

6 Reasons Why Video Gaming Will Become the Next Big College Sport

Watching college football and basketball is a popular pastime in America. Indeed, given its popularity, it's difficult to imagine that college ball sports will ever be displaced by an upstart competitor. However, they do have competition and it's not exactly Quidditch. It's video gaming—or, as college athletics departments are [calling them, esports](#).

According to [Jeremy Bauer-Wold of Insider Higher Ed](#), the “concept of collegiate esports has blossomed and become much more organized in recent years. Some smaller private institutions view gaming as a way to attract prospective students amid enrollment downturns, and even a number of Division I colleges and universities have entered this digital arena.”

Three years ago, [Robert Morris University-Illinois](#), a member of the National Association of Intercollegiate Sports, [announced that](#) it would incorporate [League of Legends](#) (a popular online video game) into their sports line-up. It was the first university to give varsity status to an esports.

Here are six reasons why college video gaming could one day draw more fans than college football and basketball:

1. *Overhead is low*: Universities simply require gaming computers, a high-speed internet connection and a way to project the game play to a national audience. There is no need to construct multi-million dollar sports stadiums. Salaries for coaches might approach those of current coaches in football and basketball, but otherwise the overhead costs are comparatively low.
2. *Few scandals*: High-profile college sports programs seem to attract scandals. Drugs. Alcohol. Rape. The wayward activities of testosterone-pumped athletes contribute directly to these scandals. Video gamers tend to have more introverted, type-B personalities. Scandals will be rare.
3. *Millennials already love it*: Young people of the millennial generation grew up playing video games. Indeed, [30 percent of gamers](#) now fall between the ages of 18 and 35. So viewership will inevitably rise as college esports make their debut on national television.
4. *Helps with National Defense*: Twenty-first-century warfare is changing. Increasingly, combat missions are being conducted by remotely piloted drones. The military needs drone pilots. It's [already recruiting gamers](#). With the growth in college esports, it will have a fresh pool of talent to draw from.
5. *It's already huge in South Korea*: Gaming leagues and televised tournaments are already a [national phenomenon in South Korea](#). Universities [there accept gamers as student athletes](#). Major corporate sponsors back professional teams that source their talent from the universities. It's a good system. The U.S. could emulate it.
6. *Nerds rule*: The nerd-jock dualism is perhaps not as old as the mind-body dualism. Nevertheless, it's one that we should seek to overcome. Indeed, nerds are now cool. Bringing nerdy video-gamers into the realm of college sports makes the nerd-jock dualism effectively a distinction without a difference.

What do you think? Are you excited about video gaming becoming a college sport? Will you tune in when college video game tournaments secure national televised coverage? Or do you believe that college ball sports will always rule the roost?

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