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ENGL 1121

4 February 2023

## The World of E-Sports

One of the craziest players in the world making play after play, ace after ace, leading his team with his consistent aim and high-level play gaining the nickname El Diablo from the e-sports community. He enters the 2023 season with a new team Cloud9 looking to make a run a championship run C9 yay, the top Valorant player in the world. The world of e-sports is taking the sports industry by storm, transforming sports competition and entertainment. Some say that e-sports is not a real sport, lacks the credentials of any traditional sport, and does not belong in education. As a sports fan myself, I can see why some people don't believe that e-sports is a real sport. There's not a ball or puck that is being played for and the objectives of some video games can be a hard understand. People are quick to judge the term gaming, but it has become more than that today. It is a sport that players strive to be the best in. The world of e-sports is a global commodity that is available to every region in the world. The truth is that the community of e-sports is a passionate and growing community that is opening doors for many students and players around the world, e-sports are a real competition that many people overlook, as a sport it takes many unique skills and physical demands such as critical thinking and hand eye coordination. As a fan and a casual player there is an indefinite skill gap in most video games. It also allows students and players of the game learn leadership, communication, and teamwork.

They say that e-sports is not a real sport and is not competitive. I believe that it's more than just a game and is as competitive as any other sport out there. I have always loved and played football most of my life. As I watch professional e-sports players and compare them to the professional players in the NFL, they have many of the same traits. The professional players of e-sports and the NFL practice day-in and day-out, working to improve themselves for their teams. It is not an easy task for either of the athletes in their chosen sport. When it comes to the stage of e-sports I believe it is as nerve racking as a game at a football stadium. The stage of e-sports is obviously much smaller compared to a football stadium, but in Valorant, CS:GO, and other games, there is only so much room to breath on the stage as it is a five versus five, while thousands of people are watching. Aside from the atmosphere of the sport, when it comes to improving their gameplay, e-sports players look to play and scrimmage the best in the world.

In addition, they say that the e-sports community and culture is lacking compared to traditional sports. I say the gaming community in the last few years has begun to thrive and grow by the second, with a passionate community. In 2012, the video game Call of Duty Black Ops 2 released on November 12<sup>th</sup>, it was the first game I fell in love with and was what I played on a consistent basis. It was the first time I began to watch and follow a e-sports league. There were two players that I still follow today. Nadeshot and Scump who both played on Optic Gaming at the time. We also cannot forget about FaZe Clan, every child in the world wanted to be a part of their team. Today, Nadeshot is the owner of one of the biggest e-sports organizations in the world, the 100 Thieves. Whether it was watching my favorite players competing or watching the content they would release on YouTube, it has been amazing to watch the e-sports community grow since I was a child. Today, there are so many e-sports tournaments every season and just

like waiting for the NFL or NBA seasons to start I am always excited to watch these players to compete for a championship.

Others say that e-sports lacks the physical aspect of a traditional sports. As this can be partially true. It is only in the physical aspect but possesses the mental aspect of a sport. Instead of training in the weight room every day, professional e-sports players train in their own home. I say that e-sports has its own unique physical demands, like hand-eye coordination, reaction time, and mental ability. As a player of e-sports games, it is much harder than it looks to do what professional e-sports players do in every game they play and to do it consistently is amazing to me. When it comes to playing video games as a pro there is a significant skill difference between just the casual player. Whether it is the moment you react to an enemy, even a millisecond can make the difference in the outcome of a game. Comparing my skill to professional players is night and day. During high school one of my friends was a professional Fortnite player. I have never beaten him in a 1 vs. 1 match before. I believe that the hand-eye coordination in e-sports is very different from sports like football and other sports, especially in first person shooter games. While I play, I have realized that it comes down to muscle memory just as if I am throwing a football or shooting a jump shot in basketball, but the small movements make it extremely hard. Instead of using a big motion, it is being able to micro adjust your mouse to where the target can be. It can come down to millimeters that make difference between hitting the target or missing. The mental ability or game sense of e-sports players is a necessity that sets the best apart from others, being able to always be a step ahead of your opponent is the key to winning. To be able to make quick decisions is like a quarterback making a play out of nothing, knowing what is always happening around you.

In contrast, they say that e-sports or gaming in general has no educational purposes and has no value for students. I say that e-sports can teach and give valuable new skills to students. On an e-sports team, there is always a leader and the teammates that are with you at all times. Although I am not on a professional team, when I go into a competitive game mode in any video game there is a need for a leader on the team to gather the team to make strategies to hopefully win against the other team. While gaming, I think that in FPS games I have lost more than half of the matches when my team has no source of communication. Many times, it comes down to the fact that without a leader, communication, and teamwork there is no possible way to win a game easily. It always takes everyone on a team to have proper communication to win. As it is also important for students to learn these skills to succeed in the career path, they have chosen for themselves.

As the e-sports community has grown and began to prosper in the industry and becoming one of the well-known sports in the world with some of the most skilled athletes of all time like El Diablo, Nadeshot, Scump, and many others leading the way. From the wise words of Matthew Haag also known as Nadeshot of 100 Thieves, “Take what’s not given”.