Debate & Sports: From Michael to Plato

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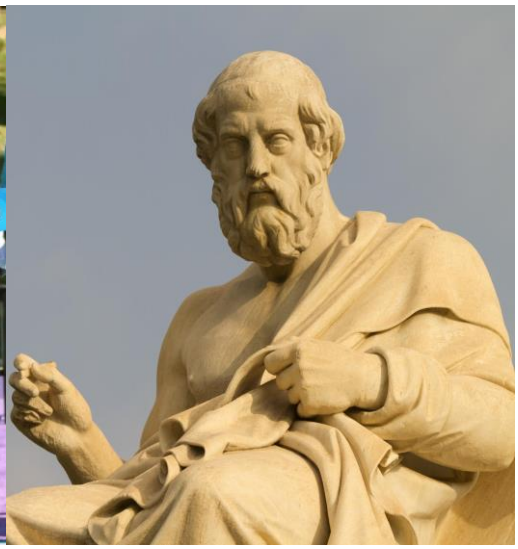


LETS BEGIN WITH THE BOTTOM LINE

Solid research shows that kids who engage in sports:

Develop higher levels of academic skills;

Graduate with better grades at much higher rates;

Are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol; and

Have far greater opportunities in life.

We also know from solid research that kids who debate:

Develop higher levels of academic skills;

Graduate with better grades at much higher rates;

Are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol; ***and***

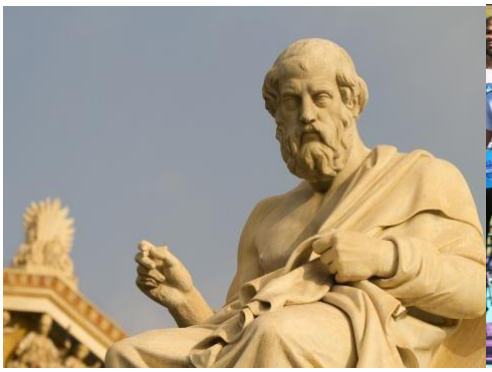
Have far greater opportunities in life.

Patrick Lockhart

Now Let's Imagine Combining Athletics & Debating

SPORTS	DEBATE
Greater Academic Achievement	Greater Academic Achievement
Stronger Career Potential	Stronger Career Potential
Higher-level Cognitive Development	Higher-level Cognitive Development
Higher HS Graduation Rates	Higher HS Graduation Rates
Higher College Graduation Rates	Higher College Graduation Rates
Increased Self-Confidence	Increased Self-Confidence
Increased Self-Esteem	Increased Self-Esteem
Highly Developed Leadership Skills	Highly Developed Leadership Skills
Highly Developed Teamwork Skills	Highly Developed Teamwork Skills
Highly Developed Interpersonal Skills	Highly Developed Interpersonal Skills
Fewer Drug/Alcohol Problem	Fewer Drug/Alcohol Problem
PLUS	PLUS
Math & Science Skills	Reading/Writing Skills
Language Arts Skills	Argumentation Skills
Analytical Skills	Research & Analytical Skills

Debate & Sports: From Plato To Michael





Plato told ancient Greeks, and the world, that success in life is achieved by dedicated, vigorous exercise of the mind and the body and that these two shouldn't be seen as separate entities, one of the mind and one of the body, but as the two elements that make up Human Being working in harmony.

Decades of research on the positive impact of both debating programs and school athletics programs on academic achievement by children and adolescents confirm Plato's observation, which can now be regarded as 100% evidence-based. Sports and Debate together are Body and Mind together in their highest forms and the two, combined in a total educational program, clearly offer children and adolescents greater opportunities for growth of any other combination of learning activities.

The power of debate and the power of sports have each been recognized for thousands of years in every civilization on earth as tools for learning.

However, it seems clear that these two powerful tools have never been combined in one integrated educational program.

However, a new development in debate may change everything. As unlikely as it seems, a completely new use for debate has emerged in a few places in America,

after literally thousands of years. In an important and still largely ignored innovation in education, a few school systems in the US have introduced the use of debate as an actual teaching tool, not an activity', that is integrated with every subject:

"Debate Across The Curriculum "

DAC techniques have been adapted to teach full-year core subject matter in biology, math, engineering, nursing and medicine, social studies, ESL - literally across the curriculum. GPA's climb, SAT's increase, graduation and college admissions soar.

Sports training increasingly concentrates equally on all parts of the athlete – body, mind and spirit – and we see an exciting potential for extending the "Debate across Curriculum" model into school athletics and sports to achieve a more inclusive model that integrates cognitive and academic development with athletics and sports.

Sports legends are investing in education. Six-time NBA champion Michael Jordan, a former University of North Carolina Tar Heels star, recently committed $10 million to the UNC School of Social Work in honor of his mother, Deloris P. Jordan. The gift, the largest single gift in the school's history, will create the Jordan Family Scholars program to support graduate students facing financial barriers. Through a foundation named in honor of his father, The James R. Jordan Foundation, Michael also supports schools in underserved Chicago neighborhoods through grants for resources and staff.

And global sports leader Nike is developing brain training & meditation apps, and supports education through multiple initiatives and programs.

We're excited to imagine what will evolve when the connection between debating and athletics is fully understood.

This makes us ask – why aren't these two high-order activities already integrated into all of our schools today with debate across the curriculum (DAC) and Athletics/Sports (AS) for everyone?

We are truly puzzled that there are dozens of peer-reviewed research studies on the academic and lifelong benefits of sports participation, and there are also dozens of studies on the academic and lifelong benefits of debate, but there are almost no studies of the academic and lifelong benefits of participation in both sports and debate.

That serious lack of research seems to be because there are few if any AS/DAC programs in American schools or anywhere in the world. We hope our work will help raise awareness of the potential for integrated Athletics/Sports programs.

We hope our work will help raise awareness of the potential for gaining impressive benefits for a wide range of students at ultra-low cost by creating in-class debate programs that give student athletes along with the entire student body a proven path to success in school and in life.





Sports & Academics

"There is a relatively consistent body of research showing that students who participate in athletics tend to fare significantly better both in school and in later life. Sports are cognitively and organizationally demanding activities that help convey self-discipline and leadership skills. This is especially true for students from disadvantaged backgrounds."

