In April 1982 an independent commission was established by the National Collegiate Athletic Association to study college athletics. Its purpose was to concentrate on athletic problems and concerns in Higher Education. A significant section of that report focused on the role of intercollegiate athletics at an educational institution with emphasis on the link that has existed between amateur athletics and higher education during the past century. In referring to this link, the committee declared:

"...one could search at length for a theoretical justification for this linkage, but the exercise is meaningless. The fact is that intercollegiate athletics today is firmly established as part of the fabric of our education system, and it will continue to be in the future. The reason for this is clear. Despite all of the problems that have been associated with college athletic programs, their contributions to the overall well-being of higher education have outweighed their negative aspects."

I am sure each of us agree with the report when it states, "the primary function of any educational institution is to educate its constituency." However, it further concludes that "in our society, colleges and universities also serve functions that are ancillary to their basic mission" and that these functions are enormously important to those who share in them. For example, some of these ancillary functions are public service; developing and sustaining an interest in the fine arts; and intercollegiate athletic programs. The point is made that in many cases these programs are often the most visible and serve as effective public relations vehicles for the institution.

Educational institutions benefit from the athletic programs they sponsor and Western Kentucky University is no exception. In this report, an attempt is made to highlight and elaborate on some of the benefits associated with intercollegiate athletics at Western.
I. The Western Athlete as a Student

The athlete as a student must be the first consideration. National studies show that thousands of students have been able to pursue college degrees through the vehicles of their athletic skills and athletic grants-in-aid. Many of these students come from families that would not have had the means to finance a college education without assistance, and the athlete in many instances is a first-generation college student. William B. Boyd, former President of Central Michigan University and of the University of Oregon, writing in 1980 for the College Board Review stated that "athletics has been the open door of opportunity for many people in America. It has helped with the provision of upward social mobility for a long time." The Select Committee on Athletics affirms that "without question, intercollegiate athletics has been one of the more effective vehicles for affirmative action in American Society."

The squad lists for the various sports at Western for 1984-85 contain 269 student athletes. An analysis of the educational programs of these students reveal the following information: 51 students majoring in programs in the College of Education; 52 in the College of Business Administration; 40 in Ogden College; and 38 in Potter College. A similar wide-distribution of minors are indicated. Included among the 269 are 92 falling in the undecided or unlisted category, a number not out of proportion considering the fact that there are 112 freshmen on those lists. These figures reveal a relatively even distribution of majors among the colleges substantiating the fact that athletics at Western provide broad-base support to the total educational mission of the University.

In another area of support for the University, we find there are currently 133 recruited walk-on student athletes on campus participating in
various sports and not receiving any aid. The average cost between in-state and out-of-state is $4,311. Thus, you can see that these 133 walk-ons generate some $500,000 to the University. In addition to the walk-ons, there are athletes that receive partial grants that are supplemented by their own funds.

The wide diversity of majors pursued by Western athletes substantiate the view that while a very small percentage of college athletes go to successful careers as professional athletes, much greater numbers have had career opportunities opened to them in other fields of business and professional careers from which their educational experience, including participation in athletics, prepared them.

The preparation for success gained by the student athlete because of the competitive nature of the sport cannot be measured, but the benefits to the individual and the gains to society from this part of the educational process must be positive. Michener in *Sports in America* states that "sports is a major determinant of our national character and cultural heritage." William Boyd writing in *The College Board Review* states that athletics has value for individuals because "it is an educative force." He feels that maturation or personal growth is a prime goal of education and that "...the striving for excellence, which at least on a college campus seems to occur more often in athletics and in the school of music than almost anywhere else, bring self-knowledge and self-esteem which do make significant contributions to maturation..."

In addition, he feels that discipline, concentration, cooperation, self-restraint and sacrifice are traits enhancing maturity that are taught through intercollegiate athletics.
The Benefits of Athletics at Western as a Common Focal Point for Students

A. The coaching staff at Western conducts sports camps on campus each summer. During the summer of 1984, these camps brought 1,786 boys and girls, ages 10 through 15, to the campus. This is highly beneficial for future student recruitment.

B. The KHSAA Girls' State Tournament to be played in Diddle Arena in March will draw 30,000 visitors in a four-day period. Many of this group will be high school students—not just athletes—but students making decisions about their college future.

C. Western Kentucky University's facilities have been used for many years to serve as host to the 14th District and 4th Regional High School Tournament attracting thousands of prospective students to the campus along with their parents and hundreds of fans from the surrounding area.

