

SPORTS EDITORIAL

Colleges cannot be held accountable for student concussions

BY AMOL GARG
STAFF WRITER

Student athletes risk their long-term health on the field while at Guilford College for our entertainment.

"I think that it's more difficult to be a college football player in this day and age than it is to be an NFL player because of the amounts of hits," said the National Basketball Player's Association Dominique Foxworth to HBO's Real Sports.

The possibility of detrimental injuries to the athletes' health are always looming. One injury that can lead to severe long-term health problems in the future are concussions.

According to a study conducted by Sports Concussion Institute, around 1.6 to 3.8 million concussions occur each year. Out of those concussions, 5-10 percent will be suffered by athletes.

Just one concussion can lead to long-term brain damage.

Only recently did the NFL remove the \$675 million cap for concussion-related claims due to the increasing number of lawsuits that state more could have been done to prevent former athletes from experiencing effects of a concussion later in life.

To address this problem, the NCAA required institutions to have concussion management plans. However, they set the plan guidelines in the most general terms, while enforcement and consequences for not abiding are extremely low.

Are you willing to take this risk? Probably not, but student athletes are.

This raises an ethical dilemma. Are academic institutions responsible for aiding these students when they suffer the effects of the concussion later on in life?

"We need to be very careful about what kind of equipment and what kind of risk we put our students in," said Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies Max Carter. "If a college or university benefits financially from the athletic involvements in the sport then they bear responsibility."

This is essentially what the NCAA has required schools like Guilford College to do — they must have effective policies and precautions to address any concussions.

"In the years past institutions really had some responsibility, but not now with all the education and all the understanding about concussions and their repercussions ... the athletes mostly assume the responsibility," said head softball coach Dennis Shores.

Similar feelings are shared by non-athletes.

"What happens on the field happens on the field," said Early College junior Suemin Chung in an email interview with The Guilfordian.

"There's no way the school could have prevented a specific athlete from getting injured on the field."

Institutions cannot really be accountable for covering expenses for former athletes as they assumed the risk when they started playing the sport. Also, increased protocols have raised precautions taken to make sure concussions do not drastically affect an athlete later on.

"If the player gets a concussion while playing, and the correct safety measures are taken and yet the player still faces lasting health problems, I don't believe it's up to the organization to take care of the player," said Erica McCune, a soccer player in the Kernersville Soccer Association.

Institutions should, however, offer proper treatment for the athlete when they are injured and not pressure them to play until they have fully recovered.

"I think this whole concussion thing is being blown a little bit out of proportion," said assistant men's lacrosse coach Nate Bates.

"We aren't forcing our kids to play the sport. They are choosing to play. It's their choice. Just because they go to school here at the time doesn't mean that we are responsible."

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Nate Bates, assistant men's lacrosse coach

Growing skateboarding population brings together sport, leisure and art



Cameron McDowell '15 rides his longboard through the North Apartments as he practices different tricks looping around the path.

BY JULIET MAGOON
STAFF WRITER

Whether you skateboard to cruise or for tricks, skating is a form of artful expression.

From a choice in boards, clothes or civil disobedience, the history of skating reflects its rebellious and multicultural nature.

"Skateboarding is as much of a sport as a lifestyle and an art form," said former professional skateboarder Tony Hawk in an interview with Bloomberg TV. "There's so much that transcends in terms of music, fashion and entertainment."

Skateboarding at Guilford College differs by the style of board and the intent of each skater.

Influences in urban East Coast culture and West Coast surf style intermingle, creating one radical and unrestricted category of athlete.

"Skateboarding permeates to every subculture in society," said junior Nick Nesbitt.

"There is no limited style about it. Everyone does their own thing. The culture of skating is important but is becoming more diluted as skaters adopt their own personal style. There is no way

of defining skate style."

As the motive of the skater changes, so does the size and style of the board.

"The stereotypical skateboard is mainly for tricks," said senior Matthew Poling. "Since the wheels do not grip as much and have a narrower build, the rider can perform tricks easier."

Longboards are lower to the ground and lack the concave structure that traditional skateboards possess, allowing for more speed and slides.

Though boards may set skaters apart in style, a mutual respect is shared. This kinship stems from the similar experiences shared when learning how to skate.

"In order to get good at skating, you need to fail at some point," said Poling.

"It helped instill the trial and error process within me. I skate because I have developed a love for it."

Luckily for students, Greensboro's own Above Board Skate Park and Shop on Greengate Dr. and 915 Skate Park and Shop on Warren St. are only a quick skate down the road.

These parks also serve as retail shops, supplying locals with the latest skating gear. Board Paradise on Battleground Ave. is another favorite of Greensboro skaters for hardware, boards, trucks and

basic inquiries.

"Board Paradise has everything you need to get started," said Poling.

"Plus they have unlimited information on board styles, wheels and hardware."

Are you a newbie?

Lessons are offered at a small cost by Go Skate Skateboard School. Instructors will help any level of skater improve, either by coming directly to your home or meeting you at any Greensboro skate park location.

Greensboro has options for the trick skater as well as longboarders looking to cruise and shred hills.

"We call one hill the tearjerker," said senior Noel Baker. "Every time you hit it, it jerks a tear out of your eye. It's down New Garden towards the Target."

The skating community at Guilford grows visibly each year, as students across the nation find common ground here in Greensboro. This culture is built around, and promotes, creative individuals.

"At Guilford, there is more diversity among skaters," said Poling.

"Students from all backgrounds, locations and interests come together to skate. We pull in people from so many different regions that the environment becomes more accepting and cultured."

View from the trenches: grand finale

BY REESE SETZER
STAFF WRITER

It is common in football to see a team have a letdown after an emotional loss like the one we suffered in overtime against Hampden-Sydney.

However, had you been at our week of intense practices following that loss, you would have seen a team full of perseverance, tenacity and fight.

Our last game of the season against Emory & Henry was prepared for like a conference championship game.

There was still a chance that we could clinch a share of first place. However, the only way this could secure this opportunity was by defeating the Wasps on their own turf.

We were up to the challenge.

We shined in all aspects of football: offense, defense and special teams.

The offense moved the ball at will throughout the game, the defense made some crucial stops in key situations and our special teams shined in a 52-28 rout.

We celebrated the victory like it was a championship win.

There was cheering, chanting and even some dancing on the field postgame as we celebrated our victories and reflected on our losses throughout the year.

We all returned to the locker room scurrying to check

our phones, hoping to see the results of the other games throughout the ODAC.

There in Emory & Henry's small, cramped visiting locker room, the team erupted as we learned that we had tied for first place in the ODAC.

This year's senior class came in as first-years and finished their first season at 2-8. In their final season, they went out 8-2 (tied for the best record in Guilford College history).

That is an accomplishment that is truly special and well-deserved by great teammates.

Unfortunately, Hampden-Sydney got the ODAC's playoff berth due to a tiebreaker.

Despite not playing in the postseason, we held our heads high that day knowing we had accomplished great things.

We are still hungry.

We know what it takes in order to be at the top of the conference and we plan on staying there. Much work lays ahead this offseason.

Having a share of first place is good, but the 2015 season has begun, and it is time for us to be greedy and to take the championship alone.

The first-years, sophomores and juniors will be called upon to take the next step.

Our preparation and quest to become 2015 ODAC champions began the day after the Emory & Henry victory. Stay tuned. Great things lie ahead.