

Is cheerleading a sport?

Sport & Tourism



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What is a sport? By definition a sport is an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment. But then what is a cheerleader? A cheerleader is a member of a team that performs organized cheering, chanting and dancing in support of a sports team. The definition given does not even put into perspective what cheerleading is.

Cheerleaders compete and do skills that not everyone can do, so why is it not considered a sport? This research paper is going to give you all the information and data on why cheerleading should be considered a sport, including the differences between high school cheerleading and all star cheerleading, as well as the injuries that are obtained, and if cheerleading were considered to be a sport what could be done to prevent many of those injuries. As to talking about the different viewpoint as to why people think cheerleading should not be considered a sport. This paper will also be include the law, law IX and what it means in the cheerleading world today.

High school cheerleading: people only look at cheerleaders as they are on the sidelines cheering for football or basketball being peppy and supporting the team. But they don't see the competitions they do. In fact about 75, 000 highschool cheerleaders take part in competitions each year. High school cheerleading (in the state of Massachusetts) is not considered a NCAA sport which leads it to be a MSAA (Massachusetts Administration Administrator Association). The MSSA takes care of the honor roll, national honors society and then cheerleading, this makes cheerleading a club instead of a sport in schools.

Thirty states have already recognized cheerleading as a sport. There are many restrictions that are in high school cheerleading, such as having to ban certain skills, due to the risk they have to the cheerleader. Also because cheerleading is not considered a sport in some states, there are no rules saying that the athlete can't work with a coach all year round, well cheerleaders can, they work with many different coaches to perfect different aspects of their skills. I fully understand that high school students do not truly see the other side to cheerleading, it is not just standing on the sidelines, if they do not think cheer is a sport. I would not want to consider it a sport either.

College and professional cheerleading: In high school cheer you don't get scouted, no one comes out to watch you or try to recruit you for the team, unlike football and basketball. Also college cheerleading is not part of the NCAA, NAIA or NJCAA. If you don't think high school cheerleading is considered a sport then at least consider professional cheerleading and college cheerleading a sport. Unlike high school and college cheerleaders, professional cheerleaders do not stand on a sideline and root for a particular team. They strictly train for Cheerleading Worlds in Orlando, Florida every April.

This event basically like the Superbowl, but you compete against more than one team. Another thing to point out is that there are all star teams made up from eleven to eighteen year olds. All star cheerleading or professional cheerleaders have to be the ultimate best. They have to be able to complete extreme stunts and tumbling passes. On top of being able to perfect their skills, they have three to four practices a week, plus school, and any

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additional classes they take to become better. No, I'm not saying that cheerleading is the only sport that practices all the time, football players are probably working out all the time to become stronger. I'm just saying cheerleaders work out and practice too, but football is a sport and cheerleading is not.

Cheerleading is deemed as one of the most dangerous sports for females. A study found that 37 percent of junior and senior cheerleaders have had concussion symptoms but have not reported them. The journal of pediatrics noted that an increase of hospital visits from cheerleaders have gone up over the years, 4, 954 in 1980 to 26, 786 in 2007. In the p of the years 1980 and 2007 there has been 83 cases of severe or disabling injuries to high school cheerleaders. Also, three of those cases were fatal.

The study also says that cheerleading accounts for 66 percent of catastrophic sports injuries for females, but when it comes to all sports combined cheerleading is second too football. A fall out of a stunt is viewed as more impactful than being tackled by a professional football player. A flyer is usually held way above the bases heads at around six or seven feet depending on how tall your bases are, but then are thrown higher in the air to be able to complete a twist down or the necessary skill that was choreographed. It is always a risk when someone is in the air and you are responsible for catching them, sometimes things happen and the stunt falls but the bases have to put their own lives first to catch the flyer because they are trusting you with their lives.

In cheerleading you are hit most of the time, leaving you with scratches and bruises all over your arms and legs. In my high school cheerleading career there has been numerous injuries which include two broken noses, one broken ankle, one broken collar bone, two broken fingers, two concussions, one dislocated shoulder and many bruises and cuts. With all that being said about how cheerleading causes more serious injuries, it is viewed as more dangerous than any other sport, but it is still not considered a sport. The American Medical Association thinks cheer should be considered a sport, also the American Academy of Pediatrics says “ school sports associations should designate cheerleading as a sport, and make it subject to safety rules and better supervision.

That would include on-site athletic trainers, limits on practice time and better qualified coaches,”(New York Daily News & New York Daily News, 2019). this means they want to make cheer safer so that less people experience injury, just like they are doing with any other sport that tries to find ways to keep injuries down. For example, in football they are always changing the rules and making equipment better, such as changing helmets so concussions are become less common.

The opposing view: many people argue that cheerleading is not a sport, due to the fact, that a Federal Judge said that cheerleading was to still to undeveloped and unorganized to be a sport. That is probably the main reason why people think it's not a sport due to the fact that an official person has said it. Another reason that is said, cheer is not a sport, is because people believe it was created for cheering on the sidelines at football or basketball games, and that cheerleaders were there just for their look.

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Many people see that the football cheerleaders in the nfl are used for there looks to makemoneyfor there team. they think cheerleaders are a specific stereotype look and how they act. In fact let me tell you there is all different types of people that do cheerleading not matter the size or ethnicity you are. Apparently stunting and throwing people around is not dangerous at all to some people. Risking other people's lives I think is more stressful than guarding someone or tackling someone.

The title IX law is known as a federalcivil rightslaw in the United States of America that was passed as part of theeducationamendments of 1972. It states that “ no person in the United States shall , on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected todiscriminationunder any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”(Title IX Frequently Asked Questions).

This is basically saying that for every female sports team there also has to be a males sports team. In articles that have been written they say that many men's teams have had to eliminated due to the fact that there was not enough female sports. Since cheerleading is not recognized as a sport then it is not protected by the title ix law because its not considered a sport, they do not receive any funding by the government or the school.

Saying this cheerleading is extremely expensive and can coast about 1300 dollars just for high school cheerleading alone (at least that's how much it was for me). For all star cheer it coasts about 2145 for one season. This being said cheerleading needs to become a sport so the government can

start helping the highschool fund it for the people that want to cheer but can not afford it.

During this research many points have come up to back up the fact that cheerleading should be a sport, while finding nothing but weak arguments against why cheerleading should not be a sport. Saying that cheerleading should not be a sport because cheerleaders are only seen in high school, standing on the sidelines, and cheering for another team is insulting to what we do and what we try to prove. By definition a sport is an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment.

Cheerleading is that entertainment on the days of the games where they have to be peppy or enthusiastic for there team. On other days behind the scenes, we work so hard, and we become serious, trying to get everything done before a competition. Unfortunately some people will never see it that way, and only look at us as people on the sidelines that are supposed to be good looking and peppy. At some point in time there will be a day where cheerleading is considered a sport.