



Top: MAINTAINING SUITABLE STANDARDS: Clarke Central High School physical education department teacher Kasi Carvell stands in the weight room in the James M. Crawford Memorial Arena. During her CCHS tenure, Carvell has observed inequalities between female and male athletes' facilities. "We've seen a tremendous increase in the last few years in our females participating in sports. So that's great, (and) a lot more involvement in all of our women's sports actually, compared to five years ago, six years ago it's double the number of female athletes that we have, which is great," Carvell said. "I do think there are some issues with our facilities not being equal, between our athletes, and what they have access to, and the suitability, the accessibility, and all of that." Photo by Laura Reichert **Bottom:** SHED OR LOCKER ROOM? The Clarke Central High School softball equipment shed is shown. According to CCHS head varsity softball coach William Lance, CCHS softball players store their bags in one of their equipment sheds and change in the visitor football bathroom due to them not having a designated locker room. "Our sheds leak, so (the athletes) stuff could get rained on, we have to fight that," Lance said. "We want to get this done. It's the right thing. As you know, whether someone says that you (can) have it or not, in my head it's the right thing. The girls need it. The girls deserve it, and I'm gonna do whatever I can to ensure that that happens." Photo by Gretchen Hinger

GAPS BETWEEN GLADS

The continued use of the term "Lady Gladiators" to differentiate between male and female athletics is one of the many divides in CCHS sports.

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Within the athletic programs and facilities at Clarke Central High School, many female student-athletes face gender-based inequalities.

Throughout CCHS's history, the term "Lady Gladiators" has been used to distinguish between male and female athletics. CCHS head swim coach Emily Hulse feels the use of "Lady Glads" in female-only sports creates a division between sports teams.

"(Using 'Lady Glads') goes with the history of our country. Women weren't allowed to do sports and even go to school for so long in our history. That's why women are the 'other' versus (the) standard," Hulse

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CCHS varsity volleyball player Sadie Eubanks, a sophomore, feels that using "Lady Glads" negatively impacts the way female sports are perceived compared to male sports.

"It takes away from what we do. It's like we're not the same Gladiators or we're not in the same student body or category of sports as our male peers. They just get to be Gladiators. They're not male Gladiators," Eubanks said. "It makes male sports the norm, and then we're what has to change."

As someone who has coached for over 35

years, Woodward Academy (College Park, Georgia) former girls track and tennis coach and English department teacher Scott Crook believes it may be difficult for schools to discontinue using 'Lady' to separate teams.

"I think people (and) schools get pretty attached to their mascots. Some mascots you'd have to completely change or give a separate mascot in order to avoid anything that may sound as if it were meaning to be gender-specific," Crook said.

"Lady Gladiators" is one of the most prominent divisions between sports at CCHS, but there are many other divisions and inequalities stemming

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-- KASI CARVELL,
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from this term that involve facilities, such as locker rooms or bathrooms. While CCHS's male-dominated teams have at least three full-sized locker rooms, with football, baseball and basketball all having their own, the 22 volleyball and 23 softball players, who are exclusively girls, have one locker room accessible to them that is shared among all female sports teams. According to CCHS volleyball player Lily Meyers, a senior, the varsity girls volleyball locker room was hard to use and unhygienic.

"We had an issue with a toilet that grew maggots and was unusable that was not cleaned for weeks. We then had an issue with insects and mosquitoes in our locker room that made it difficult to change without getting multiple bug bites every day," Meyers said. "We expressed these concerns and it was not fixed for a long time. We had issues with cleaning and overflowing trash cans because the locker room was not properly taken care of or cleaned as it should have been."

According to CCHS Athletic Director Jon Ward, the lack of clean facilities in the varsity girls locker room has now been resolved.

"To me the issue was that it got to that point in the first place. Neither locker room, the girls and then when we walked through the boys locker room it was not serviced, and we're talking about the two locker rooms on the varsity side main gym, neither had been serviced quite regularly," Ward said. "Thankfully, it was addressed to my knowledge as it should be now. I do think the issue, the volleyball players and coaches and parents were

correct that it should have never got to that point. They had been practicing since summer."

CCHS weightlifting student and soccer player Kenzie Howell, a senior, sees another inequity between CCHS' weightlifting students, as the female students use what was once a coaches bathroom as a locker room compared to the male students using the football locker room.

"It's mostly about how small the space is and how difficult it is to have a lot of girls who need to change in such a small space and stuff like that," Howell said.

"Having to get the door unlocked every day, it's just a constant difficult thing to deal with, especially compared to the guys who just walk in the door."

CCHS head softball coach and former assistant baseball coach William Lance recognizes noticeable differences between the softball and baseball team facilities. While the baseball team has a locker room attached to their dugout, the softball team does not have a locker room immediately available to them.