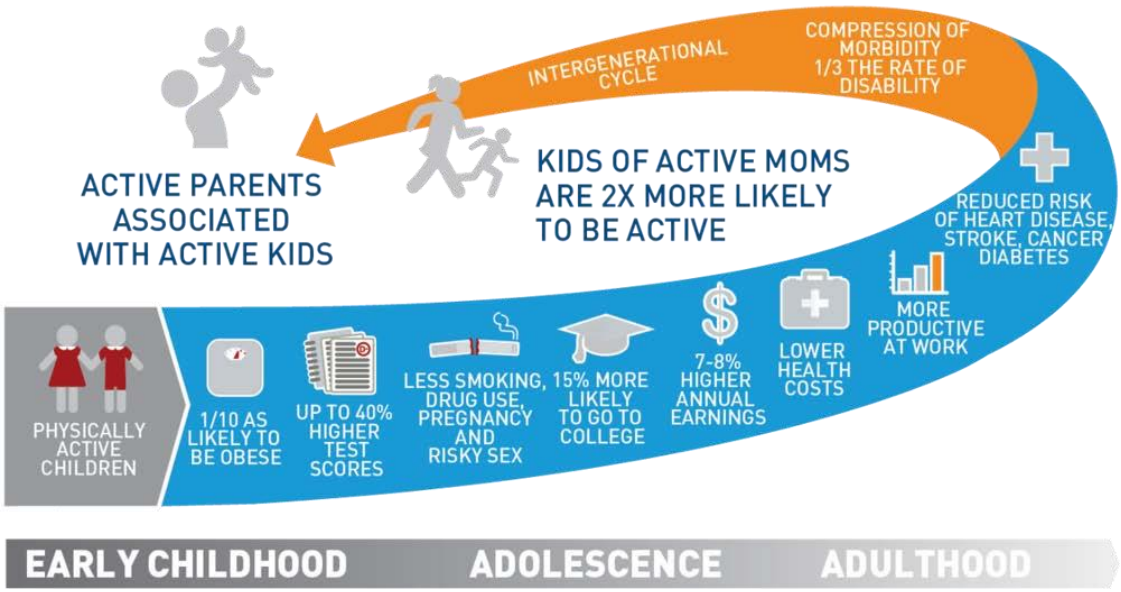
NY Times. https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/10/21/taking-sports-out-ofschool-2/sports-and-education-work-well-together

The Lifelong Value Of Sports & Debate

This word cloud shows how 2000+ successful business executives and professionals described the value of their participation in school sports and debate.

This cloud was extracted from studies containing over 1600 interviews, and the size of a word in the cloud indicates its perceived importance.

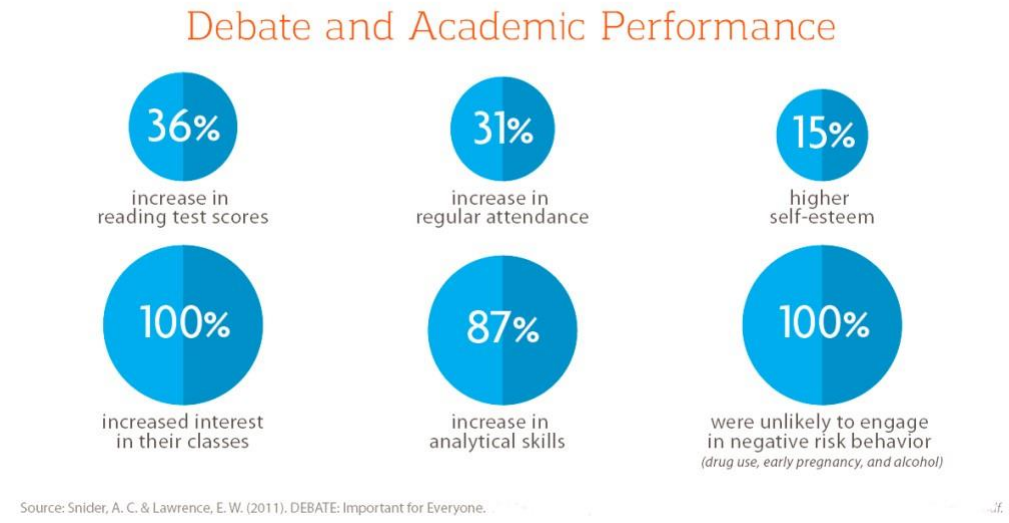




Debate & Academics

"High-risk secondary school debaters also score better on ACT and SAT tests, get into better colleges, and perform better once in college. While only 50 percent of high school students in urban schools graduate, ninety percent of urban high school debaters graduate."

http://www.americandebateleague.org/benefits-of-debate.html



"Debaters in metropolitan school districts are 3.1 times more likely to graduate high school in 4 years than non-debaters; 90% of debaters graduate on time, compared to only 75% percent of students who do not debate"

With this book we hope to share our own observation that if schools will offer students as many opportunities as possible to participate in both athletics and debate, we will begin to reverse

generations of neglect that has had students and teachers, driven by funding priorities, playing the “take the test” game. With a school-wide program of sports and debate schools can actually save money and take back their essential teaching and learning functions improve radically and across the board. knowing that outcomes, including those darned test scores, will improve radically and across the board.

We believe that “teaching to the test’ is an unproductive intrusion into the educational process that can be much more effectively replaced by small, locally-funded and supported athletic and debate programs in every school in every community. TTT is designed primarily to produce metrics that bureaucracies use to justify their excessive salaries and perks. It has nothing at all to do with education or learning - it's all about justifying budgets and salaries of administrators and bureaucrats - not teachers.

Good news - teachers, students and parents don’t have to confront or fight anybody to get rid of the test because the simple act of starting a debate club and integrating debate across the curriculum including athletic departments will raise student academic scores significantly – which will produce such great measurable results that the bureaucrats who administer “the test” will no doubt try to take the credit.

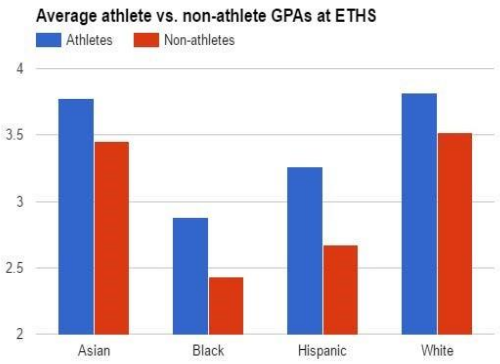
“Debate participants show significantly higher performance on standard academic indicators of college readiness than a matched comparison group of nondebaters, including higher growth on standardized test performance (SGP), higher academic GPAs, and higher rates of attempting and passing Advanced Placement tests (Winkler & Fortner, 2014). Debaters are 89% more likely than non-debaters to attend a four-year college or university and 80% more likely to graduate (Anderson and Mezuk, 2012)” http://www.bostondebate.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/

BDL-Impact-of-Debate-Program.pdf

This core research in the field examined the academic performance of students in grades 9-12 who did or did not participate in high school sports.