D. During the 1983-84 football and basketball seasons, over $117,000 worth of complimentary tickets were issued. Many of these were issued for students participating in such events as College Awareness Days, science fairs, and other special events related to student recruitment. Complimentary tickets are also issued for many public-service functions of the University.

E. The marching band, cheerleaders, student athletic trainers, mascots, student sports information interns, student sports writers, student sports photographers, student radio sports announcers, and student sports produced television programs are direct spin-offs of athletic programs. Some of these would not exist if it were not for athletics.
F. Athletics provide a focal point for many student activities related to student social life such as Homecoming festivities and special student functions. Boyd declares that "every society requires festivals" and that athletics provide "a principal celebration of life" on a college campus.

G. The significance given to athletics at Western by the student publications is demonstrated by the following:

1. The university newspaper, the College Heights Herald devotes approximately 25 percent of each edition to University athletic news. This can be documented in terms of pages in the paper.

2. The University yearbook, the Talisman has been a "showcase" for Western athletics. Examples of this are:
   - 1980 Talisman -- 69 pages out of 439 covers athletics
   - 1981 Talisman -- 53 pages out of 416 covers athletics
   - 1982 Talisman -- 69 pages out of 399 covers athletics

III. Benefits to Western Students for Careers in Sports-Related Enterprises

A. Sports Writing and Photo Experience

   The College Heights Herald attempts to cover the entire campus community which includes comprehensive coverage of athletics at Western. The experience of covering a game in Richmond on Monday night, writing the story and calling it back to Bowling Green for Tuesday's Herald has been an invaluable experience for Western's sports writers over the years. Getting a story and a picture of Monday night's game in the Tuesday's Herald give reporters, editors, and photographers exposure to the demands they will face when they go to work on a newspaper.
a. Herald sports editors and writers now working with newspapers or sports-related enterprises:

**Al Stilley**
former with the *Nashville Banner*, now publicity director for Speedrome in Indianapolis.

**Chip Draper**
sports writer for *Buffalo Evening News*.

**Tom Patterson**
former with *The Courier-Journal*, executive sports editor; formerly with *The Atlanta Constitution*, executive sports editor; now metropolitan editor of *The Denver Post*.

**Jerry Potter**
formerly *Nashville Banner*; now a sports writer for *USA Today* in Washington D.C.

**Verenda Smith**
a former sports writer *Clarion-Ledger* and *USA Today*.

**Don Collins**
former sports editor *Henderson Gleaner*, now editor of *Across the USA Today* in sports for *USA Today* in Washington.

**Jim Grove**
former sports writer at *Jackson Daily News*, formerly at *Dallas Times-Herald*, now assistant sports editor of the *Orlando Sentinel*.

**Bryan Armstrong**
formerly a copy editor at the *Kansas City Star*, now copy editor at *Cincinnati Enquirer*.
Don White now assistant sports editor of Miami Herald.
Monte Young reporter Times-Dispatch, Richmond, VA.
Kevin Stewart sports writer Sun Democrat, Paducah.
Tommy George sports writer Detroit Free Press.
Margaret Shirley sports copy editor Dallas Times-Herald.
Jim Pickens, Jr. sports editor, Madisonville Messenger.
Tom Wallace sports editor, Henderson Gleaner.

b. Photographers:
Paul Schuhmann The Courier-Journal.
David Sutherland Syracuse University.
Mike Morse Western Kentucky University.
George Wedding San Jose Mercury-News.
Scott Applewhite Associated Press, Washington, D.C.
Stevie Benson WTVF, Nashville.
David Frank Associated Press, New York City.
Lewis Gardner Lexington, TV Photographer.
Ron Hoskins Orlando, FL, magazine photographer.
Mark Lyons Western Kentucky University.
Lynn Wright WBKO-TV, Bowling Green.
Scott Robinson Jacksonville Journal.
Ricky Rogers Nashville Banner.
Judy Watson Orlando Sentinel.
Todd Buchanan Orange County (CA) Register.
Kim Kolarik Louisville Times.
Jim Gensheimer San Jose Mercury-News.
c. Sports Information Directors or Related Work:

Bob Cefalo  associate sports information director, Central Florida.

Skip Church  sports director - television station, Raleigh, N.C.

Lisa Grider  assistant sports information director, Texas Christian University.

Jamie Kimbrough  associate sports information director, South Carolina.

Quenta Payton  public relations, Gainsville, Florida; formerly assistant sports information director - University of Florida.

Sally Raque  assistant sports information director, University of Florida.

