MSU Sports

A Guide to the Resources in the Michigan State University Archives

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The purpose of this resource guide is to familiarize visitors of the MSU Archives with some of the available resources related to Michigan State University Athletics.

Note that this guide is not a comprehensive listing of all the available sources, but is intended to be a starting point from which visitors can begin their research according to their specific needs.

1. **Intercollegiate Athletics Records, 1888-1979.**

   - 2.33 cu. ft.; volumes
   - Highlights of this collection are the early intercollegiate athletics records, including a brochure from the MIAA Field Days of 1888 and 1898. Also included are athletic program budgets (1954-1961), lists of varsity award winners (1943-1972), material pertaining to women's intercollegiate athletics (1972-1979), and records that relate to organizations for women's athletics in the Big Ten, and other women's' sporting associations. There are several photographs that are also part of the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics records. These photos date back to the 1890s for some sports. The majority of the photographs are of men's athletics. They are arranged alphabetically by sport.

2. **Sports Information Records, 1884-2009.**

   - 20 cu. ft.
   - These records were from various public relations office of the college. There are eight athletic record books (1884-1964) that list team members, coaches, and scores for varsity and freshman sports, new releases concerning athletic activity, players, and coaches (1942-1990) for all major sports and some minor ones. The background research for the book Spartan Saga can also be found in these records. Of particular note are the records for the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association Field Days (1888-1907), files on Big Ten Investigations, African-American Athletes’ 1968 Boycott and a large sports photos collection
   - Programs, Media Guides and Information Sheets published by the Sports Information Office are available for:
       - Men’s/Women’s All-Sport Guide, Baseball, Basketball (Men/Women), Cross-Country (Men/Women), Fencing, Field Hockey (Women), Football, Golf (Men/Women), Gymnastics (Men/Women), Hockey (Men), Lacrosse (Men), Soccer, (Men/Women), Softball, Swimming (Men/Women), Tennis (Men/Women), Track & Field (Men/Women); Volleyball (Women); Wrestling (Men)

   - Further information also available referencing the following numbers:

- 37 cu. ft.
- C. “Biggie” Munn served as both head football coach and athletic director at Michigan State. Much of MSU’s rise to prominence in intercollegiate athletics is due to Munn’s work in these positions. These majority of the records his records are organized as general subject files. The files reflect activity about individual sports, as well as sporting events planning logistics and policy and procedure. There are also his records relating to the Michigan High School Athletic Association, the Olympics, speeches and correspondence. Of particular note are his files on the development of the college’s Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Department, and the files about Big Ten Conference activity.

4. Ralph H. Young Papers, 1902, ca 1910-1958  

- 8.2 cu. ft.
- Ralph Young served as Athletic Director from 1923-1954 and ushered MSC in to the Big Ten Conference in 1949. He also served as football coach from 1923-1928. During his tenure as Athletic Director, Michigan State was particularly successful in varsity Track producing twenty-seven All-Americans, four U.S. Olympians, and three world record-holders. His records contain correspondence about various sports related topics, subject files that focus on the Olympics and Physical Education, office file that address the college’s athletic facilities and events and information about the following sports:

  - Baseball (1922-1953)
  - Basketball (1920-1954)
  - Boxing (1935-1954)
- Cross-Country (1919-1952)
- Fencing (1941; 1952-54)
- Football (1919-1956)
- Golf (1951-1953)
- Gymnastics (1951-1954)
- Hockey (1953-1954)
- Swimming (1942-1954)
- Tennis (1951-1952)
- Track (1905-1954)
- Wrestling (1954)

This collection also contains photographs.

5. Intramural Sports & Recreative Services Records UA 7.11

- 19 Folders
- MSU’s Intramural Sports were administered by the Health, Physical Recreation and Recreation Department until 1964 when it came under the control of the V.P. for Student Affairs. In 1969 the department was renamed to its current form. The material in the collection consists service and program brochures, informational flyers, guidelines for participation, schedules of events, club and team listings, and serial publications. Men’s and Women’s sports are represented.


- 140 cu. ft.
- John Hannah was Michigan State’s longest serving President, in office from 1941-1969. His tenure was characterized by extensive growth of the University, in both size and enrollments. He also oversaw the tremendous changes in the field of intercollegiate athletics, including MSU’s entry into the Big Ten Athletic Conference. This collection is large, covering many aspects of the campus’ development, but sporting information can be found under the terms: intercollegiate athletics, NCAA, and the Big Ten. There is also information concerning various coaches. Some relevant photographs are included.


