

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Marilyn Shapiro at Game Face
Productions (212) 505-7713**

**Mary Combs at Smithsonian
(202) 357-2627 ext. 121**

**PHOTO EXHIBITION AND BOOK PROJECT IS FIRST TO CELEBRATE THE
CONTEMPORARY EXPLOSION IN WOMEN AND GIRLS ATHLETICS ON THE
EVE OF TITLE IX'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR IN 2002.**

***GAME FACE, WHAT DOES A FEMALE ATHLETE LOOK LIKE?* CO-CURATED
BY REPORTER JANE GOTTESMAN AND PHOTOGRAPHER GEOFFREY
BIDDLE CELEBRATES THE CURRENT POPULARITY AND SUCCESS OF
WOMEN'S SPORTS.**

**THIS UNPRECEDENTED EXHIBITION IS DRAWING CROWDS TO THE
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION'S ARTS AND INDUSTRIES BUILDING IN
WASHINGTON. INCLUDED IS WORK BY MORE THAN 100 OF AMERICA'S
BEST PHOTOGRAPHERS.**

GAME FACE: WHAT DOES A FEMALE ATHLETE LOOK LIKE? is a unique
photographic celebration of sports and physical daring in the lives of girls and women. The
five-year national tour of the GAME FACE exhibition is off to a rousing start with more
than 400,000 visitors since its June 27th opening. The GAME FACE book, published by
Random House, has received overwhelming critical acclaim. After a six-month stay at the
Smithsonian, through January 2, 2002, the exhibition travels to the University of Utah in
Salt Lake City for display during the Winter Olympics.

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GAME FACE is an extraordinary collection of 182 color and black and white photographs and stories from women about how sports has shaped their identity. Gottesman searched for nearly a decade for these images that span genres—documentary, conceptual, vernacular, sports action—as well subject, time, place, age and race. They depict women participating in every sport from ping pong to pole-vaulting, from hunting to hardball. And they range in style and substance, from sepia-toned portraits of a corseted lady with a bicycle in the 1890s, to a full-color action shot of today’s muscle-rippling soccer star Brandi Chastain savoring, without inhibition, her team’s sudden-death World Cup victory.

The pictures in GAME FACE present celebrated sports stars such as Marion Jones, Chris Evert, Michelle Akers, Althea Gibson, Amelia Earhart, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Mary Lou Retton, Tara Lipinski and Martina Navratilova alongside dozens of anonymous amateurs. Each image offers a unique answer to the question at the heart of GAME FACE: What does a female athlete look like? What do girls and women look like, freed from traditional feminine constraints, using their bodies in joyful and empowering ways?

Co-curators Gottesman and Biddle have assembled for GAME FACE images by some of America’s best photojournalists and fine-art photographers, a tremendous mix of perspectives creating a spirited and inclusive debate about the ways women play and compete. Included is work by Mary Ellen Mark, Dorothea Lange, Ansel Adams, Annie Leibovitz, Tina Barney, Lee Friedlander, Justine Kurland, Ruth Orkin, Eve Fowler, Andrea Modica, Charles Harbutt, Robert Mapplethorpe and Pulitzer Prize winners Annie Wells, April Saul, Melissa Farlow and Rick Rickman among many others. Together they highlight the photographer’s ability to wordlessly present the beauty and complexity of the women’s sports movement.

The GAME FACE book begins with a foreword by Penny Marshall, whose film “A League of Their Own” (1992) about women’s professional baseball in the 1940s, identified a groundswell of popular interest in women’s sports. “These photos are encouraging and inspiring,” writes Marshall in her foreword, “but most of all, they are true.” The authenticity portrayed in GAME FACE speaks to women’s gains not just in sports but in all aspects of society.

The power of sports to teach girls and women to explore their physical and mental abilities is important to the MassMutual Financial Group, including OppenheimerFunds, Inc., the project sponsor. “We’re excited to sponsor GAME FACE because it is consistent with our commitment to education and enabling people to rise to their full potential,” said Francis B. Emerson, Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications. As part of the GAME FACE sponsorship, MassMutual and OppenheimerFunds will be conducting primary research to ascertain the role that participation in athletics—team or individual sports—has played in the lives of executive women.

In 1972, Congress passed Title IX, a law that mandated equality for women and girls in schools. One of the law’s most radical effects was opening up the playing field to all. In 1971, 1-in-27 school age girls played sports; now, 1-in-2.6 do. Over the same time period the ratio of school age boys playing sports remained the same, 1-in-2. Not only did more girls start playing sports as a result of Title IX, but these young athletes also redefined what is acceptable for girls, and by extension, for boys. Title IX was born of the optimism of the civil rights and women’s liberation movements, and it continues to have a profound influence on our culture.

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A generation of women, including GAME FACE creator Gottesman, have come of age under Title IX. Old stereotypes about women and sports have fallen away, and today's women embrace athletics with a passion that would have been unfathomable a quarter of a century ago. For many women today, sports is an expression of personal freedom. Athletics encourages women to be strong, daring and resilient, necessary survival skills in an era when women are constantly bombarded by images of fashion models, self-improvement products and the diet culture. The influx of women into the athletic arena is forcing a redefinition of sports. More importantly, it is revising traditional notions of womanhood.

Provocative and intimate, the photographs in GAME FACE reveal women's powerful and complex relationship to sports, as well as men's support for the athletic females in their lives. They depict the many ways a woman can use athletics to describe her sense of self, her physicality, her aspirations and her involvement in the revision of beliefs about womanly and feminine behavior. Using the arc of the athletic experience—getting ready, start, action, finish, aftermath—as its organizing principle, GAME FACE synthesizes photographs and personal reflections into an elegantly structured story with built-in dramatic movement. When considered in terms of life stages, the various phases of the athletic experience symbolize determination, effort, dedication, completion, satisfaction and reward. They represent the phases we all experience in big and small ways throughout our lives, and they parallel the stages women have had to pass through to get to the level of involvement in athletics we enjoy today.

The project has been endorsed by the Girl Scouts of the USA which has developed a GAME FACE patch program, the YWCA of the USA, and the National Coalition of Girls' Schools, as well as the National Collegiate Athletics Association's Committee on Women's Athletics. Game Face Productions, the entity administering the project, is a 501(c)(3) not-

for-profit organization dedicated to promoting visual literacy and social progress. It produces books, exhibitions and educational projects using a combination of photography and writing.

For further information call:

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Check out www.gamefaceonline.org