Rick Redding  assistant sports information director, University of Tennessee.

Kerry Tharp  assistant sports information director, University of Oklahoma.

Paul Just  sports information director, WKU.

Ray Henderson, National Park Service.

c. Athletic Trainers:

In 1969 Western's Training Department was created, and 81 students have been chosen to work in the internship program. As of January, 1985, ten Western Kentucky University graduates have become certified trainers. They are as follows:
Nelson Pruett  Former Head Athletic Trainer at Berkner High School in Richardson, Texas.

Don Crowder  Presently the Head Athletic Trainer at the University of Evansville.

Bill Edwards  Presently the Head Athletic Trainer at Western Kentucky University

Pam Herriford  Former Assistant Athletic Trainer and present coordinator of Women's Athletics at Western Kentucky University.

Fred Cantler  Presently the Head Athletic Trainer at Western Carolina University.

Arthur McGuffin  Presently the Athletic Trainer at Covington Holmes High School.

Mark Bailey  Former Athletic Trainer at Campbell County High School, KY. Presently works as a Paramedic.

Larry Starnes  Presently the Athletic Trainer at Edmonson County High School.

Dean Geary  Former Graduate Assistant Athletic Trainer at the University of Kentucky.

David Ralston  Presently a Graduate Athletic Trainer at the University of Michigan.

Other athletic training interns from Western Kentucky University have stayed in health-related areas of paramedics, emergency medical service directors, nursing, physical therapy school and dentistry.
IV. Benefits to Western Kentucky University from Athletics Resulting from Favorable Public Exposure and Student Recognition

There is an old cliche that an athletic program is the window of the University. Western's history and tradition substantiates this statement.

A. Sun Belt Networks, ESPN and CBS

During the 1983-84 basketball season Western Kentucky University had exposure to over 150 million homes on the Sun Belt Network, ESPN and CBS--estimated value of media exposure for athletics for 1983-84 is over 50 million dollars. TV stations for Sun Belt Conference Network--Birmingham, Charleston, Fayetteville, Greensboro, Winston/Salem, Louisville, Memphis, Miami, Ocala, Bowling Green, Charlotte, Jacksonville, Mobile, Nashville, Norfolk, Richmond, Tampa, Atlanta, Raleigh/Durham, Roanake.

The game on January 19, 1985 at Diddle Arena between WKU - UAB was regionally televised on CBS with the final six minutes of game being carried nationally.

B. Western Kentucky University Radio-Network

The 1984-85 Western Kentucky University Radio Network was carried by six stations in football, and men's basketball is being carried by 14 stations. D98 FM originates all home and away games for women's basketball.

C. Western Kentucky University Television Sports Network

The following statement by Dr. Charles M. Anderson, Associate Dean of Academic Services and Director of Media Services, Western Kentucky University, emphasizes the significance of athletics and media coverage as they relate to higher education and Western. Dr. Anderson states:
"We have reached our highest level of utilization of sports telecasts produced by the Educational Television area with a total of ten cable systems and two television stations. This access to 346,000 homes in Kentucky is made possible by the interest in Western basketball and football. With this access we produce for each game a video feature focusing on some aspect of the Western academic community and provide announcements regarding various events. I believe this represents an important means of raising the general population's awareness of the University and their appreciation of higher education. The access to these television outlets paved by athletics has now been extended to educational programs we produce for statewide distribution.

With the achievement of this high penetration of television homes and substantial reach of the Hilltopper Radio Network, we all need to redouble our efforts to transmit academic messages and values via the athletic medium. I am further convinced that the higher education community as a whole could better utilize athletic telecasts to communicate the nature and importance of higher education."

The cable systems and stations listed by Anderson are as follows:

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<tr>
<th>City</th>
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<th>Homes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Covington</td>
<td>Storer Cable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabethtown</td>
<td>Channel 25</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson</td>
<td>Horizon Communications</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopkinsville</td>
<td>W43AG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paducah</td>
<td>Comcast Cable (Paducah</td>
<td>14,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherdsville</td>
<td>BCTV</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. Attendance at Athletic Events

Western Kentucky University's football and men's basketball team played before 208,000 spectators in 1983-84 season. The WKU women's basketball team ranked 4th in the nation in attendance for the 1983-84 season.

The average football attendance per game for 1984 was:

NCAA Division I-AA----------------------10,899
Western Kentucky University (record 2-9-0)--11,700
Eastern Kentucky University (record 8-4) ---11,229
Murray State University (record 9-2)------- 7,514
Morehead State University(record 2-9-0)---- 4,917

E. Newspaper Coverage

There is no way to measure the actual value received from coverage by the major metro newspapers. Western receives regular coverage from the major metro newspapers and from many local area weekly papers.

