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CSUMB Issues for Track Athletes

Luna Mercenit

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Introduction

A CALIFORNIA State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) issue that affects the entire university is the removal of the track and field. The university is taking out the track because of graduation but also they claim the track is out of date. With that happening the Track and Cross Country team have to practice at other locations where it could potentially affect other sports. Track athletes have to practice at the Monterey Peninsula College (MPC), Monterey High School and some days the softball field at CSUMB. I wanted to write about this this topic because with the track now being gone it makes such a difference getting up everyday driving far for practice, getting stuck in traffic, spending extra gas money and sometimes even being late to class. Although the school is going to build a new track, I want to figure out why MPC, a community college, has a better track, equipment and funding for their athletes compared to CSUMB a division II track team. In fact, there are high schools that have a greater athletics with better tracks where a four-year university doesn't. In an article I read it discusses and shows a track at Stadium High School in Tacoma, Washington with an outstanding track right on the ocean with a quote describing the track saying, "While there are many tracks with gorgeous views, this one takes the cake. Stadium High School in Tacoma, Washington and its stunning view of the Puget Sound makes it something truly special. Just don't have the view slow you down." (Cohen, 2015) This school has a breathtaking track that high schoolers have an advantage with where they aren't paying anything when CSUMB track athletes are with no track at all. Cal State University Monterey Bay has made plans to take out the old track for graduation which is now gone; making an issue arise for where the division II Track & Field team will practice and the issues they have to face.

Methods

For this activity I first organized three interviews with Track athletes at CSUMB. My first interview was with Tamia Stokes (T. Stokes November 2018) who is a freshman track athlete living on main campus. I interviewed her, asking her about her thoughts on how MPC has a better track compared to CSUMB. I also asked other questions like could leaving campus, getting up extra early, and getting stuck in traffic cause athletes to stress more than other students? My second interview was with Nia Howard (N. Howard November 26, 2018) who is a Track athlete as well and a freshmen living on main campus. My last interview was with Ayokemi Popoola (A. Popoola November 26, 2018) a freshman Track athlete living on main campus as well. She answered my questions in the same manner and also had some questions such as, when is the track going to be built, and how long is it going to take. My last research method I conducted was a survey of seven questions relating to issues for track athletes that attend CSUMB through the survey site, SurveyMonkey.com. I asked the athletes if carpooling was a problem, and with practicing at other schools, was getting up early and getting stuck in traffic cause them any additional stress and/or make them late to class. This survey was intended to see how the athletes felt without a track and to analyze how they grasped the issue with negative aspects that can affect their daily routine.

Results

With the interviews I conducted my results varied. My first interview with Tamia Stokes had multiple responses. The first, regarding the MPC track having better track and equipment, said "it's frustrating to know that a Junior College has better equipment than us but I'm also grateful they do because if they didn't we would probably be running in the forest or on the beach." My second interview with Nia Howard had responses to my questions I asked regarding when is the new track going to be built with her response saying, "we don't have a date yet." In my last interview with Ayokemi Popoola she responded to the questions with what her thoughts were on how a community college having a better track and equipment compared to a division II school. She said, "I think it's not fair, I came to this school to run and thought the campus would look better than a community college's. A University should look better because of the money I pay." With the survey I conducted my results were similar to everyone's answer on the issue all together.

Analysis

Both my survey and interview results show that with the track now being taken out it has caused multiple issues for track athletes. The most unexpected result with my data is that one person said carpooling wasn't a problem where everyone

else said it was. Everyday the track athletes and myself have to find a ride to MPC, which is fifteen minutes away, which can be stressful with not everyone having a car and most of us living on main campus. In an article I read it talked about how carpooling can be a problem for athletes, "The main challenge is how to match between people to share a ride, and to decide who picks up whom with their vehicle, so that it will be worthwhile both for the driver and all the passengers. Even if we assume that every driver can pick up at most one other passenger, the problem is challenging" (Hartman et al., 2014). This quote from the article shows that carpooling can be challenging when attempting to figure out who can drive and who can take who and that proves to be a problem the track athletes have to face everyday. The athletes I interviewed didn't even know the answer to some questions I asked, which can make a problem arise because they come to a four year university to run track and instead they practice at a community college. Personally I don't think that is fair when they are paying a lot more money to attend CSUMB. My results reveal that the track athletes are not happy and want to know when the new track is going to be built and that this issue causes stress and problems that keep adding up which can affect them in the long run.

Conclusion

To conclude in my project on this major issue I believe that tracks all around the world are differently built and modeled in multiple ways, but what's disappointing is that in this case, high schools and community colleges have a better tracks than a Cal State University. The takeaway is to let the readers understand the issues the track athletes have to deal with when not having a track anymore. The stress this issue can put on a track athlete, and the daily issues they have to deal with, while trying to juggle everything at once is too much. Athletes who deal with stress was shown in a article where it says "Such situations are thought to involve stress are regarded as being consistent with competitive sport" (Brown, 2003). This quote from the article shows that athletes can go under stress when playing a competitive sport which can add even more with what the CSUMB track athletes have to deal with. What's astonishing is that there even is a track inside an airport. Tracks like this are very nice and unique with different structures and are incomparable when put against CSUMB's current track. Seeing that the track doesn't even exist at the moment has made athletes actually question when is the new one going to be built and in turn also makes them stress about not only how they will get to but also where practice will be at each day.

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