

And Now It's Athletic Championships the Ladies Want!

"Over the top" for a record-breaking high jump at the recent try-outs held at Mamaroneck, N. Y., to pick girls to represent America at the Women's Olympic games in Paris this summer

For the First Time in the World's History Girls and Women to Compete on Equal Terms With Men in All the Most Difficult Tests of Strength, Endurance and Skill



The high jumper shown above is Elizabeth Stine, Leonia, N. J., high school girl, who is also a great sprinter and broad jumper



Bounding from the ground and kicking her head with her feet is the regular morning exercise of Phoebe Brown, a New York girl athlete

WITHIN just the last few years events have come crowding thick and fast, signaling the progress of woman in many different fields of life. Through the centuries she has been advancing from the lowly state when she was held as a slave and a chattel, but it had been slow work until lately, when her victories began to come with a rush.

She won the vote. She came to stand by the side of man in the business world. Admissions of equality became matters of frequency.

And now it is being granted that she has successfully invaded a field that always has been considered peculiarly man's, the field of the display of his greater strength—the field of athletics.

And it is not alone conceded that her efforts in sports are creditable for their own sake, but it is even being recognized that in some trials of strength and skill she must be regarded as a serious competitor against man.

That is what is signified by the decision of the Amateur Athletic Union, the nation-wide A. A. U., to admit women to competition in its track and field events.

It seems all to have taken place in such a brief span. In a matter of a few years women almost have made up the terrific handicap of centuries of time. Not long ago the athletic girl was pictured holding a croquet mallet, or perhaps if she were especially strenuous she might be observed moving decorously across the tennis court.

Now there is scarcely any department of sport in which women do not engage. And she may excel in all except those in which sheer strength is the predominating element.

The action of the A. A. U. was not a matter of chivalry. For that the organization which presides over the efforts of some 170,000 athletes throughout the United States has no place. With the A. A. U. it is a case of may the best man win! And the union has come to see that nowadays this slogan must be amended to read "May the best man or woman win!"

The number of women athletes has grown to such large proportions and their performances had become so notable that the A. A. U. realized it must find a place in its ranks for women or they would find some other place for themselves. A rival organization would not be desirable, so women's events will be on the A. A. U. programs and records may be hung up that may challenge the marks set by men.

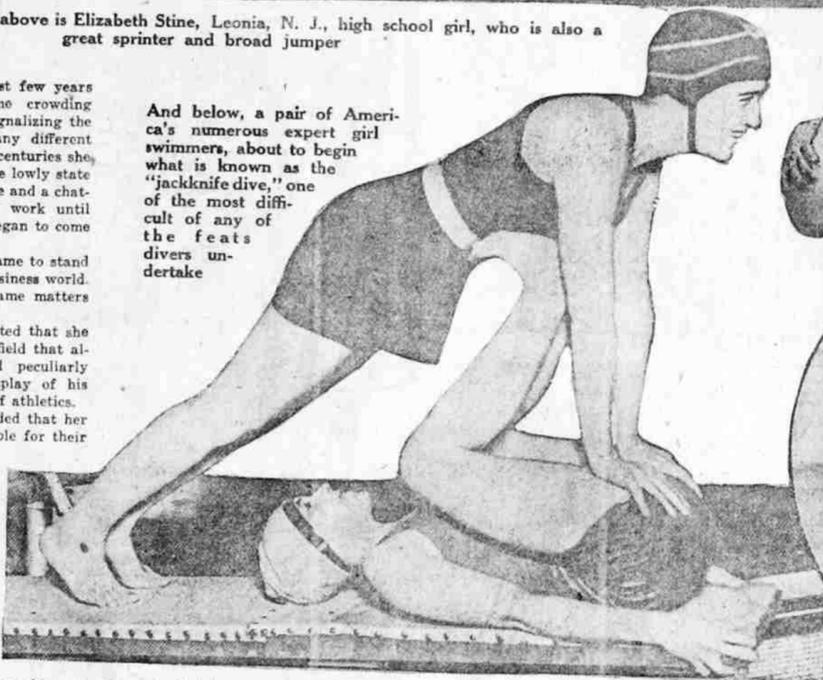
The writing on the wall has been seen in such events in the sporting world as these:

It was recently decided that at the Olympic games at Amsterdam in 1928 women will be scheduled in track and field athletics—the first time such a thing has occurred in the history of sport.

France, England and other European countries have regular athletic competitions for women. There was a marathon race in Paris last summer in which 100 women ran.

