Koeth (shot put), Lorna Miller (discus and javelin), the mile relay team of Becky Dodson, Gail Billet, Samuelson, and Heckman, and the 800-meter team of Samuelson and Billet (1978 Media Guide). Miller and the 2-mile relay team of Dodson, Romsek, Billet, and Samuelson qualified for the AIAW national meet at UCLA (BG News, May 18, 1977; BG News, May 25, 1978). Along the way, the 1977 team set 10 new school records.

As the 1978 season opened, Coach Williams explained the purpose of the indoor season: “We use the indoor meets as a training phase and also to teach the younger women new skills they might not have learned in high school. It also gives the field event women a chance to work on weights and develop techniques” (1978 Media Guide). The indoor preparation paid off as the Falcons won their third consecutive All-Ohio and Mid-American Invitational team championships. State champions included Romsek (400-meter hurdles), Billet (800 meters), Dodson (1500 meters), Betsy Miller (5000 and 5000 meters), Koeth (shot put), Sue Klembarsky (discus), the mile relay team of Samuelson, Jenny Thornton, Romsek, and Deb Wernert, and the 2-mile relay team of Robin Mansfield, Billet, Dodson, and Betsy Miller (1979 Media Guide). Jane Guilford (100 meter dash), Betsy Miller (5000 meters), and the 3200-meter relay team of Romsek, Billet, Dodson, and Samuelson represented the Falcons at the AIAW nationals at the University of Tennessee Knoxville (BG News, May 25, 1978). Mary Zarn (high jump) and Pam Koeth (shot put) qualified for the 1978 AIAW indoor meet at the University of Missouri-Columbia (BG News, March 2, 1978; BG News, March 7, 1978). Although not reported at the time, Koeth, a 2-time OAISW shot put champion, finished in 7th place, thus earning All-American status (2009 Football Media Guide, p. 124; Survey, 2009).

After the 1978 spring season, Coach Williams left the University, and Pat Brett was hired for the dual roles of coaching both field hockey and track and field. Under Brett’s guidance, the 1979 Falcons continued their winning ways, placing second in the All-Ohio Indoor and tying for first in the Mid-American Outdoor Invitational. It was a record-breaking year for the BG tracksters as 8 athletes set 10 new school records in track events and 5 new records in field events (1980 Media Guide).
In 1980, the Falcons came in second to Ohio State in the All-Ohio indoor and outdoor meets. Stephanie Eaton was state champion in both the indoor and outdoor 800 meter run, and Dodson was state champion in the indoor 5000 meters. The Falcons set 15 new school records in indoor track, 1 in indoor field, and 5 in outdoor track (1982 Media Guide). As Brett looked forward to the 1981 season, she predicted, “We should be a strong team all-around… If we stay healthy and keep developing our depth, we could be very good” (1981 Media Guide).

As it turned out, Brett’s prediction was a bit of an understatement as 1981 was truly a banner year for the Falcon cinderwomen. They came in second at the indoor and the outdoor All-Ohio Championships and at the MAIAW Regional and finished first in the inaugural Mid-American Conference Outdoor Women’s Track and Field Championship. In addition to the historic team triumph in the MAC, Kim Jamison (100 meters, 200 meters) and the 400-meter relay team of Kelly Jamison, Guilford, Diana Jennings, and Kim Jamison came home with MAC championships (BG News, May 19, 1981). Coach Brett noted that the MAC victory was a true team effort: “We may win this meet again, but it will never be this exciting. In this case, it’s hard to single out people who did well. The team pulled together, which is what we needed.” In what she called “the icing on the cake,” Brett’s fellow coaches named her the first-ever women’s track and field MAC Coach of the Year. “I was recognized because of what my team did,” said Brett. “I had the team of the year, so I was named coach of the year” (BG News, May 19, 1981, p. 8).

In addition to sending Kim Jamison (200-meter dash) to the outdoor AIAW meet and the 880 relay team of Sheila Gibson, Guilford, Kelly Jamison, and Kim Jamison to the AIAW indoor meet, the 1981 team set 18 new school records in indoor track events, 2 new records in indoor field events, 13 in outdoor track, and 5 in outdoor field events (1982 Media Guide).

At the All-Ohio meet in 1982, the Falcons placed third while garnering five first place finishes: Wendy Wumer, Diana Brumbaugh, LaDiedra Ballard, and Jennings (medley relay); Corinne Arnold, Pat Panchak, Robin Reckard, and Laura Murphy (3200 meter relay); Joy Clawson (400 meter hurdles); Murphy (1500 meters); and JoAnn Lanciaux (5000 meters) (BG News, April 20, 1982).

