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Women's sports teams find the term 'Lady Comets' derogatory, unnecessary and outdated

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As the Always commercial proves, 'Like a girl' is not an insult.

Although the Lady Comets isn't the official name for Mason's female athletics, many of Mason's female athletes have gotten used to the title, even though they might not be fond of it. Senior basketball player, Brianne Gibb, said that the term "lady" in front of a mascot creates a barrier between the girls and guys teams.

"I feel like they are trying to make it sound more feminine," Gibb said. "We should just be called the Comets because we're the same as the guys. It shouldn't be any different and they are trying to make it too separate and it puts more emphasis on the guys."

Head softball coach, Liann Muff, said when "lady" is thrown in front of Comets, it can be offensive towards women no matter the intent.

"I think the term 'lady' is somewhat derogatory," Muff said. "I think women should be called women and men are called men. We would never put gentlemen Comets in front of a guy so to me it's very old-fashioned and outdated."

According to head coach of the girls swimming and water polo team, Mark Sullivan, the selection between Comets and Lady Comets is up to the coach.

"I think the coach is probably the one leading it," Sullivan said. "Whatever the coach uses will probably dictate what the team uses. I usually say, girls swim team, boys swim team... I never bring the word Comet into it."

Head coach of the girls basketball team, Rob Matula, is a prime example of coaches setting standards for how their team will be addressed just as Matula said he set his.

"When I took over the girls program, I did not want lady in front of the Comets," Matula said. "I believe that we're all Comets and there shouldn't be any distinguishing between a male Comet and a female Comet."

Along with social media, a common place to find the term Lady Comets is at gomasoncomets.com where

placements and rankings of Mason's sports teams are posted. Mason Sports Information Director, Dan Hilen, said the reason why he uses Lady Comets on this site is because he considers it a compliment to females.

"I've done it so much without thinking about it," Hilen said. "I think what using the word lady means is it specializes the girls. It's more of a reference. When you say a woman is a lady, it has the definition of that person being of high stature or quality."

The use of "lady" in front of a mascot has been popular in the past but now colleges such as University of Delaware have taken "lady" out of their mascot. Muff, being a Lady Norse at Northern Kentucky University in the 1980's, said that the use of "lady" will eventually die out.

"I think with any outdated term it will just kind of fade away," Muff said. "I think (the younger) generation definitely doesn't use that term. It's just one of those terms in society that's going to fade."

Because "lady" has been around for a while, colleges such as University of Tennessee have recently decided to keep their mascot the Lady Volps to not interfere with their history. According to Matula, the use of Lady Comets has fluctuated over the years so it wouldn't disrupt the roots of Mason High School if the name was eliminated.

"There are things that come and things that go," Matula said. "For one reason or another, 'lady' got put in front of the Comets. My first 10 years I was here, I don't remember them being called Lady Comets but when I was gone for seven years at two other high schools, I remember it being the Lady Comets but since then I haven't so I don't think that would hurt us."

According to Gibb, the phrase couldn't go out of style any sooner as she requests as a woman and an athlete, not a lady, to be respected rather than separated.

"I don't get why we have to be separated from the guys and why they get to be called the Comets and we're the Lady Comets," Gibb said. "I just want to be called a Comet."

From left to right: Junior Erin Rockstroh and seniors Crystal Kratzer, Delaney McDowell, Brianne Gibb and Emily Ketron wear their respective uniforms.

Photo by Madison Krell