“Comparing the Academic Performance of High School Athletes and Non-Athletes in Kansas in 2008-2009”



- ***Of the 17,249 non-athletes for whom data were available, 88.1% graduated with 2,323 failing to graduate. Of the 12,218 athletes, 97.6% graduated and 303 failed to graduate.***
- ***Both male and female athletes reported higher GPAs than did non-athletes.***
- ***Female athletes and non-athletes had higher GPAs than did male athletes and non-athletes.***
- ***Male and female athletes graduated at almost identical rates and graduated at much higher rates than non- athletes.***
- ***Athletes across all ethnicities reported higher GPAs and were more likely to graduate than were non- athletes.***
- ***There were no significant differences found between minority non-athletes and athletes.***



"Academic achievement of male & female students engaged in individual and collective sports"

In this study of Middle Eastern student athletes, researchers found a strong trend toward high level academic achievement and an awareness of a need for the development of life skills as well as achieving athletic and sports competencies.

Academic achievements of male students Good Very good Excellent Total				
Individual sport	3 18.8%	2 12.5%	11 68.8%	16 100.0%
Collective sport	17 45.9%	5 13.5%	15 40.5%	37 100.0%
Total	20	7	26	53
	37.7%	13.2%	49.1%	100.0%
Fischer Exact Probability Test (108); P_A = .12; P_B = .12				

Good Very good Excellent Total				
Individual sport	6	2	10	18
	33.3%	11.1%	55.6%	100.0%
Collective sport	15	10	11	36
	41.7%	27.8%	30.6%	100.0%
Total	21	12	21	54
	38.9%	22.2%	38.9%	100.0%
Fischer Exact Probability Test (169); P_A = .20; P_B = .20				

Academic achievement of female students

Building Better Classrooms For Student Athletes

A city-wide program of debating developed by Boston Public Schools is called “Evidence-Based Argumentation” (EBA) and there isn’t a subject in the BPS system that isn’t being taught using the discipline and structure of the debating process to enhance learning. The measurable progress that students make using the tools of debate is pretty dramatic.

As one teacher comments: “EBA has provided the teaching staff with a common language that is transferable across all content areas.”

Teachers and students use the techniques of Debate/EBA in all kinds of classes – science, math, social studies, music, art, even phys. ed. Classroom debate isn’t an extra activity – it’s the way students learn and teachers teach – largely by facilitating and leading. Both teachers and students love EBA. After completing one full school year, Boston Public Schools teachers who worked with the Boston Debate

League to implement EBA in their classrooms agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

I can more effectively use debate in my classrooms as a result of this program.	90%
Debate is an effective tool to increase student understanding of class content	90%
Debate has increased student engagement in my class	86%

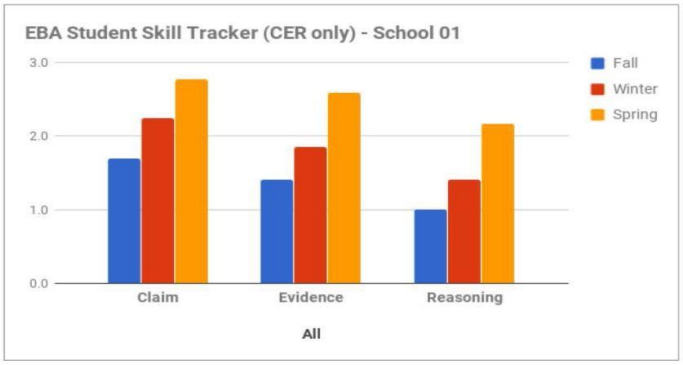
I can more effectively use debate in my classrooms as a result of this program.	90%
If all teachers in my school regularly used debate in their classroom, the academic atmosphere of the school would likely improve.	86%
Being able to use debate has made me a more effective teacher	75%



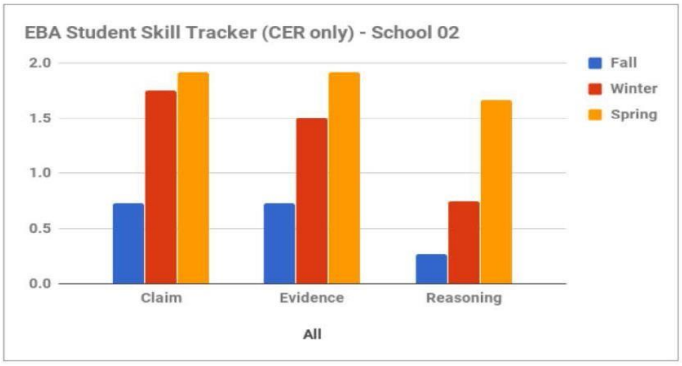


BOSTON DEBATE LEAGUE

Evidence-Based Argumentation
School-wide Initiative: Impact



EMK Academy for Health Careers
- Grade 9 History
- Grade 10 Chemistry
- Grade 11 History
- Grade 12 ELA



Timilty Middle School
- Grade 7 English as a Second Language

Here's dramatic evidence of why Boston Public Schools teachers are so motivated by EBA as a teaching tool. These are just two of dozens of BPS schools where EBA is making a

difference, and as you can see there is irrefutable growth and learning across the curriculum. In every case students progress steadily all year long, more than doubling their skills in every core academic area across a wide range of subjects and grades. EBA is, ironically, a true no-brainer.

More Testimony From Teachers

Georgia State University studied 150+ high school teachers who had included debate and argumentation into their classrooms. The survey asked how much positive change they saw in students after integrating argumentation and debate into the curriculum.

(Of special note are the very high totals you get when some of the "Moderate" and "Significant columns are summed.)

	No Change	Small	Moderate	Significant
Level of engagement/participation	0%	7%	31%	61.3%
Level of skill development	1.4%	9.2%	32.6%	56%
Level of content knowledge	0%	15.1%	28.8%	55.4%
Commitment to learning	4.2%	14.8%	43%	37.3%
Positive interaction with other students	7.8%	9.2%	37.6%	44.7%
Positive interaction with teachers	7.2%	14.5%	34.8%	41.3%
Academic performance	6.5%	22.3%	41%	25.2%
Change in teacher's ability to effectively manage student behavior	22.9%	17.9%	29.3%	23.6%

In a similar program at a major teaching hospital's School of Nursing, several classes of nursing students participated in a full semester of standard curriculum topics structured as in-class debates. At semester's end the class was polled to determine their subjective responses to the use of structured classroom debate as a learning option. Here's a sample of their responses.

