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Dedication of Bigglestone Plaza at Memorial Field is Sept. 7

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August 5, 2003

DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire will recognize long-time Coach and Director of Women's Athletics Gail Bigglestone with the naming of the plaza adjacent to Memorial Field in her honor. The dedication of Bigglestone Plaza at Memorial Field will be Sunday, Sept. 7, 2003, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.

"Gail is a person of high integrity and accomplishment, and remains deeply respected in the national women's collegiate sports community, as well as by many UNH alums and ex-athletes," UNH President Ann Weaver Hart says. "She has built a women's program at UNH that has attained national recognition, and we take pride in recognizing her in this manner."

Bigglestone Plaza sits between Main Street and Memorial Field, the primary site for women's athletics, particularly field hockey and lacrosse. Recently, the area was enhanced with a synthetic field, architectural fencing, lights and a scoring platform. The upgrades were achieved through charitable efforts made in recognition of Bigglestone.

Bigglestone, a member of the UNH Athletic Hall of Fame and respected ski coach, served as UNH's first director of women's athletics (1975-89) and was directly responsible for the development of one of the most successful women's intercollegiate programs in the country.

During her 14-year tenure as director of women's athletics, the program expanded to 12 sports with more than 200 competitors. UNH won its first national championship (lacrosse, 1985) under her watch. The field hockey squad competed in five NCAA tournaments and

finished as the NCAA runner-up in 1986. The women's ice hockey team won six regional titles and the gymnastics team captured three regional titles, while consistently holding a national ranking. The basketball team won two regional titles and qualified for tournament play five times. The cross country, ski, soccer, swim, track and tennis teams regularly qualified for regional and national competitions.

A 1960 graduate of the university, Bigglestone joined UNH in 1970 as an assistant professor of physical education. She served as head ski coach and was instrumental in organizing women's collegiate skiing as a member of the U.S. Collegiate Sport Council Ski Committee. In 1983, she was recognized with the UNH Profile of Service Award. She retired from UNH in 1989.

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