It may easily be seen what effect the

And below, a pair of America's numerous expert swimmers, about to begin what is known as the "jackknife dive," one of the most difficult of any of the feats divers undertake



Olympic decision and the fact of the great state of advancement of foreign women athletes had on our own women and girls engaging in sports. There has been a marked stimulation of interest in their efforts, of which the A. A. U. recognition is only one sign. And American women themselves are determined to show that they will be ready to participate in 1928, and that they will be able to give a good account of themselves in competition with the women of France, England, Belgium, Germany and Scandinavia.

So we are now beginning to see in America that same encouragement which the athletic unions have given women abroad. And the suggestion has been made that the International Amateur Athletic Federation assume control of world athletics for women, just as it has put the stamp of its standardization on the competitions of men athletes.

The field for women in sports has widened out rapidly since 1914, when the A. A. U. took over control of their swimming events. That was brought about by the brilliant performances of such swimmers as Ethelda Bleibrey, Charlotte Boyle, Eileen Kiffin, Helen Wainwright and others.

Their names and faces have become familiar to the sporting public. They have taken their places with the women golfers, tennis players and others on the hitherto entirely masculine sporting page.

So proficient are the best women swimmers that they must be rated high and close to the fastest men in the water. They may well be proud of some of their records.

The other day Miss Sybil Bauer, of the Illinois Athletic Club, performed what has been called the greatest feat in the history of woman's swimming—clipping 93.5 seconds off her own world's record for the 150-yard back stroke. She also holds the world's records for the 50 and the 100-yard back stroke.

Their natural grace aids women in becoming expert divers. Admitted to equal competition with men in that event, it is believed that they would stand excellent chances of carrying off the honors.

And that is only one of many sports in which the laurels may be said to be resting rather insecurely on man's brow, now that the athletic girl has set out to compete in real earnest.

Besides swimming (long distance included) and diving, women have made great progress in that dexterous sport, javelin throwing. In this country, particularly, there are some splendid horsewomen. Miss Emma Haig, widely known as a Chicago polo player, may be the first girl jockey to ride for a noted stable, whose racers she now is exercising.

Gertrude Eggert, who won an award as the perfect girl in a physical culture contest, enters a novel field for her sex in specializing in wrestling and jiu jitsu, being mistress of many of the tricks and feints of the latter which enable her to cope successfully with superior physical strength. It is by such skill that woman bids fair to become a match for men.

Women's world's records do not stand long nowadays. They are continually being broken and new ones set up. Four were smashed the other day at Mamaroneck, N. Y., where a feminine athletic meet was held to select American representatives for the first international women's field and track meet in Paris,

Miss May Merrilees, one of the cleverest divers among the girl students at the Harvard University Summer School, doing a "double flip" into the Charles River at Cambridge, Mass.



Another view of Elizabeth Stine, the Leonia, N. J., athletic champion, in one of her phenomenal jumps

Miss Gertrude Eggert, a California-born girl, who is famous for her ability as an all-round athlete, as well as for the perfect proportions of her figure



set for August. More than 100 girls from many sections of the country took part in the meet.

The records were broken in the 440-yard relay, double javelin throw, hop, step and jump and eight-pound shot put. In the 300-meter race a first mark was set of 43.3-5 seconds. The shot was put 35 feet 11 inches, breaking the record of 34 feet 1 3/4 inches.

A feature of the meet was that many of the girls were all-round athletes, at least a third of them entering in seven out of the fourteen events and some winning several places. Such all-round ability is not often found among men.

Entering the field of intercollegiate sport marks another big advance for women in athletics. Some day crowds approaching those that attend the big

football games may be witnessing contests in which girls are participants. The basketball game between the women's colleges of Vassar and Smith, which 2,500 witnessed, was at least a promising start.

Steps have been taken toward the formation of a girls' intercollegiate tennis tournament. If they succeed, the United States Tennis Association will be requested to preside, as it does over the men's tournaments. From mixed doubles it is not a far cry to mixed singles! Some day the United States tennis champion against all comers may be a woman.

It can well be imagined that athletic contests between Radcliffe, Vassar, Wellesley, Smith, and so forth, might produce as keen rivalries as the sports between Yale, Harvard and Princeton

a writer has recently pointed out. Some authorities think that the modern girl is going in too strenuously for athletics. George Chalmers, secretary of the British College of Preceptors, has uttered the warning that medical authorities are coming to believe that women as a sex will no longer exist if they continue in the masculine mode of physical instruction, that their functions of motherhood are being impaired, and in consequence they are giving birth to an emasculated race of men.

In America, however, there is little support for Mr. Chalmers' alarming theory. Most of our medical experts are agreed that American women, as a whole, were never healthier than now, and that this happy condition is largely due to the increased attention they give athletics.