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be a fieldhouse bathroom for football games, (or) they're having to change in the gym or they're changing inside the school. They're also leaving their equipment in my room because the space is not big enough to store our equipment for softball and their personal stuff," Lance said. "I'm giving up some of my space in my classroom to ensure that their stuff is safe so that we don't have just piles of bags that we have to walk over to get our equipment."

Lance not only believes that the lack of a design-

nated locker room is an inconvenience, but that these differences also create self-doubt within female athletes, impacting team morale.

"The fact that my girls don't have a locker room bothers me. We have to fight that. Coach Ward is working with me to get this done and there's parents fighting for it, so we're attacking the problem, but it's a problem that's gone on for too long, just on the softball side," Lance said. "As far as morale that affects the team, it's gonna affect the players because they're putting their stuff in a small space and it's just not appropriate. If I was a player and I saw this, I'd be like, 'Are we just not good enough?' or, 'Does anyone care?' That doubt creeps into your mind."

The overall attention given to female sports is also a concern among coaches, athletes and teachers at CCHS. With a recent increase in the number of female athletes at CCHS, physical education department chair Kasi Carvell has noticed this lack of facilities for female participants.

"(There's) a lot more involvement in all of our

Below: BASEBALL VERSUS SOFTBALL: The Clarke Central High School baseball field locker room is shown. While the baseball team has a locker room connected to their dugout, the softball team does not, which CCHS head softball coach William Lance sees as a challenge for the team. "Baseball has two sheds like softball does, (but) one got turned into a locker room. (The baseball sheds) are 15 feet longer -- same width but longer, and 15 feet goes a long way when you're talking about storing stuff and being able to move or maneuver around (and) change," Lance said. "I see it every day and I know what heart the (girls) bring to the table on all sides and they give the same that a male sport athlete. Just because they're females, they're not given the same drive, the passion, the work ethic, and not given everything they can (be) given to be successful." Photo by Gretchen Hinger



Above: WEIGHTLIFTING WOES: CCHS weightlifting student Kenzie Howell, a senior, lifts weight in the James M. Crawford Memorial Arena. According to CCHS physical education department teacher Kasi Carvell, CCHS has not provided female students with a permanent full-sized locker room that can be accessed by students during these class periods. "There's a room before (the girls weightlifting locker room), and then a bathroom. (Coaches) have to keep it locked for safety, because it's just attached to a hallway so if people were to just open the door, there are girls changing," Howell said. "So, twice a day sometimes I have to go grab (a coach) to unlock the door before I can even get in, which they understand, but it's still an annoyance and it takes up time." Photo by Lucas Donnelly

women's sports compared to five, six years ago. It's double the number of female athletes that we had, which is great," Carvell said. "I think the school was originally built because we had more males in our sports. Due to the fact we have more female athletes now, I don't think we've caught up to that as far as our facilities."

Howell has dealt with various inequitable locker rooms since her freshman year in weightlifting classes and as a CCHS JV girls soccer team member.

"I have trouble imagining how it got designed that way, like seeing the boys bathroom and then after seeing what we change in every day, it's hard to imagine," Howell said. "They just didn't plan for an actual girls bathroom and weightlifting zone."

According to Ward, CCHS has been notifying the Clarke County School District of these issues. While he does anticipate resolutions, Ward has not seen significant changes or exact plans to address these issues.

"There has been a plan in the district since 2008 informing (the CCSD) that we needed more locker room space for the Crawford Gym weight room facility and our request is to have both a male and female locker room built adjacent to the (James M. Crawford Memo-

rial Arena)," Ward said. "I don't know if it's been a delay, it just hasn't been put on as part of the (Education Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax) projects. That's the means by which the school district builds new facilities and I assume it's one of the upcoming projects. We're working with the school district to expand the equipment room of

(the softball) third-base dugout for a changing area for our girl's softball team."

For the time being, there is not a true female locker room for PE in the James M. Crawford Memorial Arena. However, Carvell has been working with members of the CCSD to resolve these issues.

"(PE students) truly do not have a separate female locker room. There is an area that (CCHS administration) are going to allow them to use, but it needs to be updated, and it has currently not been touched, so we cannot access it right now," Carvell said. "At this point, we are really struggling with our females during the school day, where they're supposed to go for PE classes to change (and) the locker room, bathroom situation."

Eubanks feels that in order to close these gaps, support is going to be the most important thing going forward for female athletics.

"If the administration put our questions and our thoughts higher on their priorities, that would be nice. We got our locker rooms taken care of and now they're on a janitor's schedule," Eubanks said. "I guess they have said reassuring things to us, but I think if they just matched their actions to their words, it would be better off and (it would) support us a little more." **O**

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head varsity softball coach

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