

More Needs to be Done to Increase Positive Perception of Esports

BY AIDAN FARLEY

One day, video games will be played in the Olympics. This has been made apparent by the inclusion of another event that originally began as a recreational sport: table tennis. The key difference between table tennis and video games is that video games are far more popular than table tennis has ever been or ever will be. In 2019, the Esports industry is projected to break one billion dollars in revenue. Evidently, a large number of people have caught onto the phenomenon that is competitive gaming. Many celebrities and prominent figures in the mainstream sports industry have invested and pledged to aid the Esports industry. Esports will only grow as more game companies create viable competitive games.

The next step is informing the general public about the realities of video game competitions. Video games are often misconstrued as being nothing more than time-wasters for children. Video clips on the internet showcase news hosts laughing and joking as they discuss recent Esports news. They are mistaken in the idea that anyone can become a professional gamer when the reality is that being an Esports athlete takes just as much effort and practice as any other traditional sport.

In an October interview on *The Tonight Show*, host Jimmy Fallon interviewed Overwatch League

Champions Jay “Sinatra” Won and Matthew “Super” DeLisi. When asked what it takes to become a professional gamer, the two players stated that one needs to practice at least eight hours a day. Their schedule, in particular, usually consists of eight hours of team practice (working on concepts like communication and teamwork) and then four hours of practice on their own time (focusing on fundamentals of the game like mouse accuracy and positioning). This interview is an example of what needs to be done to help the Esports industry grow further and become widely understood.

Recently, the video game industry as a whole received a major blow with the official classification of gaming disorder as a mental health condition. This classification is a travesty as it regulates professional players like Sinatra and Super into this category. Professional players in traditional sports often fit the definition of this disorder as well, but there is no talk of sports disorder. The problem is not video games; if someone is playing video games too much, that is the consequence of an addictive personality or another issue. Labeling gaming disorder is a step back for the industry and only stigmatizes professional gamers further.

The main problem with this classification is that there are many benefits to playing video games.

When played in moderation, video games can foster creative expression, create tightly knit communities, and aid in forming life-long friendships. There is also the benefit of playing in organizations, such as the Overwatch League, where players can learn valuable communication and teamwork skills. Comparatively, there are no benefits whatsoever for chronic smokers or gamblers. Video games aren't the problem; the problem is whatever is causing the player to sequester themselves in games for unhealthy amounts of time.

To move forward in the development of Esports, the media needs to become further involved, unlike traditional media where Esports is discussed without knowledgeable speakers present, but with more open-minded interviews like the Overwatch interview on *The Tonight Show*. Those investing in Esports organizations need to speak up and promote their investments. The numerous positive qualities of video games need to be shared with the general public before Esports will become as respected as traditional sports. Video games are not time-wasters; they are the future.

Golden Bear Men's Basketball Aims for Bounce-Back Year

BY ISABELLA D'BURKE

With the beginning of the season here, the Golden Bears men's basketball team is hard at work. The Golden Bears started their season with a preview of their skills at Hoops Madness. Sponsored by Chick-Fil-A, this promotional event gave students the opportunity to see the team before any games. The night started with a chicken-nugget eating contest then proceeded with a 5v5 intrasquad scrimmage. The night continued with a shooting contest involving the crowd, a women's skill challenge, and a slam dunk contest. Hoops Madness was an entertaining night for spectators and a great way to get the men's and women's team excited for the upcoming season.

After Hoops Madness, the men's team started to play in their exhibition games. The men fell short in their first exhibition game against South Dakota, 61-72. Even with the loss, the team managed to knock down 11 three-pointers. Freshman George Scharlau led the team that night with 10 points. Following that game, the men had another close 85-89 loss against Augsburg. In their final exhibition game, the men had a strong lead until Augsburg took the lead 12 minutes in. After a back and forth battle, the men fell short again. Even with the loss, CSP finished with a better percentage as they hit 10-25 (40.0%), whereas Augsburg only hit 13-37 (37.8%). Leading the game was Jordan Coblin with 31 points.

Concordia has added ten newcomers to their team this year. The team now features one senior, three juniors, two sophomores, six transfers, and four incoming freshmen. With only five returners, the team has a fresh start, which can either be good or bad. So far, the top four scorers during both games have all been new to the team, with the exception of Noah Kannegiesser. The team will look to adjust to the new chemistry and finish with a better season record than their 9-20 record last year. The last year the team had a winning season was 2014.

The team will be starting their regular-season games on November 15th, playing Minnesota Crookston in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Following the Parkside Tournament, they will have four home games in a row, giving students many chances to support the men. They'll play North Central November 21st, Northland November 26th, Sioux Falls December 6th, and Southwest Minnesota State December 7th. Be sure to make your way over to the Gangelhoff Center to help support and cheer on our men!



CSP Men's Basketball - Photo Credit: Josh Deere