In the 1982 MAC outdoor meet, the Falcons scored more points than they had scored in the same meet in 1981 but this time, it was good enough for only second place. As usual, though, BG boasted several MAC champions: Ballard (400 meters); Clawson (400-meter hurdles); Murphy (1500 meters); the 1600-meter relay team of Ballard, Wumer, Clawson, and Jennings; and the
3200-meter relay team of Debby Chapin, Terri Thomas, Clawson, and Murphy (BG NEWS, May 18, 1982; 1985 MEDIA GUIDE; 2009 MEDIA GUIDE). Indoors, the Falcons won the 1982 MAC Invitational, and several cinderwomen came home with individual titles: Ballard (400 meters), Clawson (600 meters), Murphy (1500 meters, 1000 meters), Lanciaux (3000 meters), and the 1600-meter relay team of Ballard, Wumer, Clawson, and Jennings (BG NEWS, March 2, 1982; meet record, courtesy of Nancy Boudreau). The Falcons’ stellar performance prompted Coach Brett to write the following message at the end of the official meet record:

FANTASTIC!! One of the most incredible team and individual performances for Bowling Green. Eleven school records and 26 personal bests! Congratulations and thank you for a super effort—you are indeed champions!

The 1982 season was the last for BG women’s and men’s indoor track for several years, as budget cuts resulted in the athletics department dropping both teams (BG NEWS, February 26, 1982). Shortly thereafter, Nancy Shafer [Boudreau], a former member of the United States Track and Field team who had been coaching the women distance runners, started an AAU track team called the Northwest Ohio Track Club. For several years, some of the BG track athletes participated with this club during the months leading up to the outdoor season (N. Boudreau, 2010).

The 1982 season also saw the Bowling Green Invitational renamed in honor of Jane Herrmann, a 1978-1981 team member who had been killed in a car-train accident in December 1981, six days before she was to graduate. Herrmann, who was deaf, had competed in the discus and javelin at the Deaf Olympics (BG NEWS, May 7, 1982). At some point in later years, however, the Jane Herrmann Invitational reverted to its original name, the Bowling Green Invitational. As Ann Bowers was conducting research for this book, she read a 1982 BG News story about the Jane Herrmann Invitational and inquired as to why the event was no longer named for Herrmann. When Cami Wells, current BGSU women’s and men’s track and field/cross country coach, heard about this situation, she immediately established the Jane Herrmann Invitational as an annual event (BG NEWS, February 11, 2009).

Pat Brett continued as head track and field coach and coordinator of special events in the athletics department until 1984, when she left BGSU for a career in the business world.
Volleyball was among the very first sports that women played at BG. In 1923, it was offered through the physical education program and by 1928, it was included in WAA intramural programming. Over the years, volleyball became one of the most popular sports at the college and, for several decades, play days and sports days gave hundreds of women opportunities to compete against other colleges and universities.

In 1965, Dorothy Luedtke organized and coached an intercollegiate volleyball team (KEY, 1965). As with many other women’s sports, an “A” team and a “B” team were formed, and they soon were recognized as varsity and junior varsity squads, respectively. Luedtke’s teams went undefeated over the next two years.

When Luedtke returned to full-time teaching in 1967, Ina Temple assumed the volleyball coaching responsibilities. In reminiscing about her coaching days, Temple recalled the refreshments that always followed the competitions, the prohibition on overnight travel and, quite vividly, the need for students to drive. In 2009, she recounted a rather harrowing incident that occurred as the team embarked on a trip to Baldwin-Wallace: “A snow storm started, and the student driver slid off a ramp in Maumee.” Although Temple and her team returned safely to BG and eventually rescheduled the match, her memory of the nerve-wracking event had not faded over the years.

In 1971, Pat Peterson took the helm of the volleyball team, and many years later, she recalled what coaching was like during that time:
A significant number tried out, and I had to have cuts...We had a varsity and a junior varsity team, so we carried 24 women on those teams, 12 per team...It was prestigious for the women to be on the team. (Interview, 2001)

Peterson went on to recall her good fortune in having the assistance of Doug Beal, a five-time NCAA All-American from Ohio State who was attending graduate school at BG:

Doug Beal started a men's volleyball club here, and he helped me a lot with my coaching...Doug later went on to become the men's U.S. Olympic coach and won the gold medal in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games. There's a tie to Bowling Green and a piece of history that people may not realize. (Interview, 2001)

Over the course of her nine-year volleyball coaching career, Peterson's teams established an excellent record as they competed against schools such as Michigan State, Miami, Wright State, Ohio University, Ohio State, Cleveland State, Defiance, Kent, Ashland, Dayton, Cincinnati, Wooster, Cedarville, Ohio Northern, Wittenberg, Mount St. Joseph, and Capital. The Falcon spikers performed consistently well in invitational and the Ohio Association of Intercollegiate Sports for Women (OAISW) tournaments, in which all nine teams reached either the quarterfinals or semifinals. Peterson's record suggests that her players responded well to her coaching philosophy:

Our goals in volleyball are to establish pride in what we are doing while working for team unity and closeness and to work toward the self-development of the student-athlete. Winning is a valuable by-product of this condition. (Media Guide, 1976)

As the 1976 season opened, Peterson was confident in her players, noting, "One outstanding trait of this year's squad is its depth. I have 12 people who can enter a game at any time and do the job well" (BG News, Oct. 7, 1976, p. 7). The strength of the competition proved challenging for the 1976 squad, though, and the Falcons recorded a disappointing fifth place tie with Wright State in the OAISW tournament. The season did, however, provide a memorable moment for senior co-captain Gretchen Weitbrecht:
I was coming out of the back row as a setter and the ball was over-passed. Cincinnati had a potential Olympian hitter who unloaded on the ball. I took the hit square in the head, knocked me out cold...never been hit that hard in my life! (Spring, 2009)

The 1976 season was also memorable from a historical perspective. It was the first year that BG offered athletics grants-in-aid to female athletes. Many years later, Beth Basil still remembered the emotions those grants evoked in her:

It was a difficult transition my senior year on the volleyball team when we welcomed our first freshman scholarship recipients to the squad. These were athletes who were taking positions that the ‘veterans,’ including myself, thought we might have earned. When I look back on that year, I am grateful that I played a lesser role. I wish I had realized then what a huge event it was to have scholarship players on our team and how it would change the world of women’s athletics forever. (May, 2005)

In 1977, everything jelled for the Falcons netters, as they had an 18-win season, the first of two such seasons in a row. Eleven of the wins were consecutive, constituting the longest overall winning streak in recorded BG volleyball history. The streak was tied by Denise Van De Walle’s 1991 squad but was not surpassed until 2006, when Van De Walle recorded 17 victories in a row (Media Guide, 2009).
Another high point of the 1977 season was the Falcons’ defeat of Michigan State, the reigning Big Ten champ. Although BG lost the first game by a score of 5-15, they came back to win the match. Peterson was proud of her players, noting: “That's a mark of a good competitor—to be beat that badly and come back to win two straight games” (BG News, Sept. 10, 1977, p. 6). The Falcons capped off the 1977 season by again making it to the quarterfinals of the OAISW.

After reaching the OAISW quarterfinals for each of the previous seven years, the 1978 Falcon netters recorded their best-ever OAISW performance, defeating top seed Miami and finishing in fourth place. Coach Peterson characterized the win over Miami as “the highlight of the tournament” for BG (BG News, Nov. 14, 1978, p. 6). The Falcons finished the season with a 18-win record (1979 Media Guide).
1979 KEY

1980 KEY
After the 1979 season, in which the Falcons again took fourth place in the OAISW tournament, Peterson returned to full-time teaching, leaving behind a 95-79-3 record (BG News, May 15, 1980). She relinquished the volleyball team to Sandy Haines, a standout player whom Peterson had coached only a few years earlier. Haines said, “This job was an ideal situation for me. I was fortunate the job opened and fortunate that I got it. I respect Pat Peterson very much. I would like to do as much for my athletes as she did for me” (BG News, Oct. 2, 1980, p.9). Starting the 1980 season, Haines noted: “The kids on the team are very coachable…. Technically, as far as starting positions go, they’re all freshmen. I expect them to challenge each other for starting positions” (BG News, Sept. 21, 1980, p. 18).

In Haines’ first season, the Falcons played 32 matches, the most ever for a BG volleyball team. The win/loss record was disappointing, however, and with only two returning seniors, 1981 was destined to be a rebuilding year. The Falcons were dissatisfied with their performance in the inaugural MAC volleyball tournament but took second place in prestigious invitationals at Cleveland State and the University of Louisville. These high points at the end of the 1981 season brightened the netters’ outlook for 1982, as eight letter winners were scheduled to return (BG News, August 29, 1982).

Haines’ final season opened with about 300 enthusiastic fans loudly encouraging the Falcons in a home game against Kent State (Key, 1983). The support must have helped, as the 1982 Falcons captured second place in the BG Invitational and fourth place in invitationals at Cleveland State and Eastern Michigan. BG also qualified for the MAC Championship, where Falcon Renee Manwaring was selected for the all-conference team (2009 Media Guide). In 1983 Haines left the University to pursue a career in the financial industry.

Personal growth and social development have always been among the goals of BG’s athletics programs for women. Jenny Uhl, who played volleyball under the leadership of both Pat Peterson and Sandy Haines, expressed how her volleyball experience helped her fulfill those goals: "Sports were instrumental in my development in that they gave me confidence, self-esteem, and the ability to learn how to work with others. The volleyball team at BG also created my friends for life" (Spring, 2009).