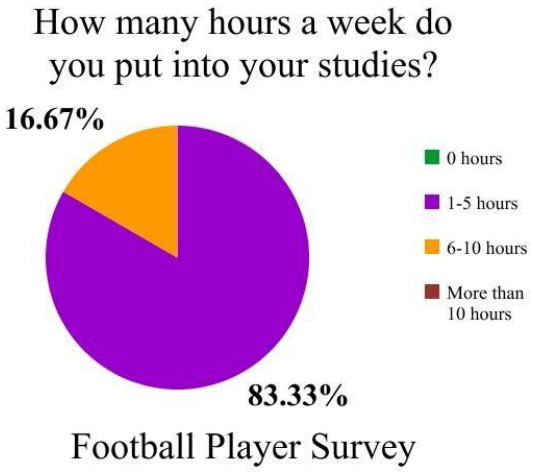
Debate Topic	**Number of Students**	**Percentage of students who changed theiropinion – before vs. after the debate**	**Percentage of debaters who agreed with the random position assigned.**	**Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that "This debate improved my understanding of the topic."**
Genetic Engineering	85	56%	79%	98%
Viruses – living vs. nonliving	97	79%	68%	97%
Use of antibacterial compounds in household	72	53%	64%	99%

Debate Topic	Number of Students	Percentage of students who changed theiropinion – before vs. after the debate	Percentage of debaters who agreed with the random position assigned.	Percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed that "This debate improved my understanding of the topic."
products				
Childhood Immunizations	44	25%	55%	100%

A university professor who has been integrating the debate format into his microbiology classes for years offers this 'voice of experience':

"Bringing current scientific issues into the classroom helps students relate science to everyday problems and use scientific evidence to critically asse ss societal challenges. Debates provide the scaffolding for evaluating relevant issues."
https://www.asmscience.org/content/journal/jmbe/10.1128/ jmbe.v13i2.420

So, one question that must be raised is: If debate can be used to learn Physics, Math, Nursing, Art and Genetic Engineering with measurable, radically improved effectiveness, why couldn't debate be used to increase the effectiveness of learning in athletics? This isn't a casual question – it goes to the heart of the ethical dilemma of schools that exploit athletes without also giving them the education they will need long after their athletic skills have faded. Integrating debate across the curriculum can almost automatically create an educational environment where athletes can engage and learn as effectively as non-athletes.



On a very practical level, an athlete who has to sit in a class and listen to a lecture while dealing with all of their other concerns and issues that relate to an upcoming game is less likely to focus and learn what is being taught than an athlete who engages with others in the class in a structured debate where they are actively involved in giving and receiving learning from their fellow students during an in-class debate.

It will be much harder for that athlete to sit and daydream about the coming game if they are actively debating with their peers rather than sitting in a semidark lecture hall doing nothing except listening to the instructor drone on. Even the most animated and talented teacher has a hard time competing with the inner lives of students who are physically present but whose

minds are elsewhere. During an in-class debate minds cannot be elsewhere – they must be present and accounted for.





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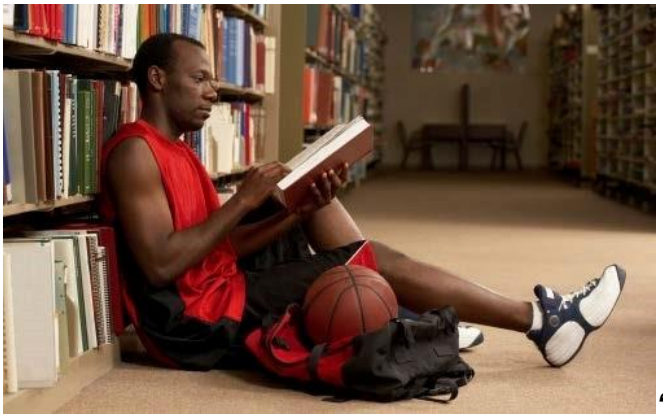


"Athletes that rely solely on their physical attributes and talent will only be able to go so far, but someone who has mastered these mental skills will have a higher success rate. It is important for coaches to work on mental toughness on top of physical conditioning to help young athletes grow and improve throughout their life, not just on the field." https://www.workinsports.com/blog/4-mental-skills-todevelop-in-young-athletes/

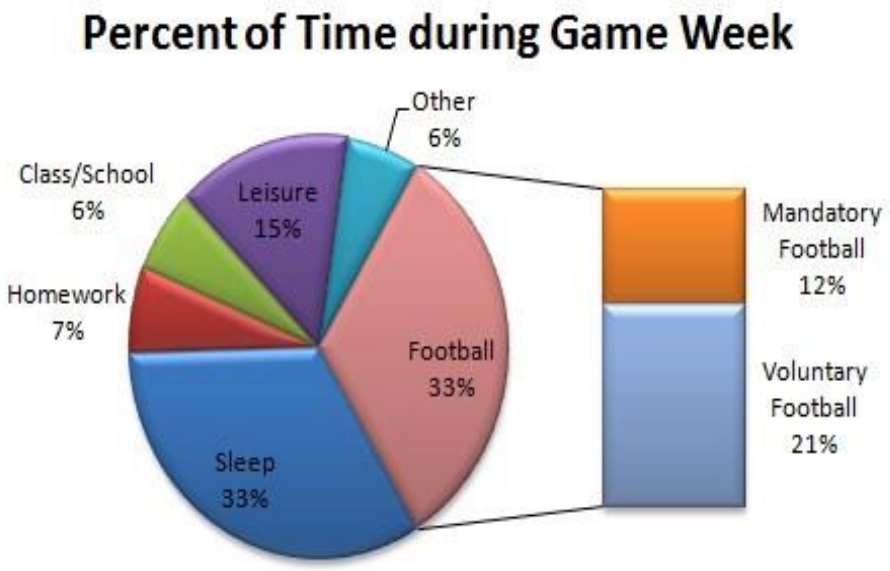
What if instead of feeling that they were taking time away from sports to study or be tutored, student athletes could get all of the proven academic benefits of debate within their class schedule instead of in addition to it?

How many hours a week would that save? What could that mean to their lives both during and after sports?