F. Mascot Recognition

The athletic program has provided the vehicle for the institution to receive much publicity concerning awards received by its mascot. Big Red is recognized as one of America's best mascots and has been the recipient of $15,000 in gifts from Pepsi during the past five years.

G. Recognition Resulting from Student Athlete Achievements

1. Mark Fatkin--named a 1984 Football Academic All-American and was selected the Kentucky College Achiever of the Year. He was listed among 1984's achievers in USA Today.
2. David Murphy--second place finish in New York Marathon. ABC national television exposure, 8 to 10 separate references to WKU.

3. Ashley Johnson - ESPN Coverage of the Pro-Comfort Final in Hawaii with extensive air time devoted to Johnson. Regional television coverage and extensive newspaper coverage of Johnson's victory in the Bix 7-Miler in Moline, Illinois. National Television Sports Programs, USA Today, and local newspaper coverage given Johnson in the Peachtree Road Race, Atlanta, Georgia.

4. Nick Rose--leading the 10,000 meter run during the middle stages of the Olympic event. Covered by National Television of the Games 1984.

V. Benefits Resulting from Community and Alumni Support because of Athletics

A. Hilltopper Hundred Club

During the past three years the Hundred Club has made an all-out effort to saturate in and around Bowling Green the "awareness factor." This has been done through membership drives, monthly luncheons, and through fund-raising efforts by individual sports directed by the Hundred Club. The net result, as far as individual participation is concerned, shows an increase in membership from 365 to over 800, which translates in a budget increase from $135,000 to $480,000.

Several of the individual sports have established first-class fund raising events that bring in money to their respective sports.
The main fund-raising event of the year has become the Hilltopper Hundred Club auction. In three years, it has grown from $12,000 to $34,000 to the 1984 total of $53,000.

Currently the endowed athletic scholarship program has 13 participants at $35,000 per scholarship. This type of financing is significant to the future of athletics at Western.

The Hundred Club contributions are the only funds Western's athletic coaches have available for student-athletic recruitment. In essence, this support becomes the life blood of Western's athletics.

B. Alumni

The closest tie that most alumni have with the University after graduation is through athletics, whether it be by actual attendance at the event, reading about it in the newspaper, seeing it on television, or hearing about it on the radio.

In a letter to Western's sports information director, Telesports, Inc. - the computer sportswire of Dallas, Texas, stated "our marketing and research clearly indicates that Western Kentucky University has alumnae and fans located from coast to coast who are interested in your various athletic programs." They concluded by requesting "any and all information regarding Western's athletic programs." Many alumni club meetings are scheduled around athletic contacts both at home and on the road.

William B. Boyd, writing in the College Board Review, maintains that athletics has both internal and external values for an institution. He emphasizes that it can be a binding force that
provides a sense of community and that it instills pride and helps morale. This accurately describes the attitudes of Western's alumni toward the University's athletic programs.

C. The Community

The link between Western and the local community is manifested in many ways. Demonstrated by many special events scheduled in Western's facilities. Western's coaches are called on almost daily to speak to civic groups and to high school athletic banquets.

The importance of Western's athletics to the community can best be summarized by a quote from a letter dated January 11, 1985 to Western's Athletic Director from the Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Bowling Green-Warren County Chamber of Commerce when he stated:

"True Case: Today the vice president of a large up-east development firm was in my office discussing his firm's possible multi-million dollar investment in our city's economy. His opening remarks were "Tell me all about Bowling Green. All I know is that Western Kentucky University is located here and you usually have a hell'va basketball team!"

The chamber leader concluded by stating that not only was Western Kentucky University a very important factor in Bowling Green's efforts to attract new business and industry "but so was athletics." He further stated that "athletics is a large part of the high quality of life we enjoy in Bowling Green:" and that athletics sure help to "sell this area."
In conclusion, it is obvious that Western Kentucky University athletics are experiencing a variety of concerns and challenges at this time. It is also obvious from the information in this report that there is much good coming from intercollegiate athletics at Western Kentucky University. Athletics and sports are an integral part of this university and of our society. Probably a fitting conclusion to this report comes from a statement made by a member of the Western University Athletic Committee who declared, "The traditions and history of athletics at this University are ingrained in success and advancement, not mediocrity and despair. It is time to readjust and move forward in a positive, productive, and committed manner."