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Should Every Student Win Football Tickets?

Dear Patrick Sweda (author of the article, “OPINION: Should Penn State Football Reduce the Student Section Capacity?”),

Most students get excited when it is time to put your name in for tickets, but when you find out you do not win the tickets it is pretty devastating. From my own experience, my roommate was on the phone with her mom and saw a notification come up about tickets. She told me once she got off the phone that she had won the tickets. I kept refreshing my email as I predicted that I would get the email any minute. I had to leave for class and as we were walking to class the email appeared. At first I was screaming because I opened the email and it showed an image of students cheering in the student section, but as I scrolled down I saw the words “your request cannot be fulfilled.” At that moment, I was shocked. I could not believe that I did not win football tickets and that email set my mood for a while. I kept finding out that so many of my friends won tickets and I just found it unfair that I did not win them as I set an alarm at exactly 8 am while I was on vacation to put my name in. However, I do not think you quite understand the stress football tickets bring to the students that are fans of the game. You write “this weekend we saw something that has become a trend in recent years: the students don’t show up for smaller games.” You highlight how Penn State has one of the best student sections in the country and the

weather was perfect for the game. You believe it is because there were not many students who showed up for one of the 2023 games against Indiana. You talk about a potential better atmosphere if this change happened too (Sweda). I think that the students make or break the game, so I think there should be as many students as possible at the games. I believe that they should increase the student section and not reduce it because of one game. Who knows the circumstances of the students for the date of the game. To be fair, it was Halloween weekend and it was a night game, so students most likely had other plans.

My first reason for increasing the student section at Penn State is because of the plan for an enrollment increase from year to year of students attending Penn State University. Since there is an increasing number of students being admitted to Penn State University, there should be more student passes for football games available. The school has a constantly growing student population as well. Danahy writes that “Now, the university says it plans to increase the number of first-year students at University Park, from 9,175 to 9,500 starting this fall. The goal is to eventually get to 10,000 new undergraduate students each year, according to the university’s recent announcement that gives an overview of current and upcoming plans.” This means that in the future, there could be potentially 50,000 students that attend University Park at the rate enrollment is going. So if there seems to constantly be an increase in enrollment then the University can afford to give out more tickets for an expanded student section especially with the numbers increasing for enrollment.

My second reason for increasing the student section is because Penn State students' passion for football games at their school influences the culture that the student body represents. Penn State just being a big football school brings everyone together on game days. Since most of the university impacts students at Penn State so heavily, I believe every student should have the

opportunity to win football tickets and be able to go to every game. Mandarino states that “but the team’s ability to create an unmatched sense of unity among fans is perhaps its most significant contribution to the community.” The article highlights statistics regarding the student body at games and how much the game means for student entertainment in the fall. This point proves that if there is such strong comradery at games among students then it wouldn’t hurt to just extend the student section, so there can be even more of a crowd at games. A big part of attending Penn State is going to football games with all of your friends to have a good time.

My final reason for why the student section should be increased is because of the amount of revenue that Penn State Football makes off of games. Wogenrich lists out a variety of statistics on the spending and revenue of Penn State football and how successful they have been with the revenue brought into the organization. The organization has spent and made over 200 million dollars just on the game of football at the university. Only five other college football programs have done this (Wogenrich). I want to prove the point that because of all the money the organization has, every student should be able to win football tickets and go to the games of their choosing. With having only 21,000 seats reserved for 45,000 students makes no sense, especially with a capacity of 107,000 fans Beaver Stadium can hold. I think if the whole football organization has enough funding to support a new 700 million dollar stadium that is perfectly fine I think they can make it so every Penn State football student can go to football games. Yes, I get that not all students are into football, but those that are should not have to hunt around for tickets and question if they will even win tickets through the lottery for as much money families pay for college as football is such a huge part of attending Penn State.

Unlike your beliefs, I think a way to go about this is to listen to the students because we have very strong opinions about the ticket process and it literally affects us along with our own

experiences. I think if students did speak out, then no new problems would arise and the student section would hopefully get expanded. Despite your reasoning, I think another specific action to address the need for an extended student section would be to go back to the old system of getting up super early to get the tickets since it shows who the true fans are. Therefore in the future, I think the student section can be easily extended to relieve this issue of a possible reduction to make everybody happy if the students that want tickets just win them.

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