If students were able to replace the time they now spend in isolation studying conventional school homework assignments with time spent working remotely or in person with other debate team members, athletes & non-athletes alike, on upcoming in-class debates in biology, algebra, history, literature and phys. ed – what do you think the results would be?

What if debate was not an outwardly-focused activity unrelated to classroom content, to the "subject matter' that is taught, but instead was a classroom method or technique used by students and teachers to make learning that same subject matter more fun and more effective at the same time.

The structure of debate, the self-discipline it creates in participants, and the teamwork that it requires all work together to empower students to become their own teachers with the teacher becoming a true leader, someone who knows how to find, analyze, organize and present knowledge and understanding.







	Debate	Sports
Self-Confidence	X	X
Teamwork	X	X
Communication	X	X
Leadership	X	X
Sportsmanship	X	X
Research & Analysis	X	X
Time Management	X	X
Performance Under Pressure	X	X
Planning & Execution	X	X
Strategic/Tactical Thinking	X	X
Emotional Maturity	X	X

We See A Natural Synergy Between Sports & Debate

The evolution of debating activities parallels that of physical activity. Just as in physical development, from the level of fundamental cognitive skills children move up into the level of

complex cognitive skills become engaged with the major variations of cognitivåe skills involved in debate. Just as in physical activities, children and adolescents engage progressively in different types of debate activity, and develop the cognitive skills that evolve from that activity, depending on their age and access to debate-centered activities and programs in their schools and communities. With debate programs, unlike most sports and recreation activity, there is almost no need for equipment or costly overhead.

All that is really needed, as many hundreds of successful debate programs prove, is the involvement of a few students, teachers and parents and the know-how to get a debate program started.

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Sports & Debate: Parallel Developmental Pathways

Just as physical activity is keyed to a young person's physical developmental stages so their debate activity is tied to their cognitive developmental stages. Elementary school children are in the process of developing fundamental cognitive skills so each element of debate has to be learned the same way climbing a ladder or riding a bike is learned – by trying it out and learning how it's done.

Beginning with very young children a teacher who knows something about latergrades debate can guide classroom discussions toward the development of basic argumentation skills like pro and con reasoning ("Good! Now switch sides and take the other point of view!"), fact & evidence-based discussions ("Okay, let's look that up online!").

> *If there's anything Debaters love, it's flexing their mental muscles, and any environment that lets them devise new approaches, new ideas and new projects, that allows them to push the limits of their creativity, will benefit strongly from what Debaters bring to the table.*

As children grow into adolescence and young adulthood, if they have the right kind and level of support and motivation they continue the development of more complex cognitive skills. Both sports and debate provide that support and motivation in abundance.



Research shows conclusively that debate

parallels the positive impact of sports in every single key

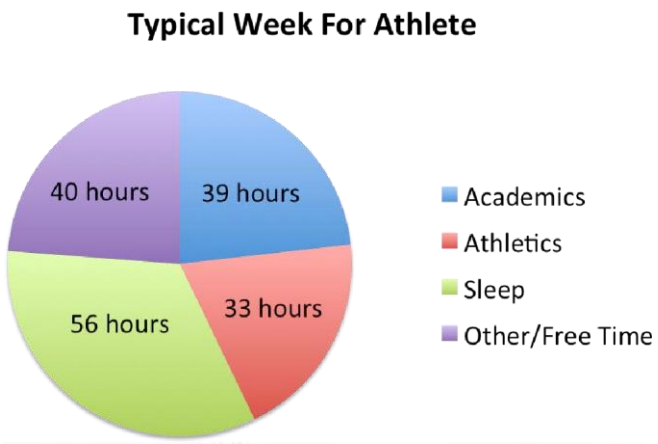
developmental way and has every bit as lasting a

positive effect on a young person's life and future.

Specific research on competitive physical activity and sports demonstrates conclusively that Physical Activity and Cognitive Skills Development are intertwined and develop together in young people. Another entirely different body of research demonstrates, also conclusively, that Debate Training and Cognitive Skills

Development are intertwined and develop together in young people, including specific research on middle school and high school debate. In this book we will bring both bodies of research together to propose a new kind of educational alliance. All jokes about brains and brawn aside, our children deserve the best that sports and debate can offer them, especially when it can be demonstrated – as we will – that combining sports and debate will prove to be the most cost-effective way to improve educational outcomes for the greatest number of young people in any school, no matter how privileged or impoverished the community.

There is no need for Sports to conflict with Academics





For many years there have been major arguments over whether sports add to or detract from academic performance. There are many practical reasons why young athletes might not devote as much time to academics as they should in order to benefit fully from school. However,

athletes understand acquiring skills and where that effort leads. We believe that once the skills that are available through debate are shown to student athletes that the highest potential among them, whatever their current levels of skill and performance, will be attracted and will learn.

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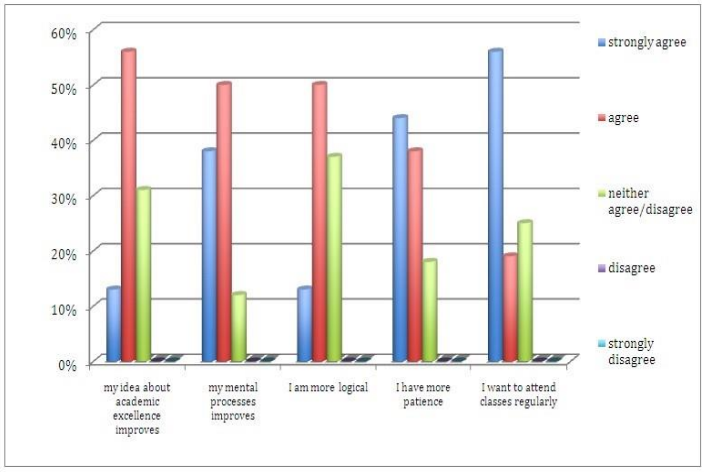
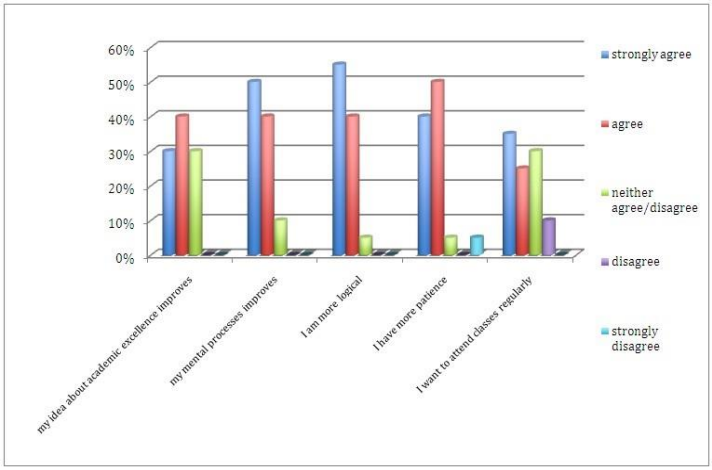
We believe that given the competitive, team-centered, performance-oriented nature of debate that student athletes who might not be drawn to the ordinary classroom might find the debate-centered classroom, as well as the debate team itself, an attractive way to learn to speak, think, and acquire the complementary skills to what he or she is learning through athletics. We believe that by integrating debate across the curriculum to include all sports and physical education schools can bring together the best of both and extend the benefits of each to a broader group of students.

