Com 260W Newsroom

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Penn State University, a large university tucked into the mountains of Pennsylvania, holds a high esteem for itself in all sports and the wrestling team is no different.

However, within the small town of State College it seems that the only sport that seems to deem attention is football.

In a so called ‘football craze’ town many sports get lost within the shuffle. Winning teams that top the nation are left scrambling to find support throughout the campus.

The wrestling team, currently ranked the number one team in the nation according to InterMat.com, seeks its support through the help of the Student Wrestling Affiliate Club (SWAC).

If you have ever attended a wrestling match, you have probably noticed them sitting mat-side leading the student section in brightly colored shirts holding their title.

While the club is not the largest support at 27 members, its primary purpose is to promote the team to the school.

The club does primarily most of its promotion through the HUB and social media. They hand out posters and fliers and create opportunities for students to meet the wrestlers and coaches.

The president of the club, Elana Carroll is very invested to the team and also doesn’t understand the theme of only football here in State College. “It’s just always been football; I don’t get the hype, when there are so many other teams like wrestling, volleyball, soccer,” said Carroll.

SWAC affiliated with the varsity teams booster club, takes a different standpoint then other clubs like it’s kind on campus.

The Hockey Management Association does it’s best to promote but allows students to become managers for the team allowing court access and of course seats to home games.

Being tied to the team through the boosters allows efforts for fundraising that HMA cannot take part in making this a one of a kind club to campus.

Shannon Daughrty, a sophomore at University Park campus and the Secretary for SWAC said “I believe the obsession (with the football team) is due to Joe Paterno. He was a great coach, and under his guidance the football program really grew.”

Joe Paterno is said to have built a legacy here in State College but unfortunately there seems to be other legacies being built here but are being ignored due to the popularity of the sport.

Cael Sanderson, the wrestling coach of the Nittany Lions, is building a legacy here on the wrestling team.

Sanderson is known as the most ‘winningest’ college wrestler in history with a record of 159-0 at Iowa State University.

Since his arrival in 2009 Sanderson has won four national championships with this team and is in line to win a fifth this year. Even though the success he has brought to the program recently may be unparalleled to other sports on campus, students still remain numb to connection to the sport.

Julia Tremblay, a junior at University Park campus said “ I have never been to match here, nor did I even know that we were that successful.”

Tremblay isn’t alone either other students’ fall into the same boat with attendance to matches.

Some students blame their lack of knowledge for the sport of wrestling as the reason they don’t attend matches yet students like Erica Cruz, a sophomore at University Park campus, admit to not having knowledge of football yet they still loyally attend those games every Saturday.

It’s the hope of SWAC to try to change this problem for a success-creating sport here and cheer on the Nittany Lion Wrestlers hopefully with addition of a growing fan base.

The wrestlers next home match will take place on a larger stage than their usual home of Rec Hall, but rather in the Bryce Jordan Center on December 13th.

Tickets are free to students with a PSUID and are on sale now through the Penn State Athletic Ticket Office.