- 28.3 cu. ft.
- Clifton Wharton served as MSU’s fourteenth President from 1970 to 1978. His term of office was often a turbulent one, featuring student demonstrations in 1970 and 1972 as well as a National Collegiate Athletic Association investigation of the MSU football program. This collection contains a wide variety of information about the history and business of the University. Of particular interest are files concerning Title IX; the federal law that ensures equal opportunity between men and women on campus. College athletics were
particularly affected by this law. The pertinent files in this collection can be found in Series 2, under Intercollegiate Athletics.

8. Edgar Harden Papers, 1976-1980     UA 2.1.15

- 6.5 cu. ft.
- Edgar L. Harden, MSU’s fifteenth president, was appointed acting president October 23, 1977 to succeed Clifton Wharton. He was formally named President March 31, 1978 to serve till the appointment of a permanent president in 1979. Harden’s term was generally a placid one on campus as student activism waned. Affirmative action and equal rights for various groups were among the issues of the day, especially the Title IX issue of equality for women athletes. The files that relate to these issues can be found in the Board of Trustees file series under Title IX, The Subject file series under the Athletic Department, which includes presidential statements and recommendations about MSU and Title IX, and the University Committee files series which includes meetings by of the Big Ten Committee.

Other records about MSU and Title IX can be found at:

9. General Academic Administration Records    UA 3.6  (File Series 3)
10. Associate Provost Records    UA 3.4

11. John (Jack) Heppinstall, 1914-1966     UA 17.239

- 0.3 cu. ft.
- John (Jack) Heppinstall was hired by MSU in 1914 as the first athletic trainer, as well as groundskeeper and equipment manager. The job was a temporary position to help the few athletes playing multiple sports transition between seasons. Among the other duties performed by Heppinstall in his early years, were laying out a baseball field and coaching and playing in a basketball game. Heppinstall was one of the best known athletic trainers in the country, working as a trainer for the 1948 United States Olympic team. Heppinstall worked at Michigan State University for 45 years before retiring. The collection contains papers related to Heppinstall’s career as an athletic trainer at MSU. The collection includes inventories of athletic equipment and training supplies, The First Aider newsletter by Heppinstall, and photographs of MSU’s sports teams and varsity club.
12. Department of Kinesiology (MSU), 1938-2010  

- 1 cu. ft.
- Formerly known as the Dept. of Physical Culture, Dept. of Physical Training, Dept. of Physical Education, Dept. of Physical Education, Health and Recreation, and the Dept. of Health, Physical Education and Recreation. The collection consists of course syllabi and curriculum materials; program brochures; an index and abstracts of theses; brochures for conferences and workshops; minutes from department committees; a student handbook and staff manuals and departmental publications.


- 12 Folders
- The Athletic Council was established in 1923 to control the governance of athletics at Michigan Agricultural College. Today the Council is involved with academic, fiscal, compliance, and student-athlete welfare matters as well. It is an advisory body made of members of the MSU community and advises the Athletic Director and university administration. The collection consists of a constitution and bylaws, meeting minutes, correspondence, and reports.

14. Elizabeth (Betty) Drobac Papers, 2002  

- 1 Folder
- Elizabeth (Betty) White Drobac began teaching at MSU in the fall of 1950 as a member of the women's physical education staff. She taught a variety of team and individual sports including field hockey, soccer, basketball, lacrosse, volleyball, softball, swimming, tennis, badminton, archery and square dance. The papers consist of preliminary notes that Drobac wrote for a speech she gave at the Women's Varsity Letter Celebration on February 10, 2002. MSU did not award varsity letters to women before 1980. This event was to honor those women who were active in varsity sports before 1980 and to award them a varsity letter. Drobac’s speech recounts the early days of women’s athletics at MSU from 1927 and memories of her time as an athletic instructor.
SPORT SPECIFIC COLLECTIONS

15. Lauren Pringle Brown Papers, 1927-1962  
UA 17.153
- 1 cu. ft.
- Track / Cross-Country
- Brown started his education at Michigan State in 1926. As a student he was managed the production of football publication the Spartan Gridiron (now the Spartan Stadium Sideliner). Brown was also a noted athlete during his college years. A champion cross country runner, he was voted Spartan All American for his record in distances in 1928, served as captain of the cross country team (1929-1931), and in 1930 he was awarded a varsity letter and gold track shoes for being unbeaten for three consecutive years in dual track meets. After graduation in 1931, he accepted a position as Cross Country and Freshman Track Coach, a position he held until 1947. As coach, his cross country team won the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America Championship for five consecutive years. In 1951 he became the scorer for track, swimming, and cross country and in 1956 he devised the scoring system for NCAA Cross Country championships. The papers contain some of his coaching records, track event programs, newspaper articles, and a scrapbook. There are also pictures of different sporting events and practices.