We are especially struck by the finding that men in competitive sports achieved less academically than men in non-competitive sports – could it be that those are the sports that require higher levels of cognitive skills? The research doesn't answer that, but you can bet that any athlete who engages in both competitive sports and in debate won't have any trouble scoring high in academics and in life.

FEMALE ATHLETES MALE ATHLETES





"Female athletes who participated in competitive sport attained higher levels of academic achievement than their male counterparts, whereas males who participated in noncompetitive sport achieved higher levels of academic achievement than their female counterparts."

"Female athletes who participated in competitive sport also attained higher levels of academic achievement than females who participated in non-competitive sport or did not participate in sport.

"***In contrast, male athletes who participated in competitive sport attained lower levels of academic achievement than males who participated in non-competitive sport or did not participate in sport."*** https://www.researchgate.net/

publication/258128468_The_Unique_Trio_Academic_Achievement_Sport_and_Gender

Sports & Debate Experience Together Increase Employment Opportunities

Not just in the US and Europe, employers worldwide recognize that participation in sports is an excellent indicator of a high-potential employee. That's because young people cannot engage in sports without learning and developing in positive ways mentally, emotionally, physically and ethically. Employers who act on this belief aren't necessarily aware of all the research that confirms the validity of their approach – it just make good sense that a young person who studies and plays hard is going to become a more productive, happier and more successful person as an adult than another young person who may get good grades but who fails to develop other important parts of their social/emotional/physical self.

(from) "The Impact of Engagement in Sport on Graduate Employability"

Sheffield Hallam University Centre For Sports Research

Attribute	Overall	No sport	Gym only	Sport including volunteering / management	Sport excluding volunteering / management
Good numeracy skills	**0.71**	0.68	0.62	0.90	0.70
Clear written communication	**1.18**	1.24	1.06	1.47	1.09
Using appropriate IT applications	**0.73**	0.72	0.70	0.92	0.6
Good time management	**1.48**	1.31	1.26	1.91	1.50
Organizing, planning and coordinating	**1.71**	1.62	1.44	2.24	1.70
Good at solving problems	**1.44**	1.42	1.26	1.91	1.36
Ability to be creative, innovative	**1.48**	1.54	1.34	1.74	1.40
Ability to work as part of a team	**1.98**	1.77	1.64	2.46	2.09
Ability to lead / manage others	**1.76**	1.55	1.35	2.38	1.84
Good understanding of customer handling	**1.12**	1.11	0.95	1.51	1.05
Making a positive contribution	**1.59**	1.52	1.34	2.01	1.60

Corporate and government employers interviewed for this research agreed that participation in sports builds a set of personal characteristics and performance skills that are highly desirable in the workplace. Employers consider athletic experience as a dependable indicator of strong performance as an employee. Here are a few comments from employers interviewed as part of this study:

“In banking you need soft skills as well as technical skills. For me if I see that someone has been involved in sport then they're more likely to be competitive and driven to meet targets. They're also likely to have team working skills, to be organized and maybe even have a bit more about them on the leadership front. We need to be able to trust staff to go out and meet clients and hope that they know how to conduct themselves socially. I'm more confident that people who have been involved ins port have those skills from doing things that come naturally like communicating with their own team, socializing with opponents, showing respect for match officials and generally having more extrovert and driven personalities.”

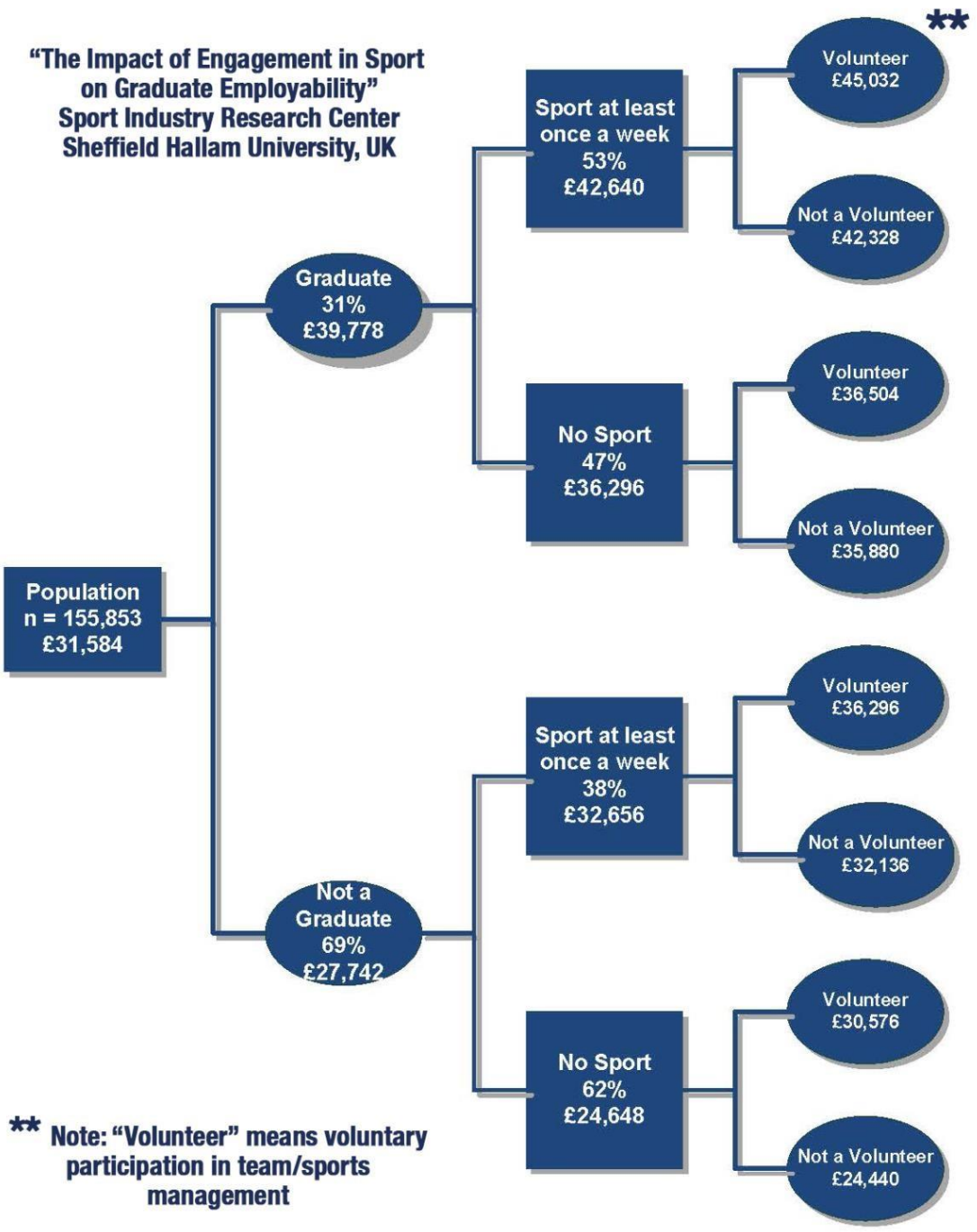
“We regard participation in sport, particularly representative levels, as being very beneficial. Personality is as important to us as specific job skills and participation in sports shows a breadth of interest outside of academic and work spheres and competitive nature suggests a drive and commitment and a will to succeed. Here are the qualities we look for and find in candidates with athletics in their background."



