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Cooperstown Next Female Target?

THIS summer the board of directors of Little League baseball caved in to demands that girls be allowed to play on boys teams. That victory may have done more for women's liberation than anything else that has happened lately. It had been wavering and wobbling.

Now, one of the leaders in the Mothers' March on Little League is waving the banner: "Today the Little League, tomorrow Cooperstown!" Women already participate in professional wrestling, track, golf and tennis, so what's to keep them out of professional baseball, football and basketball? Looks like a whole new ball game!

The 52-word Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) that was approved in Congress in 1972 has not been doing too well. It still needs ratification by five more states. Only three of the 11 that considered it this year approved ERA, while two retracted previous ratification.

The president of the Men's Rights Association claims that women have been a favored, pampered class in America. He says that they want to abolish economic preferences for men, but that they do not want to accept the economic responsibilities.

Groups of women who do not want to be liberated lest they give up some of their privileges also are organizing to fight ERA. The Stop-ERA Committee calls ERA the "Extra Responsibilities Amendment". Another group is called "Happiness of Womanhood", apparently referring to the status quo, which they want to maintain.

However, the federal government isn't waiting for ERA to be ratified

before sticking its bureaucratic nose into the public schools on this matter, too. HEW officials have proposed a whole battery of new regulations aimed at ending alleged sex discrimination in schools from kindergarten through university.

The proposal bars discrimination in admissions to public and private institutions, but does not stop there. It gets involved in such fundamental educational matters as athletic teams, physical education and sex education right away.

Demands are heard for qualified women to be allowed to play on any school athletic team, previously all-male territory, but the libbers also want schools to maintain separate women's teams in most sports.

The proposal intends to end segregation by sexes in all classes, or nearly all. The bureaucratic pedologists don't want anything like boys versus girls spelling matches, or other rivalry that might make boys feel

superior to girls, if they won.

The rules would end all-girl home economics classes, even if it became necessary to draft boy volunteers. All-boy shop classes would be outlawed, too. Co-ed physical education classes seem to be a certainty, but consideration is being given to allowing sex education to be taught in separate groups. So far, the rules would also permit the use of separate boy and girl restrooms.

Use of quotas for boys and girls would be barred in school activities, but chances are the youngsters will always figure out ways to match up one and one for social occasions. They always have.

The idea of desegregating the sexes could be an advantage to the older generation, who have experienced difficulty in telling whether long-haired, blue-jeaned individuals are male or female. Under the proposed rules, it might not make any difference!