16. Fendley Collins Collection, 1930-1972  
UA 17.80
- 10.8 cu. ft.
- Wrestling
- Collins began working at MSU in 1929 as a physical education instructor. He became an assistant professor in 1939 and associate professor in 1942. He was also the head wrestling coach from 1929 to 1962. In 1955 he was the coach for the wrestling team for the Pan American Games and he was the manager of the wrestling team for the 1964 Olympics. The collection contains information on Michigan State University’s wrestling team and physical education department. Also included is material relating to Pan American games wrestling team tryouts held at MSU in 1959, the Pan American Games (1959-1971), and the Olympic Wrestling Committee (1948 -1972). The photographs in the collection include team photographs, individual wrestlers, portraits of Collins, Pan American games tryouts, and Olympic wrestling team. Note: there is some information Collins collected about other sports. (See Full Inventory)

- 2 cu. ft.
- Football
- “Duffy” Daugherty started his career at Michigan State as the assistant coach to Clarence “Biggie” Munn in 1947. In 1954, he became the head football coach, a position he retained for 19 years. Over that period, Daugherty’s Spartans won 109 games, lost 69, and tied 5. His teams took two Big Ten titles, placed second four times, and were consistently rated among the nation’s top ten. His popularity with sports audiences landed him a job as commentator for ABC Sports in 1973. The materials in the collection are primarily publications and news articles relating to his coaching career; this includes several scrapbooks. There are also representative photographs of football teams and friends throughout his MSU career.

18. Porpoise Fraternity Records, 1948  

- 1 Folder/Yearbook
- Swimming
- The Porpoise Fraternity is a swimming honorary organization. It is the Beta Chapter in the National Honorary Swimming Fraternity. The chapter was established 1930 primarily to sponsor and encourage all swimming activities. All male students of Michigan State who have shown superior ability and an active interest in swimming were eligible for membership. The records consist of a copy of their Aquatic Yearbook, which lists members and statistics for the varsity & junior varsity swimming & diving program. There is also a folder of photographs.


- 1.8 cu. Ft.
- Swimming
- In 1920, the Women’s Lifesaving Corps of Michigan Agricultural College was founded to teach swimming and lifesaving techniques to interested coeds. In 1927, the Corps changed its name to Green Splash and reorganized into an honorary swimming club, focusing on synchronized swimming. The Green Splash represented MSU in varsity sports with club members competing in synchronized swimming competitions both nationally and in the Big Ten Conference. They also put on performances for entertainment. Later the Green Splash became an intramural sports club. In 1998 the name changed to the MSU Synchronized Swimming club. The records of the Green Splash Swimming Club consist
of club meeting minutes; membership information; and scrapbooks (1920-1986) containing photographs, memorabilia, and water show programs.

20. Charles Schmitter Collection, 1940-1983

- 5 cu. ft.
- Fencing
- Charles Schmitter came to Michigan State to take a position as head fencing coach in 1938. He was honored many times for his coaching talents; in 1957 he was awarded the title of Fencing Coach of the Year by the National Fencing Coaches Association, was the fencing coach for the 1959 Pan American Games and was named into the National Fencer’s Hall of Fame in 1970. The collection includes Schmitter’s correspondence files, newspaper clippings, fencing publications, information about the National Fencing Coaches Association, the U.P. Olympic Committee (1954-64), as well as records about MSU physical education curriculum, and the campus sporting facilities and athletic governance. The collection also contains photographs. Note: This collection has not been fully prepared for research use. Please see an UAHC Archivist for access.

UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS

1) MSU Yearbooks, 1877-present - These books provide a yearly snapshot of sporting activities for the preceding school year. Summaries of the events, team histories, photos, and perspectives about popular sports can be found.

2) The Holcad, 1909-1925 - This forerunner to the State News was an early newspaper that provided articles about sporting events of the day. [Note: The State News (newspaper) is available at the MSU Main Library in the microforms section.] (Serial 669)

3) The College Speculum, 1881-1896 (Incomplete) Serial 662

4) Alumni News Publications –

-- The MAC/MSC Record, 1896-1925 - This publication provides a great amount of detail concerning sporting events both held on and off campus. Most of the articles are written in a “newspaper” style. (Serial 48)

-- Alumni Magazine, 1955 – present - This publication provides primarily feature stories, but some updates are given for larger sporting events. (Serial 18)