(1) ***"Resilience - in sport you experience defeats, set-backs, trials and tribulations. At a graduate level employers like to see that you have experienced this. Because in your career everything is not going to be smooth sailing, you might face external problems that could affect your work, you might not get the promotion you wanted or you might not receive the recognition you deserve."***

(2) ***"Experience can make you immune to these types of situations; your attitude becomes more resilient. Sport helps you go through these and starts carving your attitude which can be transferable into the work place."***

(3) ***"Competitiveness, most businesses are created to make money and as a result it spurs on growth. Sport creates a competitive attitude that employers like to see in their staff. That attitude of continuous improvement and a desire to come out on top is a culture that most managers like to create”'***



In both sport and debate you compete in multiple dimensions with, against and alongside your peers, who are both more and less talented than you. We learn from each kind of activity, sports and debate, and research shows that both offers great potential benefits to young people if they receive the right training and opportunities.



Widely published research shows that business hiring executives believe that job candidates with sports experience and with debate experience have similar and equally desirable characteristics:

ATHLETES	DEBATERS
Leadership	**Teamwork**
Motivation	Organizational skills
Communication	Flexibility
Networking / social skills	Good health and mental wellbeing
Confidence	Self-discipline
Time management	Determination
Competitiveness	Ambition
Resilience	Problem solving skills
Personal drive	Planning and strategic skills
Commitment	Passion
Able to take instruction	Energy
Self-awareness	Ability to multi-task
Respect for others	Initiative
Sense of fun	Self-respect
Tenacity	Pride
Breadth of interests	

Reasons for agreement with: "Sport has had a positive impact on my employability."



This 20 year-long study of UK university graduates sums up impact on school sports on lifetime earnings quite nicely

Table 7 Career income increases (1)

Cluster 1	Weighted starting salary	Current	Relative growth in Earnings
OVERALL	**£ 15,388**	**£ 29,536**	**£ 14,148**
Gym Only	£ 14,652	£ 28,080	£ 13,428
Sport including volunteering/managing	£ 16,026	£ 31,720	£ 15,694
Sport excluding volunteering/managing	£ 16,593	£ 32,552	£ 15,959
No sport at university	£ 13,793	£ 26,728	£ 12,935

"Being a captain of a sports team yielded the highest collective scores, followed by athletic All-Americans. After the All-American group were two extracurricular leadership positions - president of a fraternity and captain of the debate team. http://csri-jiia.org/old/documents/publications/research_articles/2015/JIIA_2015_8_1_Employer%20Attributes.pdf

Appendix One: A New Dimension In Entertainment?

IMAGINE: SPORTS DEBATING!!

Featuring: MAJOR SPORTS

CHEERLEADERS, DANCERS,

SPOUSES, PLAYERS & FANS



Pro Teams Have A Deep Bench Of ***Totally***

Unrecognized High-Potential *Debating Talent*

32 NFL Teams (26 with Cheerleaders)

+/- 36 Cheerleaders per Squad+/- 1000

@ 65% students 35% FT Employed

1696 Total NFL Players 1696 Spouses & Significant Others

30 NBA Teams (26 With Dance Teams)

+/- 40 Principals per Dance Team+/-

100 Auxiliaries per Dance Team+/- 3600 Dancers/Auxiliaries

@ 80% students 20% FT employed

450 (390) Total NBA players

450 Spouse & Significant Others

SPORTS DEBATE

New Ways Of Talking Sports

INTRODUCTION

There is no such thing as information overload or an uninteresting argument for a true sports fan. Talking sports is almost as exciting to hundreds of millions of fans as watching their favorite team win a big game.

As technology has evolved sports fans have been able to expand their passion for knowing everything about their favorite players and teams into new dimensions. The amount and quality of sports-related information keeps growing, and sports fans love it.

We propose to turn that passion for "Sports Talk" into a passion for

"Sports Debating" on our WorldDebatingForum.com platform

Like debating, talking sports involves argumentation, and

- Sports fans use facts in conversation more than any other group, and
- They understand the power of evidence to back up facts, and
- They understand the beauty of a well-reasoned argument, and
- They can usually be depended on to be fair-minded (with notable rowdy exceptions), and,
- 82 percent of American men and 67 percent of American women watch sports on television ....

• ALL TRUE FANS LOVE TALKING SPORTS

We envision a series of Debating Leagues based on sports and team affiliations that will meet in a wide range of venues to engage in an exciting new style of evidence-based debate. We see cheerleaders, dancers, spouses, players & fans making up teams of debaters engaged in live debates with the viewing audience acting as debate judges.

