

UNITED

The Rise of Women's Sports & The PR Behind it





2006

2007

2009

2011

2019

2021

2023

2025



Relevancy + Background Information

**Nielsen: 46 Billion
Minutes of
Women's Sports
were Consumed in
2025**

It's not just the games.

Athletes are becoming media personalities, with fanbases, rivalries, and personal stories that bring new audiences and types of fans into the sport.

For communicators, that's the real story.



By The Numbers:

- Olympics (Women's Hockey): **5.3M avg / 7.7M peak** — most-watched ever
- Winter Olympics coverage: **26.7M avg** — best weekday since 2014
- WNBA 2025: **1.3M avg** (regular season) | **220M** hours consumed (+16% YoY)
- NCAA Women's Basketball: 280K avg — **highest since 2008**; multiple 1M+ games
- Women's College Softball World Series: Finals: **2.2M avg** — **most-watched ever**
- Volleyball Tournament: **666K avg** (+13% YoY)
- Little League Softball: **1.4M** — record (+66%)
- Women's Tennis: US Open Final **2.4M** (+50% YoY)
- National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) 2025: **+61% viewership growth** | Championship 1.18M (record)
- Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) 2026: **First-ever full live coverage of every event**



Rivalries Create Attention

Caitlin Clark vs. Angel Reese

Caitlin Clark:

- Iowa Hawkeye / Indiana Fever, the “face of women’s basketball”
- Record-breaking NCAA and WNBA scorer, **MASSIVE** media pull.

Angel Reese:

- LSU Tiger / Atlanta Dream
- Outspoken, confident, built a **rival fanbase against Clark**

“Clark vs. Reese games drew TV ratings not seen in women’s basketball in decades.”



Fans Connect With Athletes As People

Caitlin Clark

WNBA

3.7M

Instagram followers



Simone Biles

Gymnastics

7.1M

Instagram followers



Alex Morgan

Soccer

10M

Instagram followers



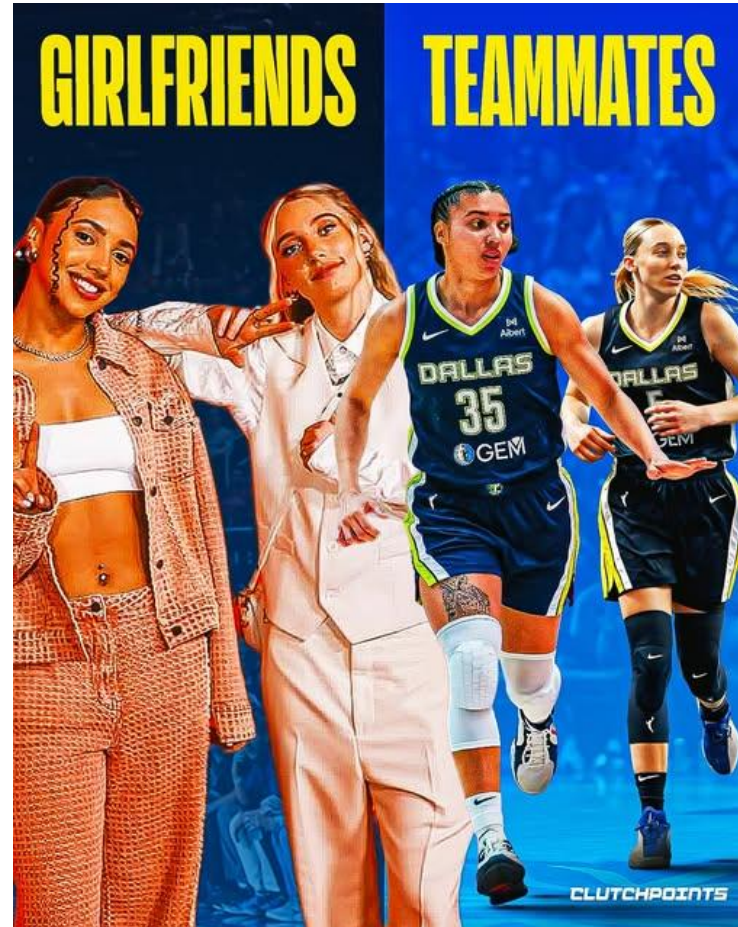
Fans Connect With Athletes As People (cont.)

Paige Bueckers

UConn star, 2025 #1 WNBA Draft Pick. Her story goes beyond the court:

- **Best friends since HS with NBA star Jalen Suggs**
 - Her network spans both leagues, creating more fan opportunities outside women's basketball
- **Dating Azzi Fudd**
 - Fellow top basketball star
 - UConn AND WNBA teammate
 - Relationship became a media story and caught major fan support

The personal = the PR.



Attention Turns Into Investment

Brand Sponsorships

- Nike: “Everyone Watches Women’s Sports” Campaign
- Signed Clark, Biles, Morgan
- Brand following audience attention into women’s sports



New WNBA Teams

- 2026 Expansion: added Toronto Tempo and Portland Fire
- 2025 Expansion: added Golden State Valkyries
- Future plans to expand to Cleveland, Detroit, Philadelphia, and beyond
- New markets, more media opportunities



United Airlines Connection

- Official airline of Chicago Sky! (and additional WNBA teams including the new Valkyries)
- Partnership reflects brand alignment with women's sports growth
- Part of a broader trend of major brands investing here



So, What Does This Mean for Us? The PR Takeaway

- 1. Storylines and rivalries are the content, not just the game scores.**
- 2. Athletes are media platforms. Their personal brands matter to fans.**
- 3. Women's sports partnerships are a growth opportunity, not a niche play.**

