

# Exhibit 5

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

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ELIZABETH LAURA CHOIKE, ASHLEY  
GUINEVERE STONER, HEATHER  
WALBRIGHT, JESSICA STUDENT, JENNIFER  
VENET, ELIZABETH PENNING, LAURA A.  
SANFORD, EMILY C. CAMPBELL, REBECCA  
ZINN, ALISON NICOLE NUCKOLS, SARAH S.  
SANDER, and RACHEAL BIENIAS, on behalf of  
themselves and all similarly situated individuals;  
and JAMES V. YEAMANS,

Plaintiffs,

v.

SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY OF  
PENNSYLVANIA OF THE STATE  
SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION;  
ROBERT SMITH, in his official capacity as  
President of Slippery Rock University; and  
PAUL LUEKEN, in his official capacity as  
Director of Athletics of Slippery Rock University,

Defendants.

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Civil Action No. \_\_\_\_\_

DECLARATION OF JENNIFER VENET

I, Jennifer Venet, hereby declare:

1. I am 18 years old. I am a freshman at Slippery Rock University, where I play a midfield position on the varsity field hockey team. I also play lacrosse on the school's club team.

2. I come from Mechanicsburg, PA. I went to Cumberland Valley High School there. I played a lot of sports in high school: I was on the junior varsity field hockey team in my freshman year at Cumberland Valley, and played varsity field hockey in my

sophomore, junior, and senior years. I also played varsity softball in my sophomore and junior years, junior varsity softball in my freshman year, and varsity lacrosse as a senior.

3. Field hockey is my favorite sport. The game is a lot of fun. I have been playing field hockey since I was 11 years old. It is how I met all my friends in high school.

4. I am a pretty good athlete. In high school, I won Rookie of the Year in my sophomore year for softball. I was on the Field Hockey Mid-Penn All Star Team in my senior year, and was named to the All-Sentinel Field Hockey Second Team in my senior year. The All-Sentinel Team is an award given out by the local newspaper and coaches. Also, I was the co-captain of the field hockey team in my senior year.

5. My family plays sports, too. My aunt played on the national field hockey team when she was younger. My mom is a national lacrosse collegiate umpire and a high school field hockey official. She is the coach of the high school lacrosse team. She runs the officiating board for lacrosse in the Mid-Penn region. But I would have made the varsity team even if she had not been the coach. She made me work really hard. My mom is really upset that field hockey got cut because it is a growing sport.

6. I considered going to the University of Pittsburgh, Drexel, and Temple. I applied to all of those schools and was accepted by all of them except Pitt's main campus. I was drawn to Slippery Rock because of my major, which is exercise science. I am minoring in adapted physical activity. I am learning to help people with disabilities. My plan is to go to physical therapy school after I get my undergraduate degree and work with children through pediatric physical therapy.

7. My main interest was in finding a school that would be academically strong, but the second thing I looked for was a school where I could play field hockey. Until May of my senior year in high school, I was not sure I was good enough to play field hockey in college. So the spring before my freshman year, my dad tried to contact the Slippery Rock coaches to get a summer training schedule I could follow, but the old coach had left and no one was answering her phone. My dad left a few messages, and finally in mid-May someone called him back. We took the work-out schedule and followed it religiously. My dad trained with me. It involved a lot of running, six days a week.

8. When I got to Slippery Rock last fall, I walked on to the field hockey team. It was overwhelming at first. There were only four freshmen on the team. I was a starting player for the team's first game.

9. A field hockey team is made up of 11 players on the field at a time. There were usually about 20 to 21 players on the women's team.

10. If Slippery Rock were not cutting field hockey, I would definitely keep playing as long as I could. I have three more years of NCAA eligibility. Probably the most upsetting thing about the cuts is that I only got one year to play.

11. Our field hockey team has not won many games. But we did not lose by much, either. Many of our games were very close. Our team is very strong, and there are a lot of amazing players on it. I know for a fact that we can win games.

12. We have had about five coaches in the past four years. It is sad that when the university goes to hire a field hockey coach, it hires inexperienced people. Last year Slippery Rock did not even post the opening for field hockey coach. Instead, they just

hired the girls' varsity soccer coach. He is a great conditioning coach, but he is not very knowledgeable about the game of field hockey. A lot of times the players have to coach him about the rules.

13. The field hockey team plays on the same field that the football team uses. The good thing about this is the field is in fantastic shape, the best anywhere on the campus. The bad thing is that football players do not have any respect for hockey players. At least twice we have had to ask them to get off the field during our practices because they just walk out and start throwing the football while we are in the middle of practice. Even after we have told them and the coach has told them to get off the field, they still drift back. As far as I know, we are the only other team that uses that field regularly besides the football team. Once our sport is eliminated, it will be used only for football and soccer games.

14. Our locker rooms are not in the football stadium—they are across campus in the field house. We have to buy our own mouth guards and our own sticks, which last about a year or a year and a half. They cost about \$120 for a good stick. The school provided us with shin guards this year, which cost about \$12 to \$15 a pair.

15. The field hockey team does not get anywhere near the same support from the school that some of the men's teams get. President Smith has never come to a single one of our games that I have ever seen. I do not recall a single field hockey game that the athletic director attended.

16. When we have away games, we have to travel in a tiny little bus that reminds me of one of those airport shuttles. Because field hockey plays teams from all over Pennsylvania, many of our games are three or four hours away. There are no bathrooms

on the bus, and you cannot move around at all, especially since you have to bring all your equipment on the bus with you, so you are all stiff by the time you get to the game.

17. I found out about the cuts in athletics at a meeting of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee or SAAC, where I represent the field hockey team. The SAAC heard rumors in the fall that there would be cuts, but we did not know how bad they would be or what sports would go. The decision to cut sports was kept secret from the students until the end of January. The committee that recommended cutting sports had only two student athletes on it, and neither one played any sport that was getting cut.

18. I was really surprised that my sport got cut. I remember Athletic Director Paul Lueken coming to the SAAC at the beginning of the fall semester and telling us that no teams would be cut.

19. The cuts became public and official on January 30, 2006. We got an email from our coach saying he needed to meet with us and he had bad news. For an hour and a half we met with Paul Lueken, President Smith, and Dr. Watson.

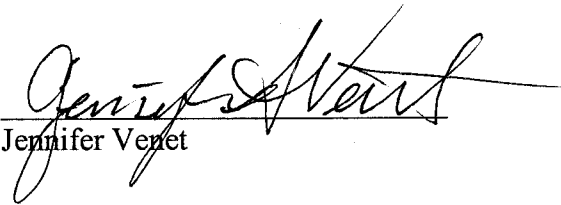
20. Unless the school changes its mind, I will not be playing field hockey next year. It is a very upsetting situation. The whole summer I trained with my dad, and it was a really good experience personally. I had been looking forward to training with my dad again. Now there is no reason to.

21. We are working on keeping field hockey alive as a club sport. There will not be any trouble recruiting enough students to play. But it will not be the same. The players will not be at the same level. As a club sport, we will not be able to play on the football field anymore. I know from my experience playing lacrosse as a club sport at Slippery Rock that it is extremely difficult to get a field to play a club sport on. The

spring boys' soccer practice will always take precedence over any club team. If we want a coach, we would have to use club funding to pay the coach's salary. And we will not even be eligible for club funding for the first two years we are in existence. At the meeting on January 30, President Smith told us that it might be possible to get that two-year rule waived, but he was not sure.

22. As sad as I am about losing my sport, I am not considering transferring to another school at this time. But I know at least two or three other players who will.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on May 9, 2006.

  
Jennifer Veret