Sports broadcasters are hugely popular media stars because they are experts at using facts, reason, and evidence to express their opinions in interesting and provocative ways. Millions of fans admire these broadcasters for their ability to research facts and then express their meaning, and their ability to argue a point of view using those facts.

We believe that sports fans will LOVE seeing the best in the community of fans engaging with players, cheerleaders, and player spouses debating the hottest topics in real time with full audience participation.

A very important aspect of regular sports talk is that while it is often passionate it is rarely disrespectful or angry. It is also a carefully choreographed debate that doesn't look like a debate but has all the important elements - fact-based argumentation and reasoning that avoids making logical fallacies and uses rhetorical structures to arrive at conclusions.

In fact we believe that debate team coaches should encourage debaters to watch several different sports commentary programs and write a critique of the debaterelated strategies and tactics they use. Since many debaters may not dedicated sports program viewers we think that seeing how debate is used in the world of sports will raise their awareness of the important synergies between debate and sports.

That's why we see such a powerful opportunity for both profit and service by bringing together the tools and techniques of debate and the passion for respectful fact-based arguments to create the best of media sports talk. We've identified this opportunity because we're passionate about both sports and debate and as we researched our debating publications we noticed that they almost never appeared together in the research that talks about the lifetime benefits of participation in debate or in sports, but never in debate and sports together.

We thought – why not? **Here are some examples of the diverse kinds of debating possible in the sports space.**

Vision #1 – Sports Talk On Steroids

As just described, we believe that a more thrilling form of "Sports Talk" can be generated by a system of online sports debating that merges the best of "Sports Talk" with the best specialized evidence/fact-based argumentation (EFBA) debating techniques currently being used everywhere from grade schools to medical schools.

We know these EFBA debate techniques work because we've researched and published five books on debate covering EFBA applications in everything from education to market research. These specialized EFBA techniques are not rocket science, but they do lay out specific game plans for how debates are set up and run in order to drive toward a set of outcomes including conclusions and recommendations, that rarely occur with everyday sports talk. As we said – even most sports 'debates' on TV today are little more than taking turns.

We see this new kind of "Sports Talk Debating" as something that would attract audiences and participants from many different areas – not just the traditional sports fans. For example, can you imagine young academics getting up early on a Sunday morning to watch the analysts debate the cross-country races of the day before? They might not get up to watch a debate on the NCAA football game, though thousands will, but they might just be interested in a debate using facts & figures, and maybe some exercise science and sports physiology, to decide which of the runners has the better breathing techniques for a 5k cross-country run.

We propose to have a Dedicated debating team for every major sports team and in College and professional sports i.e. NCAA, NFL NBA, Soccer, NHL, Track & Field – every sport has a worldwide community of fans and followers and so every sport can support multiple debating teams that would probably made up mostly of fans and quite likely also some athletes. These debates would not just take place during the season, but because virtually every sporting event in the world is now available either live or as video online, in the off-season the leagues & teams will have plenty to work with.

To ensure that we are able to own & develop this concept with the right partners we've established ownership of a wide range of appropriately named internet domains including:

majorleaguedebating.com

olympicdebating.com

championdebating.com

…. Plus over 100 additional dotcom domains in the sports/debating space.

Vision #2 – Cheerleader/Dancer & Fan Debates

As we consider the potential of Football & Basketball “Sports Talk Debates” we’re reminded that spectacle is an important part of this sport’s experience and

cheerleaders and fan clubs have a large role to play in every team’s connection with its base.

We think a cheerleading debate team is a natural part of any “Talking Sports Debate” program. This would be a huge opportunity for Football & Basketball cheerleaders, who suffer from sometimes rather intense stereotyping, to show the people that they’re smart, educated, and really know what they're talking about. The fans would absolutely love watching this no matter what they were debating about. A live stream of NFL or NBA cheerleaders & dancers debating interesting and maybe even controversial topics in sports would pack the sports bars – at a correct social distance of course.

Because professional sports cheerleaders are predominantly either full-time employed professionals or full-time college/university students we believe that this program can be managed and integrated into their existing lifestyles to their great advantage. With a commitment of only a few hours preparation and training they will be able to showcase a completely hidden side of their talents before a huge, appreciative and involved audience.

Vision #3 – Sports Bar Debates

We also envision a sports bar debating system that would entail 5000+ teams just in the United States, considering that there are probably going to be 20,000 Sports Bars alone where these debates would draw enthusiastic audiences & participants. Every sports bar that wants to have a debating team can sign up through

WorldDebatingForum.com and debate other sports bars across the country and even the world.

Based on many years of experience as an owner of over 40 sports bars I am confident that in addition to debating and having a great time doing it the “Sports Talk” fans will be buying “Let’s Talk Sports” shirts, jerseys, hats and all of the things it that go along with the team they love and support. We believe that this new form of fan involvement can supplement at least some of the live fan involvement lost to the virus situation.

We are confident that sports fans and the public in general will welcome a nationwide program that uses people’s love of sports to promote respectful dialogue based on facts that has strong entertainment value while leading to useful learning and other positive outcomes as well as to significant revenue opportunities up and down the business chain from sports bars to national sponsors.

- Recognizing that sports bars need to reinvent how people interact under the new models for socializing
- Recognizing also that people come to sports bars to drink and be with each other

  - and talk sports
- We see a big opportunity to innovate and adapt formal debating models to create a new form of bar-based entertainment based on introducing news ways of talking sports
- We have extensive sports bar and debate experience, along with the management skills and vision to bring the two together.

IN SUMMARY

Just as debating itself is far more than holding elevated discussions about exotic topics, we see Sports Debating as far more than even the most energetic discussion between fans over burgers and beer on a Sunday afternoon. Just as specialized forms of debate are used to train doctors and nurses in medical schools, or to train Buddhist monks in medication and reasoning, we see Sports Debate as a way for everyone who loves sport to have fun competing with each other while sharing, comparing and growing their knowledge and perspectives. We also see Sports Debating as a completely new way for professional sports teams to serve and grow their fan base while demonstrating an awareness that sports is about more than the game itself - it is about the community of fans that care intensely about the game, the players, the history and tradition, and their shared passion.



This concludes the preview section of

"Sports & Debate: Plato To Michael"

This concludes the first section of our sports debating book. We intend to finish this evolving R&D project in collaboration with our principal sports industry sponsor. We will incorporate their experience, research, and ideas for development in all these areas.

We have not yet decided on who will be the best choice, as revolutionizing the school learning experience to raise student achievement levels and outcomes is our first priority .

MUCH MORE TO COME

World Debating Forum.com